

**AN ASSESSMENT OF AWARENESS AND LITERACY LEVEL ON  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ASPIRATION OF  
OGUN STATE TERTIARY INSTITUTION STUDENTS**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the awareness level of entrepreneurship education as well as entrepreneurial aspiration of Ogun State tertiary institutions students. A total of 300 students selected through the purposive sampling technique from the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta and Moshood Abiola Polytechnic participated in the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were raised, tested and answered at .50 level of significance. Two self developed and validated questionnaires were the major instruments used for data collection. The t-test statistics, Pearson Moment Correlation and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used in data analysis. Findings from the study revealed that majority of the students have high level of awareness of entrepreneurship education, and there exists a positive and significant relationship between student's level of awareness and entrepreneurial aspiration. It was recommended among others that a national body should be established to promote entrepreneurship education and that entrepreneurship education should be formally incorporated into the curriculum of higher education in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Aspiration, consortium, Nigeria*

**Introduction**

The study of entrepreneurship has relevance today, not because it helps entrepreneur better fulfill his/her personal needs but because of the economic contribution of new ventures. It does not only increase national income by creating new jobs, but also acts as a positive force in economic growth by serving as the bridge between innovation and the market place. Entrepreneurship education, according to Asikhia and Williams (2012), has received much interest in recent times probably because of the growing rate of unemployment and poverty pervading the global economies following the economy downturn of the so's. The study of entrepreneurship and the education of potential entrepreneurs are essential part of any attempt to strengthen country's economic well-being. Obasan (2005) sees the entrepreneur as primarily an innovator whose dynamic creative response to the economic environment makes him central to the promotion of material growth of a nation. The entrepreneur is recognized as the principal agent of production and industrial progress. When we think about the challenges of downsizing business, as well as major reductions in the size of government's enterprise, the wise person asks where the jobs of the future are going to be. Of course, there are many answers to this question, but one that is often overlooked by educators is the option to create your own business, to be responsible for your own income through entrepreneurship. As a nation, there is need to respond to these challenges through a variety of efforts and a host of initiatives to improve performance and productivity. While structural reform is needed, we must begin to consider new ways of engaging children and youths through their learning process. Such engagement can be achieved in many ways but the fact remains that entrepreneurship education must be part of any solution.

Entrepreneurship education, as defined by the consortium for entrepreneurship education (CEE, USA), is a form of education that seeks to prepare people, especially youth to be responsible

enterprising individuals, who become entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial thinkers and who contribute to economic development and sustainable communities. Aldrich (1996), states that entrepreneurship education entails entrepreneurship courses, training and certification for educators, economic developers, business counselors, and entrepreneurs (aspiring and existing) who exploit opportunities and also establish a business of their own. Entrepreneurship education is an innovative area of study that assists people to achieve their potentials through entrepreneurship, which in turn helps to build local capacity for solutions.

Nafukho (2002) opined that entrepreneurship education is like catalysts for business formation, it teaches students how to start and run their own business; play the stock market roles and balance personal life and more. It teaches Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Business, Economic Finance and Office application with real world theme. The centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development (CEED, Canada) describes entrepreneurship education as a vehicle for teaching student to look for a need or a problem and to create a solution. It is the wise vocational teacher who helps students to understand their options in a free market economy and encourages them to look for entrepreneurial opportunities for themselves. This is also the mission of entrepreneurship education in the education curriculum.

The success of meaningful development that could produce dynamic economy in Africa in all development areas has been hinged on rigorous and massive entrepreneurial education training and development right from childhood (Owoyele & Akinlana, 2012). Nelson (1996), had earlier noted that entrepreneurship education is much relevant in the tertiary education curriculum, as it provides students with skills and knowledge to successfully launch and operate their own business venture, provide them with the opportunity to develop, own and practice skills and perspective that are vital to entrepreneurial success. Meredith (1986), supported this view as he emphasized

that entrepreneurship education in tertiary curriculum will commit students to level of excellence in their chosen field of study while fostering values and characteristics needed in entrepreneurship. David (2000) posited that the inclusion of entrepreneurship and understanding what is involved in setting up a business; he further added that entrepreneurship education would also be useful to tertiary students in the following ways:

- a. To generate potential business ideas fro group and individual.
- b. To understand the role o enterprise in the local community.
- c. To develop the skills of entrepreneurship.

