



Effect of Entrepreneurial Education On Career Success Beliefs Among Undergraduate Learners of Distance Learning Institute, University of Lagos.

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Abstract. Entrepreneurship education has firmly established itself in Nigeria, with numerous higher education institutions now having entrepreneurship centers where students acquire entrepreneurial skills to achieve self-sufficiency amidst rising unemployment. This research investigates the effect of entrepreneurship education on the beliefs surrounding career success (Career Efficacy, Career Decision Belief, and Career Problem-Solving Conviction) among undergraduate learners of distance learning institute, University of Lagos. Two research instruments, namely the Entrepreneurship Assessment Scale and Career Success Belief Scale, were utilized to gather data from 381 distance learners in their third to fifth year, selected randomly through a descriptive survey design. The collected data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis and correlation analysis. The results indicated significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables, implying that entrepreneurship education is instrumental in enhancing career efficacy, Career decision beliefs, and problem-solving abilities among distance learners. Findings were discussed and recommendations made.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Education, Career Success, Career Efficacy, Career Decision Belief, Distance learners.

1. Introduction

The escalating rate of poverty globally has sparked concerns over the years, particularly in developing countries, with Nigeria being a major contributor where young individuals are disproportionately impacted by poverty. In response to this situation, various government bodies and non-profit organizations have initiated multiple social intervention programs aimed at addressing this issue by supporting other entities in creating and implementing policies that inspire hope in the youth of

Nigeria. To address unemployment and poverty, the Nigerian government has created several organizations, such as the Raw Materials and Resources Development Council (RMRD), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDAN), the National Technology Acquisition and Support Agency (NOTAP), among others (Ibitoye, Atoyebi & Sufian, 2015; Emmanuel, 2012; Akhuemonkhan, Sofoluwe & Raimi, 2013).

To promote self-employment among students in higher education as a part of their studies and practical training, the Nigerian government, via the Federal Government of Nigeria, has recently announced an additional initiative. As noted by Aja-Okorie and Adali (2013), the National Commission for Higher Education (NUC, 2004) has been directed to incorporate entrepreneurship education into the curriculum of Nigerian universities, with the primary goal of reducing the unemployment rate among recent graduates in the country. Although entrepreneurship education and training have been implemented as a means to decrease unemployment among youth in Nigeria (Dike, 2009), it is unfortunate that the unemployment rate among Nigerian youths continues to increase, recently according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2024) the unemployment among Nigerian youths increased from 7.2% in 2023 to 8.4% recently. This reality places greater demands on higher education institutions in Nigeria to prepare graduates who can secure employment both individually and on a national and global scale (Teichler, 2007). Considering this, graduates need to possess a mix of traits that will help them succeed after graduation, as this equips them to be flexible and proactive in their selected career (Bezuidenhout, 2011).

The 2011 report by the Haase and Lautenschlager Group emphasizes the crucial role of entrepreneurship

education in fostering undergraduates' entrepreneurial spirit, knowledge, and skills. (Ifedili & Ofoegbu, 2011). Torre (2015) argued that entrepreneurship involves individuals' ability to take risks to produce goods and services, alongside the elements of production. In other words, it refers to an individual's willingness and ability to seek investment opportunities in their environment and to establish and manage a successful business. However, research indicates that students generally hold a favorable view of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria (Ekpoh & Edet, 2011; Bassey & Olu, 2008). Furthermore, Wilson, Kickul, and Marlin (2007) contended that entrepreneurship education can encourage students' inclination towards pursuing entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial skills acquired through training are recognized as a crucial element for both organizations and economies (Dickson, Solomano & Waever 2008). These abilities significantly contribute to the creation of jobs, generation of wealth, reduction of poverty, and improvement of income for individuals and governments. Recognizing the essential role of entrepreneurship in contemporary economies underscores the necessity for strategic investment and support in this field. Additionally, education is seen as a fundamental requirement for fostering entrepreneurship, especially in environments where the entrepreneurial spirit and culture are lacking. This is viewed as a key factor influencing the choice to engage in entrepreneurship, establish new enterprises, and attain overall success in entrepreneurial ventures (Dickso et al, 2008). There is also an assumption that there exists a positive link between education and an individual's choice to pursue business and the outcomes of their entrepreneurial efforts. Strategies for alleviating poverty should not be regarded in isolation; various methods and approaches should be employed. To realize true economic growth and development, the national education system must be recognized as an essential and irreplaceable component. Education is broadly acknowledged as a foundational aspect of significant advancement, irrespective of the context.

