

Entrepreneurship Factors and Career Choice Among Undergraduates of the Centre for General Studies of University in Cross River State of Nigeria. Implications For Societal Development

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Abstract- *The study explored the relationship between entrepreneurship factors and career choices among university students in Cross River State, Nigeria, with implications for societal development. An ex-post-facto research design was adopted, focusing on 400-level students in two conventional public universities in Cross River State, with a total population of 2,134 students. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The instrument's face validity was established by consulting three experts in Educational Measurement and Evaluation, while its reliability was tested using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, yielding estimates ranging from 0.78 to 0.89. The Chi-Square Test of Independence was employed to analyse the data, revealing a significant association between entrepreneurship training facilities and career choices among university students. Additionally, entrepreneurship learning experiences had a substantial impact on students' career choices, particularly in areas such as realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional careers. The study's findings underscore the importance of providing quality entrepreneurship training facilities in public universities to enhance the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education. Based on these results, it is recommended that the government prioritise the provision of such facilities to facilitate the development of entrepreneurial skills among university students, ultimately contributing to societal development. By investing in entrepreneurship education, the government can empower students to make informed career choices and become valuable contributors to the economy*

Index Terms- *Entrepreneurship, Factors, Career Choice, Society & development*

I. INTRODUCTION

Career choice is a crucial aspect of an individual's life, reflecting their desires, hopes, and ambitions towards a particular field of study or profession (Kisilu, Kimani, & Kombo, 2012). It involves identifying one's strengths, interests, and personality traits to make informed decisions about future careers (Herr & Cramer, 2021). In today's competitive world, career guidance is essential to help individuals navigate numerous options and make choices that align with their knowledge, skills, and capabilities. Students, as the future of a country, require correct guidance, especially during their early academic stages.

Expert career guidance counsellors play a vital role in enabling students to understand and choose career options that match their abilities and interests. However, many students make decisions about occupations without fully understanding their own abilities, leading to potential mismatches between their characteristics and career requirements.

Entrepreneurship education can significantly influence career choices by developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for individuals to achieve their goals (Chuma, Pearl, & Chizoba, 2018). Effective entrepreneurship education can nurture entrepreneurial minds, helping university undergraduates develop a positive mindset towards their career choices.

According to Umunadi (2014), entrepreneurs are innovative minds that can identify and evaluate business opportunities, and education is expected to stimulate this entrepreneurial spirit in individuals. Entrepreneurship education prepares people to be responsible and enterprising individuals, helping them develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to achieve their goals. The relationship between entrepreneurship factors and career choice is complex and multifaceted. This study focuses on entrepreneurship factors and career choice among undergraduates of the Centre for General Studies at a university in Cross River State, Nigeria.

The research aims to explore the relationship between entrepreneurship factors, such as training facilities, learning experiences, and career choices, to provide insights into how entrepreneurship education can shape career decisions and contribute to societal development. By understanding the impact of entrepreneurship education on career choices, policymakers and educators can develop more effective programs to support students' career development. Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on entrepreneurship education and career choice, providing recommendations for improving entrepreneurship education programs and supporting students' career aspirations. By doing so, it aims to promote societal development and economic growth in Nigeria.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following theories were considered:

- The theory of entrepreneurship by Israel Kirzner (1973)

The theory of entrepreneurship, propounded by Israel Kirzner in 1973, utilises Austrian Economics to explain how entrepreneurs identify and capitalise on economic opportunities amidst uncertainty. A key assumption of this theory is that entrepreneurial alertness leads to the discovery of new information, ideas, and opportunities, enabling entrepreneurs to exploit these opportunities while mitigating ignorance and fear.

According to Kirzner, entrepreneurs seek profit by detecting and eliminating arbitrage opportunities, thereby facilitating the alignment of supply and demand for goods. Alertness is considered a fundamental quality of entrepreneurs, enabling them to perceive new economic opportunities that others may overlook. This theory is relevant to the study of entrepreneurship education, as it highlights the importance of creating an environment that fosters mental alertness and the discovery of business opportunities. By providing the necessary facilities and support, administrators can encourage students to develop the alertness needed to identify and pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

The theory's relevance to this study lies in its emphasis on the need for students to develop foresight and market awareness before embarking on business ventures. By imparting the skills and knowledge necessary for entrepreneurial success, educators can help students make informed decisions and navigate the challenges of entrepreneurship. Ultimately, Kirzner's theory underscores the importance of alertness and foresight in entrepreneurial success, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to support entrepreneurship education and development.