Cathy (2003) confirmed that the benefit of entrepreneurship education provided at all age levels have been evident in the past. The first of such training begin in the early 1980's when Secretary of Education, Tarrell Bell issued a policy statement encouraging entrepreneurship education to be taught in all vocational education programs. Today, entrepreneurship education efforts exist at all levels of education across United States and overseas. The benefits are profound, these include:

- a. It inspires and motivates students to achieve while in school and use their knowledge in a real world setting.
- b. It builds a pipeline that creates productive and thoughtful citizens who contributes to local, regional and national competitiveness.

Meanwhile, research findings have shown that entrepreneurship education's works and programs have been operating for two decades now and they have generated impressive and sustainable improvements in students and school performance. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria can also

integrate entrepreneurship education into existing programs and curricula. According to the Consortium's National Standard (USA), entrepreneurship is not simply an add-on to existing classes; it can become integral and innovative piece of the learning environment.

The objectives of entrepreneurship education is not just to teach someone how to run a business, but is also about encouraging creative thinking, promoting a strong sense of self worth, accountability and productivity. Entrepreneurship education offers how to be independent and a lot more (Okon, 1990). Other objectives of entrepreneurship education are to inculcate in a person:

- a. The ability to recognize opportunities of one's life.
- b. The ability to pursue such opportunities by generating new ideas and marshalling needed resources.
- c. The ability to create and operate a new venture.
- d. The ability to think in a creative and critical manner etc.

Entrepreneurship aspiration refers to the desire of an individual to set up and manage business (Denga 2005). Consortium of Entrepreneurship Education also defined entrepreneurial aspirations as the willingness of individual to own a prosperous business. Research in Entrepreneurship studies confirmed a close relationship between an individual level of awareness of entrepreneurship education and the desire to set up a business (Denga 2005). Research from the Consortium of entrepreneurship education (2006) also reported that the youth level of awareness is closely related with their entrepreneurial aspiration. In other words, their level of

awareness is a greater factor in stimulating their interest to set up a personal business after school.

The increasing danger of unemployment among Nigerians, especially new graduates requires the attention of entrepreneurship education as an instrument for reform. From the above, it is an undisputable fact that entrepreneurship education has a lot benefits to offer students, educators, local communities, government at all levels, all Nigerians and Nigeria economy as whole. Since the emergence of the current world economic recession, unemployment has been a major problem facing many governments, both developed and developing. Every year Nigerian education system produces graduates, which has greatly increased the country's workforce without any increase in the level of job opportunity in the labour market.

Graduates find themselves useless after schooling if not being employed in the labour market for; they lack the knowledge of entrepreneurship process, business plan knowledge and skill to identify and recognize opportunities in their different areas of study. It is on this basis that this study investigated the awareness level on entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial aspiration among Ogun State Tertiary Institution Students.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What is the awareness level of Ogun State tertiary institution students on entrepreneurship education?
- ii. What type of relationship exists between the students' awareness level and entrepreneurial aspiration?

### **Null Hypotheses (H<sub>0</sub>)**

There is no significant difference between students level of awareness of entrepreneurship education across institutions in Ogun State.

### **Alternate Hypotheses (H<sub>1</sub>)**

There is no significant gender difference in students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship education.

