

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CURRICULUM AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

The ultimate objective of this paper is to provide insight into the various factors that help shape the intention of our teeming youth to take an interest in Entrepreneurial actions for them to be self-employed and self-reliant. Like other Developing countries, the Nigerian government has introduced several policies to eradicate poverty by encouraging self-employment among youths. One such policy is the introduction of entrepreneurship education into the Curriculum of Higher Education, which aims to promote and teach entrepreneurship among university students. Restructuring the Nature of the Nigerian Curriculum that is more of a theory to one that is more practical might enhance the participation of Nigerian graduates in entrepreneurial activities. This affects their intention toward starting a business. This paper presents a theoretical framework for the relationship between Curriculum and Entrepreneurial Intention in Nigerian Universities. If validated, the model would have policy implications for the government, Universities and other stakeholders in the decision-making process because of the need to deal with unemployment and issues of curriculum and subject outcomes, respectively.

Keywords: Curriculum, Entrepreneurial Intention, Entrepreneurship Education.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, today's education has gained and witnessed a wide range of acceptance from the public, with numerous enrolling in one higher institution or the other ranging from Universities, Colleges of Education, and Polytechnics. Concerning raising the perception of individuals earning a living after finishing their studies with a certificate, this condition is unsurprising. Nigerian Educational System has been endangered by this perception that ceaselessly witnesses a rise in the number of applications for several programs annually (Deebom & Baridoma, 2017; Salim & Yakub, 2021). This resulted in many graduates from various high institutions in the country annually, contributing immensely to the unemployment rate with little capability of private institutions. The government might need the ability to engage this rate contributing to the threat. Also, the graduates' unemployment problem is not restricted to Nigeria and the rest of the underdeveloped nations alone; it has been a universal issue for many decades. Hence it became a common trend in several nations to identify a tertiary institution graduate without a job or not capable of earning a job after finishing his studies. (Twumsmasi, 2013; Salim & Yakub 2021). Debon & Baridoma (2017), unemployment remains a negative economic issue that brings several severe social consequences that affect directly or indirectly affect each country and its populace.

Unfortunately, the incidents of Coronavirus (COVID-19) have brought several problems into the world business environment; leading countries, "economies and business organizations crumble, which influence them to reduce the size of their operations thereby bringing the loss of many jobs and hence, raising the rate of unemployment" (Salim & Yakub, 2021). This condition emphasized the demand for Entrepreneurship education amongst graduates to make them capable of being self-reliant. To solve this world's negative issue of graduate unemployment, most developed countries sponsored a move from a teacher-centered curriculum to one directed toward acquiring technical and vocational skills to encourage a smooth shift into employment for graduate students, especially those of higher institutions. For example, most of the developed nations (United States of America, United Kingdom, and China, among others) have expanded their education activities beyond classrooms and textbooks to add many extracurricular activities, such as the introduction of centers for service learning and Entrepreneurial base activities (Kuh & Donnell, 2013). This exposes the fact that education becomes inevitable for the advancement of any society. As such, the objectives of poverty reduction, re-orientation of value and wealth creation might only be realized and maintained via an educational system with an efficient and helpful curriculum that can impact appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in individuals. (Agi & Yesllowe, 2013).

The Nigerian government also restructured its Curriculum and re-highlighted that Entrepreneurship education became mandatory in each higher institution of learning in 2014. Also, the persistent rise in the scarcity of paid employment graduate unemployment has been witnessed in an increase in the rate of unemployment of the age working populace (15-64years) that raised from 6.4% fourth quarter of 2014 to 27.1% around the 2nd quarter of 2020 whereby 13.3% of a total number of unemployment are postgraduates and graduates (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Therefore, this study discusses this essential gap by proposing investigating the relationship between Entrepreneurship curriculum and entrepreneurial intention in Nigeria. The researchers reviewed related literature and developed a proposed framework that predicts the relationship between Curriculum and Entrepreneurial intention in Nigeria with a specific focus on Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto (UDUS).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Entrepreneurial Intention

The first step in a behavioral deed is an intention, which begins with rational knowledge of how to involve in a particular behavior (Ridha & Wahyu, 2017). A person's intention to perform and participate in activities related to entrepreneurship or behavior, to become self-sufficient, or to construct a fresh firm in the future is referred to as Entrepreneurial intention (Hamiruzzaman et al., 2020). If the learners decide to form a new business, they might embrace an entrepreneurship career path. This is because choosing to run a business profession is the first step (Jemal, 2017).

Intention refers to an individual's drive to make an effort to act upon sensible plans and decisions, as noted by Liu, Lin, Zhao, and Zhao (2019). Choosing self-employment as a preferred

career choice is influenced by entrepreneurial intentions, as pointed out by Fayolle and Linan (2014). Different scholars have various perspectives on entrepreneurial intentions. According to Dohse and Walter (2010), as well as Dell (2019) and Salim and Yakub (2021), entrepreneurial intentions involve a person's willingness to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset and engage in entrepreneurial actions related to self-employment and new business startups.