- Skill Learning Theory by Alexandra Romiszowski

The Skill Learning Theory, developed by Alexandra Romiszowski in 1981, focuses on the development of skills along a continuum of complexity, ranging from reproductive to productive dimensions. Reproductive skills involve applying standard procedures or automated processes, such as psychomotor skills like typing or changing gears. In contrast, productive skills require the application of principles and strategies, including cognitive skills like speaking and writing grammatically correct sentences. Romiszowski's theory highlights the significance of understanding the types of responses involved in skills, categorising them as closed or open responses. Closed responses involve routine actions, while open responses require dynamic decision-making and adaptation to environmental stimuli. The skills cycle involves perceiving stimuli, recalling prerequisites, planning

behaviour, and exhibiting responses, which are then evaluated and refined.

This theory is relevant to career choice among university undergraduates, as it emphasises the development of cognitive skills and entrepreneurial abilities that enhance employability. The four stages of skill learning are perception, decision, action, and evaluation—provide a framework for understanding the learning experiences and assessment methods that can inform career choices. By applying Romiszowski's Skill Learning Theory, this study explores how university undergraduates can develop the skills necessary for entrepreneurial career choices, focusing on the cognitive and productive dimensions of skill development. The theory offers valuable insights into the design of instructional strategies and assessment methods that foster career development and entrepreneurial skills among university students.

Statement of the problem

Career choice has become a pressing concern in academic environments, particularly in Nigeria, where many students pursue courses without considering their interests, marketability, or employability. This often leads to dissatisfaction and low productivity in their future careers. The exploration stage, which coincides with adolescence, is a critical period for career development. However, most secondary school students lack adequate readiness for the world of work due to insufficient orientation and preparation. Many students are not vocationally mature when they leave school, leading to frustration and potential dropout. There is often a discrepancy between their early ambitions and actual career accomplishments. Entrepreneurship education can play a vital role in equipping students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to succeed in their chosen careers. By acquiring relevant skills, students can develop entrepreneurial intentions and make informed career choices. Entrepreneurship education fosters innovation and creativity, contributing to economic growth and youth empowerment. It can also help reduce unemployment rates by equipping students with the skills and confidence to start their own ventures. This study investigates entrepreneurship factors and career choice among undergraduates of the Centre for General Studies at a university in Cross

River State, Nigeria, with implications for societal development.

• Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of entrepreneurship factors and career choice among undergraduates of the Centre for General Studies of the University in Cross River State, Nigeria. Implications for Societal Development. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine how entrepreneurship training facilities influence career choice among university undergraduates in terms of realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional.
2. Determine how entrepreneurship learning experiences influence career choice among university undergraduates

Research questions

The study seeks to answer two key questions:

1. To what extent do entrepreneurship training facilities influence career choice among university undergraduates?
2. To what extent do entrepreneurship learning experiences influence career choice among university undergraduates?

Statement of hypotheses

The study tests two null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant influence of entrepreneurship training facilities on career choice among university undergraduates.
2. There is no significant influence of entrepreneurship learning experiences on career choice among university undergraduates.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the paper focuses on reviewing theoretical and empirical literature related to the study, organised under specific subheadings for clarity and coherence.

Entrepreneurship training facilities and career choice
The availability and quality of facilities play a crucial role in the effectiveness of educational programs,

including entrepreneurship education. Facilities such as classrooms, libraries, workshops, laboratories, and equipment are essential for providing students with hands-on experiences and practical skills. Studies have shown that inadequate facilities can hinder the implementation of entrepreneurship education programs.

Research by Nwankwo and Egboka (2015) found that learning facilities for entrepreneurship education in secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria, were grossly inadequate. The study recommended that the government improve funding to provide adequate facilities and repair existing ones. Similarly, Anaele, Adelakum, and Dem (2014) identified the provision of textbooks, equipped workshops and laboratories, adequate power supply, and improved funding as key strategies for revitalising entrepreneurship education in technical and vocational education and training. These studies highlight the importance of facilities in entrepreneurship education and the need for adequate funding and resources to support the development of practical skills and career choices among students.

Entrepreneurship Learning Experience and Career Choice

Learning experiences refer to activities or interactions that enhance learning, whether they occur in a classroom or outside of school. These experiences can lead to changes in thinking, understanding, or behaviour and are essential for developing skills and knowledge. Research has shown that learning experiences can be a significant predictor of students' entrepreneurial behaviour and skills development.

