

## **Undergraduate Students' Creativity And Entrepreneurial Intention: A Panacea for Youth Unemployment**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated undergraduates' level of creativity and entrepreneurial Intention as a panacea for youth unemployment. The study used descriptive survey research design. Five hundred students were sampled using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data was collected using Students' level of entrepreneurial intention questionnaire and student's level of creativity questionnaire. Analysis was done using descriptive statistics, t-test of significance and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The results revealed that undergraduates have low entrepreneurial intention and low level of creativity. Creativity was found to have a positive relationship with Entrepreneurial intention. No significant difference was found between undergraduate students' entrepreneurial intention or level of creativity according to gender. The study recommends that undergraduates should be re-orientated on the need to be self-employed instead of seeking white collar jobs. Also, teachers of entrepreneurship should make their courses more practically-oriented.

**Key Words:** Creativity, Entrepreneurial Intention, Gender, Unemployment, Undergraduates

### **Introduction**

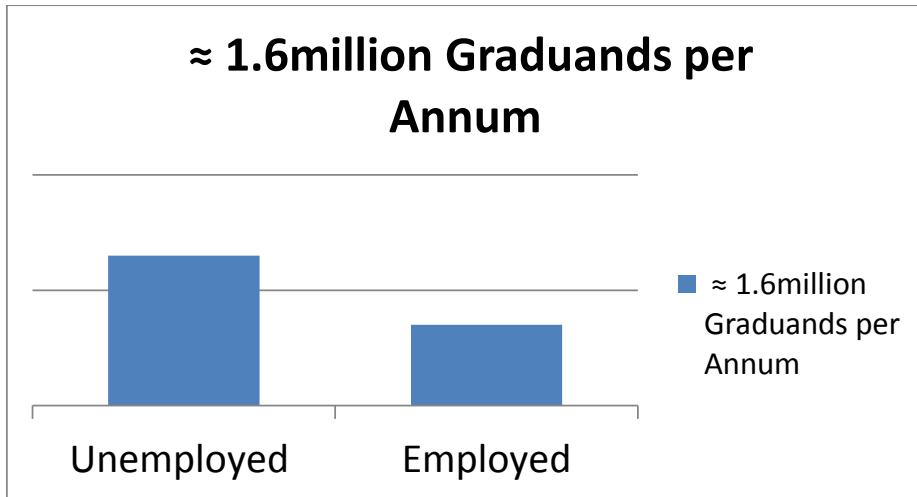
The need of a society or nation at one point or another determines the type of education to adopt. If the primary goal of any nation is economic development, then the education of its citizens should be tailored towards the economic empowerment of its citizens to suit the needs of the society. Nigeria as a developing nation is plagued with numerous challenges which its educational system is yet to resolve, part of these include insecurity, bunkering, willful vandalization of pipelines, armed robbery, kidnapping, bribery and corruption, examination malpractice, terrorism, high rate of unemployment. Unfortunately, of all these challenges, none seems as persistent and rapidly rising as the high rate of unemployment among Nigerian graduates. In fact, it can be said that high rate of unemployment is the cause of most of the national challenges, as there is a popular saying that 'an idle hand is the devil's workshop'.

Unfortunately, there has been a consistent increase in the unemployment rate in Nigeria over the years. Federal of Bureau of Statistics (2008) reported that Nigeria has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the world (60-65%). According to the report, the available estimate shows that about 1. 6 million persons, mostly young adults, graduate annually from our higher institutions of learning out of which 60-65% of them are not employed (See figure I).

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Source: Federal of Bureau of Statistics (2008)

**Figure 1.** Graphical illustration of grandaunts, employed and unemployed

In April 2009, the Director of the National Planning Commission of Nigeria put the rate of youth unemployment in the country at between 60% and 70% (World Bank). Only 10% of graduates can be absorbed in the Nigerian Labour Market (Oli, 2010). In the same vein, National Bureau of Statistics (2011) in its analysis reported increase in rate of unemployment from 12.6% in 2002 to 23.9% in 2011. Sadly, most of these unemployed are young and energetic adults that could have contributed to the development of the nation if they were to be gainfully employed in the private or public sector. As a result, knowledge acquired from school gradually fades away when such knowledge is not put into use for self-empowerment or the development of the country, consequently poverty pervades among the Nigerian youths. This gives rise to the question of where lies the use of the knowledge acquired in school especially in the area of entrepreneurship education. Nigeria, like other developing nations where government is heavily relied upon as the sole provider of the means of production, has not been able to facilitate economic self-dependency culture among its large population of youths. Consequently, youth restiveness coupled with high incidences of criminality alongside high poverty levels have resulted over time. The resultant decline in the standards of living is a pointer to the fact that the government alone cannot provide jobs for all.