Career effectiveness, commonly known as career self-efficacy, is a crucial idea in the realm of career development and success. It pertains to the confidence an individual has in their ability to carry out tasks and make choices concerning their career. This belief framework can influence the extent of effort individuals dedicate to their careers, their ability to handle difficulties, and their resilience when facing challenges. Self-efficacy is significant in shaping how people tackle goals, tasks, and obstacles. Those with a robust sense of career self-efficacy are likely to perceive challenging situations as just another

assignment to complete, foster a deeper interest in their profession, cultivate a heightened commitment to their career, and bounce back more swiftly from setbacks and failures (Okunola 2024).

Various elements contribute to achieving career success. This encompasses a comprehension of oneself and one's skills. It entails self-assessment, acquiring professional knowledge, establishing attainable goals, strategizing, and resolving issues. A robust sense of career purpose empowers individuals to manage their career growth, investigate various avenues, and adhere to career decisions that align with their personal and professional aspirations. Thus, career decision beliefs refer to the thoughts and convictions a person has regarding their career trajectory, skills, and the job market, which can greatly impact their decisions and behaviours while career problem solving conviction refers to one's personal belief in tackling career-related challenges through a systematic method, beginning with understanding the issue, gathering relevant information for resolution, and assessing the solution's effectiveness (Williams, 2013). To address a problem, one must combine appropriate actions and put them into practice to reach a solution.

Career Success can be enhanced through various interventions; career guidance and coaching represent common approaches in which professionals assist individuals in recognizing their strengths, establishing achievable goals, and devising plans to navigate challenges. Additionally, training programs that offer individuals the chance to gain new skills and knowledge can boost their career self-worth. Furthermore, fostering a supportive atmosphere that promotes risk-taking and learning from mistakes can instill a sense of purpose, institutionally instituted entrepreneurial centers cater to foster this ability in learners. Ultimately, career success can be cultivated and reinforced over time, influencing both career satisfaction and overall well-being. A nation like Nigeria, among those in the developing world, cannot afford to overlook the significance of entrepreneurship education if it aims to optimally develop its citizens and progress technologically, hence the need for this study.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

It has already been acknowledged that the education provided by many tertiary institutions results in graduates who are ill-prepared for the job market. Graduates are trained primarily for wage-paying roles in the formal sector. The high unemployment rate among graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions has

become a significant national issue. The gap between graduation and employment continues to be lengthy, leading to frustration among graduates. Given these circumstances, it is evident that the most feasible solution is for universities to sporadically prepare their students for self-employment. Recently, many universities have initiated entrepreneurship education programs, aiming to equip their students with the skills necessary to launch their own ventures and become job creators rather than job seekers upon graduation. This initiative aligns with the directives from the Federal Government of Nigeria, which has instructed all tertiary institutions to provide courses in entrepreneurship to enhance the development of self-employment skills among graduates. The following research hypothesis and questions guided the study.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

Three research hypotheses were formulated and shall be tested at 0.05 significant level:

- H₁: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and student career efficacy.
- H₂: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and career decision belief of the undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos.
- H₃: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and career decision problem solving conviction of the undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos.

1.3 Research Questions

- To what extent will entrepreneurship education influence career efficacy of the undergraduates?

2. Results

Hypothesis I: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial education and career efficacy of undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos.

R= .693 R ² = .480 Adj R ² = .479 Std Error = .29721							
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	P	Remark
Regression	30.412	1	30.412	344.290	.000 ^b	<.05	Sig
Residual	32.948	373	.088				
Total	63.360	374					

Table 1 above shows that there is a significant relationship between the independent variable (entrepreneurial education) and the dependent variable (career efficacy) among undergraduate open distance learners of university of

- To what extent will entrepreneurship education influence career decision belief of the students?
- To what extent will entrepreneurship education influence career decision problem solving conviction of the undergraduates?