Studies by Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) found that learning experiences, among other teacher education curriculum components, were significant predictors of students' entrepreneurial behaviour in Colleges of Education. However, Bucus (2018) found no significant influence of curriculum learning experiences on students' entrepreneurial skills development in a study of undergraduate students in Ghana. These findings highlight the importance of considering the role of learning experiences in entrepreneurship education and the need for further research to understand their impact on students' skills development and entrepreneurial behaviour.

IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Research design

The research design for this study was the ex-post-facto design, which Kerlinger (1986) cited in Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004) defined as a systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control of the independent variables because their manipulation has already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable. Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct variation of independent and dependent variables.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised all four hundred level students in the two conventional public universities in Cross River State, which include University of Calabar and University of Cross River State, totalling 2134 (Academic Planning Unit & Management Information System, 2022/2023 of the respective Universities). However, the choice of the final students will be based on the assumption that they are the most mature, competent and experienced, in which qualitative information can be derived.

Sampling technique

Stratified random sampling was adopted for the study. Stratification was based on the institution's faculties as well as gender (male and female). The essence of choosing stratified random sampling was to make room for the heterogeneous characteristics of the population

Sample

The sample for this study comprised 412 respondents drawn from all the public universities in the study area.

Validity of the instrument

Face validity was employed to ascertain the way questionnaire items appear to address the relevant content of the subject area of interest. Consequently, to ascertain the face validity of the instrument, it was given to three (3) specialists in Educational Measurement and Evaluation and general studies units of Cross River State university. This was to ensure that the items measured what they were intended to measure.

Reliability of the Instrument

To establish the reliability of the instrument, the researcher in the first instance administered the instrument to forty (40) students from three equivalent schools outside the study area. The Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used, which gave the reliability estimates of .72 to .79.

Procedure for Data Analysis

In this section, each hypothesis of the study is re-stated in a null form, independent and dependent variables are identified and appropriate statistical techniques for testing the hypotheses are also stated. The study adopted the chi-square test of independence. The Chi-Square Test of Independence determines whether there is an association between categorical variables.

Hypothesis one

There is no significant influence of entrepreneurship facilities on the job creation.

Independent variable: Entrepreneurship education facilities

Dependent variable: Job creation potentials.

Statistical Analysis Technique: Chi-square statistic

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of learning experiences on the job creation.

Independent variable: Learning Experiences

Dependent variable: Job creation potentials

Statistical Analysis Technique: Chi-square statistic

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Hypothesis-by-hypothesis presentation of results

Hypothesis one

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of entrepreneurship training facilities on career choice among university undergraduates. To test this hypothesis, an independent Chi-square (X^2) test was employed, treating entrepreneurship training facilities as the independent variable and career choice as the dependent variable. The Chi-square test was chosen because both variables are categorical, allowing for independent measurement. The results are presented in Table 1. The Chi-square test results revealed:

- X^2 value: 167.827
- Degrees of freedom (df): 10
- p-value: .000
- Critical X^2 value at .05 probability level: 25.791

Since the p-value (.000) is less than the chosen alpha level (.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurship training facilities and career choice among university undergraduates.

TABLE 1
Summary of Chi square analysis on the influence of entrepreneurship facilities and career choice

Levels of entrepreneurship facilities		Realis.	Invest.	Artistic.	Social	Enterp.	Conv.	Total	N	X^2 -value	df	p-value
High	Observed Count	39	31	31	10	11	15	137				
	Expected Count	21.5	15.0	15.4	21.2	22.5	41.3	137.0				
Moderate	Observed Count	24	13	5	23	22	22	109				

	Expected Count	17.1	12.0	12.2	16.9	17.9	32.9	109.0	401	167.827	10	.000
Low	Observed Count	0	0	9	29	33	84	155				
	Expected Count	24.4	17.0	17.4	24.0	25.5	46.8	155.0				
Total	Observed Count	63	44	45	62	66	121	401				
	Expected Count	63.0	44.0	45.0	62.0	66.0	121.0	401.0				

Hypothesis two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of entrepreneurship learning experiences on career choice among university undergraduates in terms of realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional careers. To test this hypothesis, an independent Chi-square (X^2) test was employed, with entrepreneurship learning experiences as the independent variable and career choice as the dependent variable. The Chi-square test was chosen because both variables are categorical, allowing for independent measurement. The results are presented in Table 2. The Chi-square test results revealed:

Since the p-value (.006) is less than the chosen alpha level (.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurship learning experiences and career choice among university undergraduates in terms of realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional careers.