Abubakar, Salwa and Amina (2014) observed that the oil boom in Nigeria has affected people's attitude to work, and the tendency of most Nigerians is to avoid investments that require special expertise and creativity. Added to this, the school curriculum was not initially geared towards equipping students with skills required for self-employment (Kolawole & Omolayo, 2006). However, economic self-reliance re-

mains a viable option in addressing these associated problems.

Economic self-reliance is well grounded in Entrepreneurship, this starts from having entrepreneurial intention, which is lacking among Nigerian graduates and students (Nkechi & Enejo, 2014). Entrepreneurship as a concept is not new to Africa, it is a concept that has been with known to Africans for a long time, the only difference is nomenclature (Nkechi & Enejo, 2014). However, over time, as a result of the type of education received from the missionaries which emphasis on getting employed than creating employment, the orientation of Nigerians has changed and everybody expects a government job. Like many other concepts, entrepreneurship has no single universally acceptable definition, but shares similar features among many definitions. Williams (2011) conceives it as a process where individuals seek to use their talents, efforts and resources to create and/or grow ventures that capitalize on business opportunities and thereby create value.

Generally, entrepreneurship is agreed by scholars to be a key driver of any economic development. Education is an essential ingredient for entrepreneurship development particularly in a place where the spirit and culture of self-economic dependence is very minimal, such as Nigeria. It is said to be an important determinant of selection into entrepreneurship, formation of new venture and entrepreneurial success (Dickson et al., 2008; Nwachukwu & Nwamuo, 2010; Baba, 2013). Nafukho (2002) stated that entrepreneurship education is a catalyst for business formation that teaches students how to start and run their own business, play the stock market roles, and balance personal life and more. The inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curricula of tertiary institutions will serve the students in experiencing and understanding what is involved in setting up a business (David, 2001). When entrepreneurship education is effective, students are able to identify opportunities and enhance trainees' creativity, innovative abilities, beliefs and recombination skills (Sofoluwe, 2007; Fuduric, 2008). Entrepreneurship education has received much interest in recent times probably because of the growing rate of unemployment and poverty pervading the global economies (Asikhia & Williams, 2012). Those who engage in entrepreneurial activities are referred to as entrepreneurs.

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. Okpara (2000) argues that an entrepreneur is a human bulldozer, who can convert a stumbling block into a stepping stone. He posits that an entrepreneur is a creative and aggressive innovator who promotes the necessary relationships required for the new business to come into existence.

Creativity is psychological concept that plays an important role in entrepreneurial development. Creativity, according Olowo (2010), is the ability to discover new ideas that are surprising, yet intelligible. Okpara (2007) stresses that creativity is the act of seeing things that everyone sees while making connections that no one else has made.

Creativity involves departure from existing facts and methods to finding new ways, inventing answers and seeing unexpected solutions. It is obvious that creativity does not have a general definition as scholars defined it from their different perspectives. There is the belief in the myth that creative skill comes naturally and creative works comes with ease (Gytuse et. al., 2014). Conversely, Onanuga (2014) pointed out that one of the problems of the Nigerian educational system is that students are not taught in a way that will enhance creative thinking and the assessment procedure does not reward creativity. Hence creativity be taught and learnt.

The role of gender in creativity has been explored to determine not only if males and females differ in terms of creative ability (potential) or output (product), but also what factors contribute to the likely differences and whether these manifest differentially over the course of the lifetime, as suggested by recent studies (Hong & Milgram 2010; Cheung & Lau 2010; Stoltzfus et al. 2011; He & Wong 2011; Bender et al. 2013; Karwowski et al. 2013; Sayed & Mohamed, 2013) however literature is inconclusive on the issue of gender and creativity.

Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa. Other populous nations of the world such as America and China have considerably used their population to foster development. Entrepreneurship remains one of the tools of economic development in America while Technological creativity has helped China to reach development. This cannot be said for Nigeria, in spite of its population and manpower. One can say Nigeria has not been able to take full advantages of its large population by emphasizing self-independence skills in its youth. This has led to civil disobedience, youth violence, willful vandalism, robbery among other vices, thereby identifying the country among the poor countries of the world. To fill the gap created by this apparent problem among the youth of Nigeria in terms of entrepreneurship intention and level of creativity was the primary aim of this study. The study also investigated the influence of gender and level of study on the undergraduate students' entrepreneurial intention and level of creativity. To these aims, the following research questions and hypotheses have been formulated:

### **Research questions**

1. What is the level of undergraduate student's entrepreneurial intention?
2. What is the level of creativity of the undergraduate students?
3. What type of relationship exists between undergraduate students' creativity and their entrepreneurial intention scores?
4. What percentage of undergraduate students who are presently entrepreneurs?

### **Hypotheses**

H01: There is no significant difference between the entrepreneurial intention scores of the selected male and female undergraduate students.

H02. There is no significant difference between the creativity scores of the selected male and female undergraduate students.

### **Methodology**

The study adopts a descriptive survey research design. The population for this study consists of all the students of Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ijebu Ode (TASUED) who are full-time students and who receive education on the main campus. A total of 500 (female=250; male=250) respondents participated in this study. Students are in natural strata by gender. Simple random sampling was used to select 250 students from each stratum to make the 500 respondents from the 600 questionnaires distributed. Two major instruments were used for the purpose of data collection. Students' Level of Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (SLEIQ), adapted from Kelvin (2005) who used the instrument to measure students' level of entrepreneurial intention. Three items were found not applicable from the list of 23 items because they were related to the college environment where it was used, hence were removed, while another three were inserted to fit into the context of Nigerian undergraduate students. SLEIQ is a four points Likert scale questionnaire. The instrument contains 23 items, out of which 19 are positively worded and 4 are negatively worded. Students were asked to indicate their option by ticking any of Much Like Me, Like Me, Unlike Me and Never Like Me.

Students Level of Creativity Questionnaire (SLCQ) is adapted from by Kumar & Holman (1997) who used the instrument to measure student's creativity. Their instrument has 23 based on relevance to student's level of creativity. SLCQ is a four point Likert scale. All the items on the questionnaire are positively worded. The instrument is capable of measuring student's level of creativity. Students were asked to indicate their option by ticking any of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

### **Validation of the instruments**

The SLEIQ was given to a senior lecturer in the department of Business Administration while the SLCQ was given to a senior lecturer in the department of educational psychology for perusal and critique to ensure its content validity. The observation and corrections made were used to amend the instruments. The instruments were trial tested on 40 undergraduate students of Olabisi Onabanjo University, specifically students from the Faculty of Education. The result from the trial test was used to obtain a Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient of .78 for SLEIQ, and .76 for SLCQ.

After seeking permission from the Student Affairs office of the school, data collection procedure spanned eight working days with the help of four Research Assistants who were lectures in the school (One from each college). First, the researcher visited the school to find out where and when general classes are held. With the help of the Research Assistants, the questionnaires were administered on the respondents. The re-

searcher and his assistants provided necessary information to some respondents. After completion of the questionnaires, it was retrieved and collated to avoid misplacement. The collected data was analyzed using Descriptive and Inferential statistics. Specifically, descriptive statistics used are percentages, charts and mean scores. Inferential statistics used are Independent t-test of significance and Pearson Moment correlation.

## Results

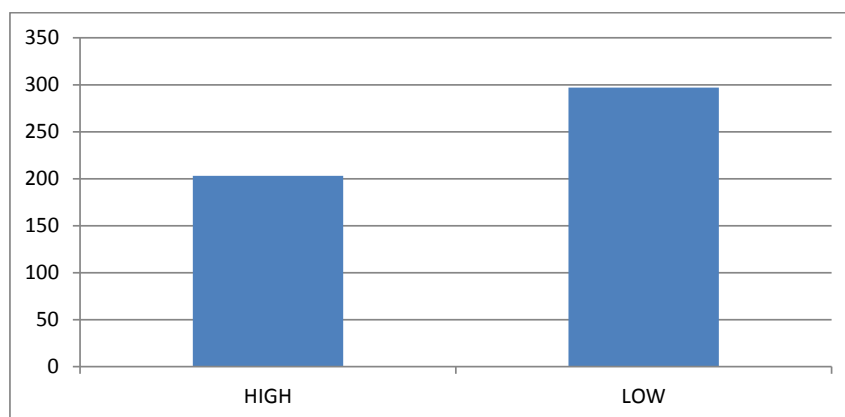
The result the first question of the research which aimed to ascertain the level of undergraduate students' entrepreneurial intention is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of respondents' level of Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurial Intention level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	203	40.4
Low	297	59.6
Total	500	100

Source: Field Survey

The results in Table 1 indicate that 203 (40.4%) of undergraduate students responded in favor of high Entrepreneurial Intention, while 297 (59.6%) of the undergraduate students responded in favor of low Entrepreneurial Intention. The mean score of 63 which was obtained from the students response to SLEIQ was taken as benchmark, students who scored below the mean score were recorded as low while students with the mean score and above were recorded to have high Entrepreneurial intention. Hence, undergraduate students' level Entrepreneurial Intention is low.