### **Research Methods**

The study adopted the descriptive survey design, which involved the use of two structured questionnaires. Students in three tertiary institutions in Ogun State constituted the population from which the sample used for the study were drawn. A total of 300 final year students were purposively selected from Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU) Ago-Iwoye, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY) Abeokuta, and Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNNAB). The research instrument used in gathering data for the study is questionnaires namely: awareness Level Scale Questionnaire (ALSQ) and Entrepreneurial Aspirations Scale Questionnaire (EASQ). The ALSQ was made up of two sections; section A sought demographic information on students' age, sex, and name of institution, while section B contained 15 structures items meant to elicit information on their level of awareness of entrepreneurship education. The EASQ contained 5 items meant to gather information on entrepreneurial aspirations of students.

The instruments were validated by two of the researchers' colleagues (who are experts in test and measurement) in the Faculty of Education, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. Their comments were used in the final production of the instruments. The instruments were trial tested in a typical institution in Lagos State, which was not part of the main study. Trial testing of the

institution slowed it to be reliable with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.75 and 0.83 respectively. The instruments were administered on the subject at the three institutions with the help of five research assistants. The data obtained from the study were collated and analyzed, using simple percentage and frequency counts, Pearson product Moment Correlation Coefficient, t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Further analysis was done using Scheffe post-hoc to show the direction of the observed significant difference. All analysis were done using the S.P.S.S. computer package.

### Results and interpretation

The results of the study are presented in table 1 to 5 to reflect the order in which the research question and hypotheses were raised and generated.

#### Research question 1

What is the level of awareness of Ogun State tertiary institution students on entrepreneurship education? The awareness level scores of the students were classified as low and high from the range of scores on the awareness scale questionnaire, the result is summarized in the table below.

**Table 1:** Student's Awareness/ Level of Entrepreneurship Education

| Level of awareness   | Frequency  | Percentage  |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Low (25-39)          | 144        | 48%         |
| High (40-56)         | 156        | 52%         |
| <b>Total (25-56)</b> | <b>300</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The result in table 1 shows that 156 (52%) undergraduate students possess high level of awareness, while 144 (48%) of the students possess low level of awareness of entrepreneurship education.

#### Research question 2

What type of relationship exists between the student's awareness level and entrepreneurial aspiration?

**Table 2:** Relationship between Level of Awareness of Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurship Aspirations.

| Undergraduate Students' | N   | Mean  | S.D. | Pearson (r) | Sig... |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|------|-------------|--------|
| Awareness Level Score   | 300 | 40.46 | 5.49 | 0.124*      | 0.32   |
| Aspiration Score        | 300 | 41.87 | 8.02 |             | p=0.05 |

\*Significant at 0.5 level.

The result in table 2 reveals a significant outcome ( $r=0.124$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), this implies that the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant. An  $r$ -value of 0.124 is an indication of a very low but positive relationship.

### Null Hypotheses

There is no significant difference between students level of awareness of entrepreneurship education across institutions in Ogun State.

**Table 3:** Difference among Students' Awareness Level According to Institution

| Institution      | N          | Mean         | S.D.        | df.        | T      | Sig.   |
|------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------|--------|
| OOU, Ago-Iwoye   | 100        | 39.33        | 5.49        |            | 49.778 | .000   |
| UNAAB, Abeokuta  | 100        | 44.24        | 4.29        | 2          |        | p=0.05 |
| MAPOLY, Abeokuta | 100        | 37.80        | 4.44        | 297        |        |        |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>300</b> | <b>40.46</b> | <b>5.49</b> | <b>299</b> |        |        |

The result in table 3 shows a significant outcome ( $f=49.778$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This means that the observed difference in the mean score of students' awareness level scale across institutions is statistically significant. In order to know the direction of the observed significant difference, a further test, (the Scheffe Multiple Comparisons Analysis) was conducted. The summary is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Scheffe Multiple Comparisons Test

| Institution      | Mean  | OOU | UNAAB | MAPOLY |
|------------------|-------|-----|-------|--------|
| OOU, Ago-Iwoye   | 39.33 |     | *     |        |
| UNAAB, Abeokuta  | 44.24 | *   |       | *      |
| MAPOLY, Abeokuta | 37.80 |     | *     |        |

This result shows the direction of the observed significant difference. The significant difference is between the pairs of the mean scores of UNAAB and OOU as well as between UNAAB and MAPOLY. The difference between the mean score of the pair OOU and MAPOLY is not statistically significant.