2.2 Concept of Curriculum

The definition of the word 'curriculum' is hard to define. For school, Pratt, Brady and Kennedy (2014) maintain that Curriculum could be a planned fixed formal educational and training intention. For students, Marsh and Wills in Brady and Kennedy (2014) uphold that Curriculum is related to established plans and skills that a learner assumes under the leadership of the school, and for teachers, the task is to create curricula that can cater to all student's needs (Ah et al., 2005) Gelaidan and Abdullateef (2017) and Ahmad et al. (2018) have similar views of this perception and suggest an entrepreneurial intention-motivation method that recommends the importance and sufficiency of curriculum and course contents. They maintain that doing this would enhance the knowledge and practical understanding results, as well as the entrepreneurial uptake tendency of students.

2.3 Curriculum and Entrepreneurial Intention.

According to Jimoh, Umar, Muhammed and Karwai (2021), the relationship between innovativeness and entrepreneurial Education (EE) needs to be moderated. This could be due to the theoretical nature of most EE lectures and the need for more effort to integrate innovative thinking and practical activities into the delivery method, which could enhance the student's creative ability.

Based on research conducted by Ridwan (2013), as cited in Gautama et al. (2017), Indonesian learners must have a firm intention toward commercial actions and view entrepreneurship as a leisure pursuit without considering the market demands. This is due to the fact that Indonesian society has low awareness of entrepreneurship, and most universities in Indonesia focus on academic studies rather than practical skills and entrepreneurship (Kuswara, 2012). Indonesian undergraduates have limited knowledge and understanding of entrepreneurship, and many need to be made aware of the challenges of finding employment in today's job market (Kuswara, 2012). Although 82 public universities and 2,679 private universities are in Indonesia, only a few universities prioritize entrepreneurship education (Kuswara, 2012).

Gelaidan and Abdullateef (2017) and Ahmad et al. (2018) believe that incorporating entrepreneurship-related content in the Curriculum is crucial to improve students' knowledge and practical understanding and increase their inclination towards entrepreneurship. They proposed an approach to assess the adequacy and relevance of the curriculum and course contents in fostering entrepreneurial intention and motivation.

Nunfam et al. (2022) found that teaching methods wholly mediated the relationship between entrepreneurship curriculum and personality traits. Each of the three personality trait

constructs was equally found to mediate the relationship between teaching methods and Entrepreneurial Intention. Furthermore, teaching methods and each personality trait construct, in turn, mediated the relationship between entrepreneurship curriculum and Entrepreneurial Intention. Thus, the following hypothesis was developed.

P1 There is a significant relationship between Curriculum and entrepreneurial intention.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The framework of this study has one independent variable, Curriculum, while Entrepreneurial intention is the dependent variable. The theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was propounded by Ajzen (1991). This theory is generally employed to explain and analyze human behaviors, consisting of three essential elements: attitude toward behavior, personal norm and perceived behavioral control (PBC). This is in line with the study of Rudhumbu et al. (2016) and Jena (2020), that discovered students with a positive attitude to entrepreneurial education would pose a higher EI after finishing their educational program, while perceived behavioral control refers to the extent of orientation drive entrepreneurially to a person because no conceptual distinction among PBC (Jena, 2020).

Therefore, the Curriculum is one of the components of entrepreneurship education that is tangible and valuable among the educational resources that will assist the government, universities and other institutions of learning toward meeting the required knowledge in shaping the mind of the learners. Therefore it can be used in fetching the interest of our young graduates towards entrepreneurial intention. Some studies also adopted the planned behavior theory and argued that there is a link between beliefs and behavior which further asserts that there is a relationship between the intention to be an entrepreneur and becoming an entrepreneur (Ajzen, 1991). This trajectory may be aided by entrepreneurship education that imparts entrepreneurial skills to individuals to enable entrepreneurial intention, opportunity recognition and new venture creation (Iwu *et al.*, 2021 & Fatoki, 2014).

Thus, in line with the available literature, the educational sector with relevant Curriculum and the connection between these independent variables and students' EI will be stronger. These are incorporated into the proposed research Framework see Fig 1).

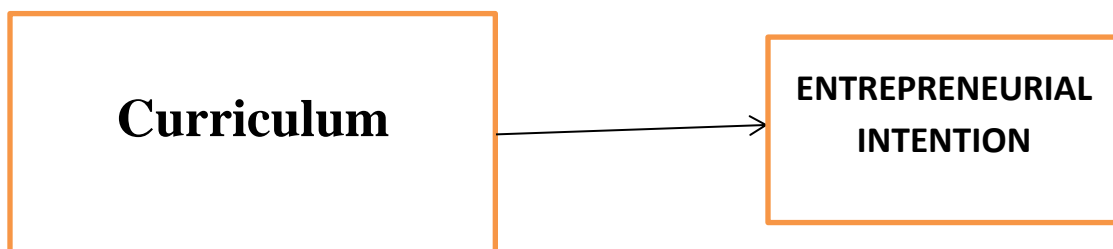


Figure 1: Propose theoretical framework

CONCLUSION

This study appraises the related literature and emphasizes the demand to consider the relationship between Curriculum and Entrepreneurial intention, as shown in Figure 1. If the framework is validated empirically, the outcome will deliver significant insight to students and the government, universities and other educational institutions, also the critical influence of the Curriculum in shaping the mind and behavior of graduates towards entrepreneurship actions. The research might benefit the academic world by introducing an Element that has yet to be considered by prior studies. This research suggested an avenue for furthering the studies if they empirically validate the proposed framework in this study. The limitation of this study is that it does not include other factors that influence the intention of our teeming youth toward Entrepreneurial Activities, such as the University Support System, Entrepreneurship Andragogy and many more.

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