1.4 Methodology

This research utilized a descriptive survey approach. The population for the study included 9,317 registered students in year 3 to year 5 (4,145 males and 5,172 females) during the academic year 2023-2024 across three departments of the Institute. To choose the participants and ensure that the sample adequately represented the population, the Taro Yamane sample size formula was applied to calculate the necessary sample size. A total of 381 participants were deemed to be a suitable representation of the population. Two standardized research instruments were employed; the Entrepreneurship Assessment Scale was adapted for this research, consisting of 20 items, while structured career confidence scales were created and validated. The career confidence scale encompasses three components: measuring career effectiveness, belief in career decision-making, and belief in problem-solving. The internal consistency of the instrument was evaluated using the Cronbach alpha method, resulting in a confidence coefficient of 0.88, which is regarded as adequate for establishing the reliability of the questionnaires for the study. The questionnaire was distributed to students via Google Forms, and a total of 381 students completed it. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed employing the Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression techniques.

Ibadan, $R = .693$, $P < .05$ therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, the table revealed that only 48% ($R^2 = .480$) variance in career efficacy of open distance learners of university of Lagos was due to the prediction of the independent variable. The result of the ANOVA also attests to a causal relationship of the independent variable with career efficacy, $F(1, 373) = 344.290$, $P < .05$.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial education and career decision belief of undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos.

$R = .707^a$ $R^2 = .500$ $Adj R^2 = .498$ $Std Error = .30804$							
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	P	Remark
Regression	34.584	1	34.584	364.467	.000 ^b	<.05	Sig
Residual	34.635	365	.095				
Total	69.220	366					

Table 2 above shows that there is a significant relationship between the independent variable (entrepreneurial education) and the dependent variable (career decision belief) among undergraduate open distance learners of university of Ibadan, $R = .707$, $P < .05$ therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, the table revealed that only 49.8% ($R^2 = .498$) variance in career efficacy of open distance learners of university of Lagos was due to the prediction of the independent variable. The result of the ANOVA also attests to a causal relationship of the independent variable with career efficacy, $F(1, 365) = 364.467$, $P < .05$.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial education and career decision problem solving conviction of undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos.

$R = .646^a$ $R^2 = .418$ $Adj R^2 = .416$ $Std Error = .37176$							
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	P	Remark
Regression	36.775	1	36.775	266.091	.000 ^b	<.05	Sig
Residual	51.274	371	.138				
Total	88.049	372					

Table 3 above shows that there is a significant relationship between the independent variable (entrepreneurial education) and the dependent variable (career decision problem solving conviction) among undergraduate open distance learners of university of Ibadan, $R = .646$, $P < .05$ therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, the table revealed that only 41.8% ($R^2 = .418$) variance in career efficacy of open distance learners of university of Lagos was due to the prediction of the independent variable. The result of the ANOVA also attests to a causal relationship of the independent variable with career efficacy, $F(1, 371) = 266.091$, $P < .05$.

Research Question I: To what extent will entrepreneurial education influence career efficacy of undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos?

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.696	.151		4.625	.000
	ENTREDUC	.825	.044	.693	18.555	.000

Table 4 above shows the exact contribution of the independent variable (entrepreneurial education) on the dependent variable (career efficacy) among undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos. The result shows that entrepreneurial education ($\beta = .693$, $t = 18.555$, $P < .05$) contributed to the prediction of career efficacy by 69.3%, this is relatively high.

Research Question II: To what extent will entrepreneurial education influence career decision belief of undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos?

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.487	.158		3.085	.002
	ENTREDUC	.891	.047	.707	19.091	.000

Table 5 above shows the exact contribution of the independent variable (entrepreneurial education) on the dependent variable (career decision belief) among undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos. The result shows that entrepreneurial education ($\beta = .707, = 19.091, P < .05$) contributed to the prediction of career efficacy by 70.7%, this is very high.

Research Question III: To what extent will entrepreneurial education influence career decision problem solving conviction of undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos?

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.242	.189		1.279	.202
	ENTREDUC	.913	.056	.646	16.312	.000

Table 6 above shows the exact contribution of the independent variable (entrepreneurial education) on the dependent variable (career decision belief) among undergraduate open distance learners of university of Lagos. The result shows that entrepreneurial education ($\beta = .646, = 16.312, P < .05$) contributed to the prediction of career decision problem solving conviction efficacy by 64.6%, this is also relatively high.

3. Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect entrepreneurial education on career confidence of open distance learners in University of Lagos. The result of the correlation indicated that the independent variables correlated with dependent variables, this means there is a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The result of the regression analysis shows that the independent variables contributed to the prediction of the dependent variables.

Hypothesis I which stated that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and career efficacy among undergraduate open distance learners at the University of Lagos was rejected as the result revealed a significant relationship ($R = .693, p < .05$), indicating that entrepreneurship education substantially influences the career efficacy of these learners. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .480$) suggests that 48% of the variance in career efficacy is

explained by entrepreneurship education. This finding aligns with the work of Walmsley and Nabi (2024) that underscores the importance of entrepreneurship education in enhancing students' confidence in their career-related abilities, the researcher suggested that entrepreneurship education equips students with essential skills, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and innovation, which are critical for career success. Therefore, the rejection of the null hypothesis supports the argument that entrepreneurship education plays a pivotal role in boosting career efficacy among students. In a similar context, hypothesis II, which proposed that there is no notable correlation between entrepreneurship education and career decision belief among undergraduate open distance learners at the University of Lagos, was also dismissed. The results revealed a strong positive correlation ($R = .707, p < .05$), with 49.8% of the variance in career decision belief accounted for by entrepreneurship education. This outcome implies that entrepreneurship education greatly improves students' confidence in their capability to make well-informed career decisions. Cultivating such self-confidence is vital for students as they navigate the intricacies of today's job market. Entrepreneurship education likely promotes a sense of agency and empowerment, allowing students to make assured and informed career choices. These results align with earlier research that emphasized the importance of entrepreneurial skills in enhancing career decision-making among students, as noted by Douglas (2015).

Hypothesis III also examined whether there exists a notable correlation between entrepreneurship education and career decision-making confidence among undergraduate distance learners at the University of Lagos. The findings indicated a significant relationship ($R = .646, p < .05$), with entrepreneurship education accounting for 41.8 percent of the variation in confidence regarding problem-solving. This outcome underscores the influence of entrepreneurship education on students' self-assurance in their problem-solving abilities when making career decisions. Typically, entrepreneurship education incorporates practical, experiential learning opportunities that urge students to engage in critical thinking and address real-world challenges. Consequently, students cultivate a solid confidence in their problem-solving skills, which is vital for making informed career choices. The rejection of the null hypothesis in this context further highlights the essential role of entrepreneurship education in equipping students to face future career challenges.

Furthermore, to know the exact contribution of the independent variable to the prediction of dependent variables, 3 research questions were postulated. The research question revealed the following; Research question I The result shows that ($\beta = .693, = 18.555, P < .05$) This means entrepreneurial education contributed to the prediction of career efficacy by 69.3%, this is relatively high, Research question II result also shows ($\beta = .707, = 19.091, P < .05$) This implies that that entrepreneurial education contributed to the prediction of career efficacy by 70.7%, this is very high too. The final research question of this study shows that entrepreneurial education ($\beta = .646, = 16.312, P < .05$) contributed to the prediction of career decision problem solving conviction by 64.6%, this is also relatively high.

All of these results align with those of other researchers, including Lackes (2015) and Nabi et al. (2017), indicating that entrepreneurship education positively influences the employability of undergraduate students, equipping them for success in their careers. Additionally, Fitzsimmons and Douglas (2011) also contend that entrepreneurial education bolsters career decision-making by improving individuals' self-perception and confidence in their decision-making abilities. Gibb (2008) further supports the notion that entrepreneurship fosters problem-solving skills by promoting innovative thinking and a strategic approach to addressing challenges. The analysis demonstrates that students who receive entrepreneurship education are more likely to contribute to reducing the unemployment rate and poverty levels among graduates in Nigeria.

4. Conclusion

All of the findings suggests that students who engage in entrepreneurial activities or coursework feel more confident and capable in managing their career paths. Entrepreneurial education positively impacts students' beliefs regarding their career decisions. The results implies that students who participate in entrepreneurial education programs are more likely to have stronger beliefs in their ability to make sound career decisions. The influence of entrepreneurial education on career decision problem-solving conviction is notably high. The analysis demonstrates that students with exposure to entrepreneurial education exhibit greater confidence in their problem-solving abilities related to career decisions.

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