Conclusion: There is a significant influence of entrepreneurship learning experiences on career choice among university undergraduates.

X^2 value: 43.162

Degrees of freedom (df): 10

p-value: .006

Critical X^2 value at .05 probability level: 21.360 (not directly relevant to decision since p-value is used for decision-making)

TABLE 2

Summary of Chi square analysis on the influence entrepreneurship learning experiences and career choice

Levels of entrepreneurship learning experiences		Realistic	Investigative	Artistic	Social	Enterprising	Conventional	Total	n	X^2 -value	df	p-value
High	Observed Count	47	17	16	19	27	11	137				
	Expected Count	33.8	18.1	17.4	17.4	24.6	25.6	137.0				
Moderate	Observed Count	37	13	13	12	15	19	109				

	Expected Count	26.9	14.4	13.9	13.9	19.6	20.4	109.0	401	43.162	10	.000
Low	Observed Count	15	23	22	20	30	45	155				
	Expected Count	38.3	20.5	19.7	19.7	27.8	29.0	155.0				
Total	Observed Count	99	53	51	51	72	75	401				
	Expected Count	99.0	53.0	51.0	51.0	72.0	75.0	401.0				

Summary of results

The study's findings revealed two key results:

Entrepreneurship Training Facilities:

There is a significant influence of entrepreneurship training facilities on career choice among university undergraduates in terms of realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional careers.

Entrepreneurship Learning Experiences:

There is a significant influence of entrepreneurship learning experiences on career choice among university undergraduates in terms of realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional careers.

Discussion of Findings

The study's findings on entrepreneurship training facilities and learning experiences are consistent with previous research:

Entrepreneurship Training Facilities:

The study found a significant association between entrepreneurship training facilities and career choice among university undergraduates. This finding aligns with Nwankwo and Egboka (2015), who highlighted the inadequacy of learning facilities for entrepreneurship education. It also supports Anaele, Adelakum, and Dem's (2014) study, which emphasised the importance of equipped workshops, laboratories, and adequate power supply for effective entrepreneurship education.

Learning Experiences:

The study found a significant association between learning experiences and career choice among university undergraduates. This finding is consistent with Adeyemi and Adeyemi's (2014) study, which identified learning experiences as a significant predictor of students' entrepreneurial behaviour. However, the finding contrasts with Bucus's (2018) study, which found no significant influence of curriculum learning experiences on students' entrepreneurial skills development.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that entrepreneurship education significantly influences students' career choices, increasing their aspirations for entrepreneurial careers. To enhance this impact, it is recommended that entrepreneurship courses be made more practical and introduced at lower levels of study. This would allow undergraduates to better understand and appreciate entrepreneurship education. The National University Commission's (NUC) initiative to integrate entrepreneurship education into university curricula is a step in the right direction, promoting a positive orientation towards entrepreneurship among students. This initiative is expected to bridge the gap between traditional job-seeking mindsets and entrepreneurial career paths, ultimately fostering a new generation of job creators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, two key recommendations are proposed:

- i. Provision of Quality Entrepreneurship Training Facilities: The government should provide adequate and quality entrepreneurship training facilities in public universities to enhance the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education.
- ii. Motivation for Entrepreneurship Learning Experiences: There should be motivation for both teaching and learning of entrepreneurship experiences to foster career choice among university undergraduates. This would help students develop a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship careers, improve their awareness of career options, and minimise ignorance in career choice.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT

In sociological development, development has far-reaching implications for societal progress, influencing various aspects such as economic stability and growth, social cohesion and inclusivity, access to essential services and environmental sustainability. Effective development can lead to: inclusive growth and improved public services, job creation and opportunities, and increased citizen participation in decision-making. However, a sole focus on economic growth can result in increased inequality, social unrest, and environmental degradation. Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in societal development by driving job creation and innovation, boosting economic growth and competitiveness, improving quality of life and reducing poverty, encouraging resource mobilisation and fairer income distribution and facilitating technology transfer. To maximise benefits and mitigate harm, responsible practices and supportive policies are necessary to address potential negative consequences, such as environmental degradation and worker exploitation.

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