### Alternate Hypothesis

There is no significant gender difference in students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship education.

**Table 5:** Gender Difference in Students' Awareness Level

| Gender       | N          | Mean  | S.D  | df. | T     | Sig.   |
|--------------|------------|-------|------|-----|-------|--------|
| Male         | 140        | 40.14 | 5.40 | 298 | 0.926 | .355   |
| Female       | 160        | 40.73 | 5.57 |     |       | p=0.05 |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>300</b> |       |      |     |       |        |

The result in table 5 reveals a non-significant outcome ( $t=0.926$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), this means the observed difference between the level of awareness scores of male and female students is not significant. Hence, there is no significant gender difference in the students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship education.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

The major focus of this study was to determine the Awareness level of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial aspiration among Ogun State tertiary institution students. Arising from the findings of the study is a clear indication that 52% of Ogun State tertiary institutions students have high level of awareness on entrepreneurship education. This study corroborates the findings of Okon (1990) that unemployed youth and graduates are eager and willing to get information on entrepreneurship opportunities. This finding is similar to the result of the research carried out by the Tulgan (1991) in order to determine the current state of entrepreneurship education in the United State of America. It was found that many states have been aware of entrepreneurship education and 28 of the 37 (75% of the total state) territories report that entrepreneurship education is part of their state vocational activities.

Research question 2 also revealed a very low, positive significant relationship between the students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial aspiration. This finding also supports Okon (1990) that individual level of awareness of entrepreneurship education is closely related to entrepreneurial aspiration. This is because awareness of entrepreneurship education encourages a promote desire to set up new ventures. The results also agree with the finding of Gormon (1997). He said "with an explosive number of people in the field of entrepreneurship education and recent growth and development in the curricula and programs devoted to entrepreneurship, new venture creation has been remarkable". The study further discovered that students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship education differ significantly across institutions in Ogun State, FUNAAB students are found to possess the highest level of awareness followed by OOU and MAPOLY students respectively. This result is also in line with the discovery of the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (USA, 2003),

which reported that; there are differences in responses of students in a research conducted on awareness level of students on entrepreneurship education across institutions in the United States of America. The findings further stated that the type of institutions determined students' awareness level of Entrepreneurship Education.

The result from hypothesis two (2) revealed that there is no significant gender difference in students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship education. The finding also corroborated with what Cathy (2003) discovered in his research. He found that students had similar response according to gender in their selection of definition of the word entrepreneur and they also have the same awareness level of entrepreneurship education. However, the importance of small business and private enterprise sector in an economy is now widely recognized and the role of education and training in stimulating entrepreneurship is also appreciated worldwide. In recent years, countries have started promoting entrepreneurship education. Educators have tremendous task and opportunity to instill greater awareness of entrepreneur education and sense of responsibility in the society through their students. Business educators and professionals have evolved beyond the myth that entrepreneurs are born, not made and most of the empirical studies surveyed indicated that entrepreneurship can be taught, or at least encourage by entrepreneurship education, so the question of whether entrepreneurship can be taught is obsolete.

With the completion of Nigeria banking reform and the proposed mass sack of 33,000 federal civil servants, the level of unemployment is sure to rise with HND holders and State University graduates being the worst hit. In fact, unfolding events have shown that many graduates will remain unemployed. If these are the lot of Nigerian graduates then, there is need for self-employment.

Efforts should be made by teachers, school administrators, government at state and national level of work towards the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curricula of tertiary education, and move beyond ordinary awareness of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. The government should finance an Entrepreneurship Education Innovation Fund to provide the seed funds to innovative educational programs. A body should be formed to serve as national leader in advocating and promoting entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and be a member of the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (USA). The field of entrepreneurship education is booming around the world; we need to share the effective practices that are already working.

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