Source: Field Survey

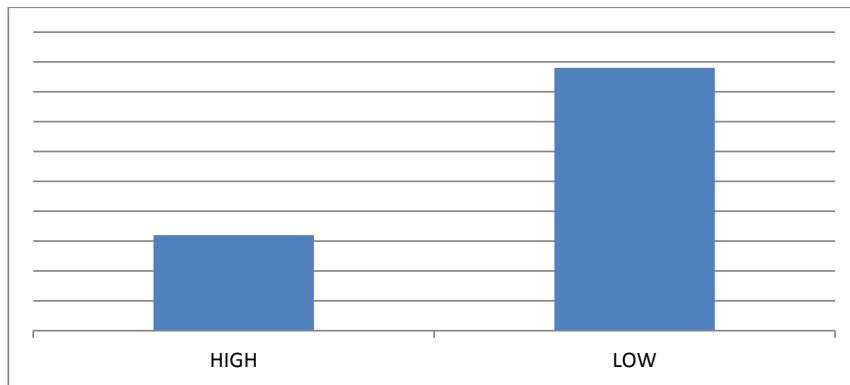
**Figure 2.** Chart showing levels of Entrepreneurial Intention

Research question two which sought to determine the level of creativity of the undergraduate students was analyzed in Table 2, Figure 3.

**Table 2.** Distribution of respondents' level of Creativity

Creativity level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	236	47.8
Low	264	52.2
Total	500	100

Source: Field survey



Source: Field Survey

**Figure 3.** Chart showing respondents' level of creativity

The results in Table 2 show that 236 (47.8%) of undergraduate students responded in favor of high level creativity, while 264 (52%) of the undergraduate students responded in favor of low level of creativity. The mean score of 45 which was obtained from the students' response to SLCQ was taken as a benchmark, students who scored below the means score were recorded as low while students with the mean score and above were recorded to have high level of creativity Hence, undergraduate students' have low level of creativity.

Research question three was analyzed by PPMC show the type of relationship between the student's level of creativity and entrepreneurial intention. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Relationship between students' creativity and Entrepreneurial intention

Students	N	M	SD	(r)	SIG
Creativity	500	44.54	14.353	.322	.003
Entrepreneurial intention	500	62.82	11.612		

\*Significant at 0.5 level

The results revealed a significant outcome ( $r=.322, p<0.05$ ), this implies that there is a positive relationship between the two variables (student creativity and Entrepreneurial intention) and the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant. An  $r$  =value of .322 is an indication of low positive relationship. The results indicate that there is positive low level of relationship between undergraduate students' creativity and entrepreneurial intention scores.

Research question four, which sought the proportion of undergraduates' who are presently entrepreneurs was analyzed using mean and simple percentage. The results in Table 4 show that 33(7%) of the respondents are entrepreneurs, while the remaining 467 (93%) are non-entrepreneurs who do not support in the payment of their schools.

**Table 4.** Distribution of respondents who are Entrepreneurs

Students	Frequency	%
Entrepreneurs	33	7
Non	467	93
Total	500	100

Those who support their school fees by engaging in novel means of generating income were considered entrepreneurs, while those who did not support in the payment were regarded as nil. Hence, only 33(7%) of the undergraduate students are Entrepreneurs.

### Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference between the entrepreneurial intention scores of the selected male and female undergraduate students.

The result in Table 5 revealed a non-significant outcome ( $t=.323, p>0.05$ ).



**Table 5.** Difference in Entrepreneurial intention male and female undergraduate students

Gender	N	M	SD	df.	t	Sig. of t
Male	250	62.99	11.58	498	.323	.260
Female	250	62.65	11.66			
			2			P=0.05

This implied that the observed difference between male and female undergraduate students entrepreneurial intention is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students Entrepreneurial Intention is hereby not rejected.

### Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference between creativity scores of the selected male and female undergraduate students. The result in Table 6 revealed a non-significant outcome ( $t=1.548$ ,  $p>0.05$ ).

**Table 6.** Difference in entrepreneurial intention based on Gender

Gender	N	M	SD	df.	t	P
Male	250	43.54	14.168	498	1.548	.668
Female	250	45.53	14.496			
						P=0.05

This implied that the observed difference between male and female undergraduate students' creativity scores is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students level of creativity scores is retained

### Discussion of findings

The study shows that undergraduate students have a low level of entrepreneurial intention. This finding is unexpected, considering the fact that students should have been exposed to entrepreneurial courses from 100 level. The expectation is that entrepreneurship education will impact positively on the orientation of the undergraduate

students. One of the plausible reasons for this finding could be that undergraduate students have a negative perception of being an entrepreneur. This possibly explains why there are thousands of unemployed graduates. Since they were not able to form positive entrepreneurial intention from school, they may probably continue in that mindset if nothing is done to change the situation, hence they remain unemployed and continue to search for white collar job. Expectedly entrepreneurship education could shape their intentions. Kakkonen (2010) in his research finding revealed that taking entrepreneurship education course has significantly positive effects on entrepreneurial career choice of students.

The findings also revealed that undergraduate students have a low level of creativity. The finding supported the report of Onanuga (2014) who pointed out that one of the problems of the Nigerian educational system is that students are not taught in a way that will enhanced creative thinking and the assessment procedure does not reward creativity. Furthermore, the study found positive relationship between students' creativity and Entrepreneurial intention scores. This is because ability to come out with something new and acceptable to the market requires good level of entrepreneurship. Hence those who are creative are most likely to have entrepreneurial intention since they can bring in marketable ideals to the market. This finding corroborated the claim of Lee, Florida and Acs, (2004), who found relationship connected entrepreneurship with creativity as the first consists of a form of the second and can be called business or entrepreneurial creativity because some new businesses are original and useful. In addition, the study revealed that only 33 (7%) of the 500 selected undergraduate students are Entrepreneurs. This could be as a result of different factors such as social needs, family background that have guided them to becoming an entrepreneur. Some may have become an entrepreneur because they need to support their school fees payment.

Furthermore, no significant difference was found between male and female undergraduate students entrepreneurial intention. This implied that the entrepreneurial intention of male and female undergraduate students does not differ. This could be as a result of the fact that same instruction was given to the students in the class. Also, the increasing level of awareness and campaign for gender equality could have been responsible for this outcome. This is contrary to the finding of Yordanona and Tarazon (2010) which showed that women showed lack of entrepreneurial intent. It is also at variance with the report Joseph, Sylvanus and Joseph (2013) who found out that female students have innate entrepreneurship tendencies and intentions than their male counterparts. More so, no significant difference was found between male and female undergraduate students' creativity scores. This finding is peculiar in the sense that it oppose the notion of male been more creative than females. This finding could have been so because the male and female undergraduate students are nurtured under the same environment and probably under the same academic situation. This further implies no gender superiority in terms of creativity among undergraduates. This con-

firmed the studies that revealed no gender difference between males and female's creativity (Baer et al., 2008; Charyton & Snelbecker, 2007). However, it is at variance with the report of Hoff, (2005), Matud, Rodríguez and Grande (2007) who found no gender differences in creative performance.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study has provided meaningful insight into the entrepreneurial intention level and level of creativity of undergraduate students. The moderating role of gender of the respondents was also considered. The finding submitted that the entrepreneurial intention of the undergraduate students is rather low which could have been responsible for increasing high rate of unemployment among the teeming graduate youths yearly. The importance of creativity cannot be over emphasized; it became clear that creativity has an enormous contribution to entrepreneurship. Since there is a positive correlation between creativity and entrepreneurial intention, one will expect that the more creative an undergraduate is, the higher his/her entrepreneurial intention level will be. The study however found that undergraduate students have low level of creativity which could also be plausible reason why students finds it difficult to come up with new ideas. Furthermore, the assumption that males are better entrepreneurs was found to be a negative report according to this finding. This is right step in the right direction since having entrepreneurial intention has nothing to do with gender. Today we have female entrepreneurs all around the world controlling big firms, besides poverty that is the outcome of unemployment is not gender specific. Lastly moderating impact of level of study was not significant on the entrepreneurial intention on the undergraduate students; however, it is significant on the level of creativity of the undergraduate students.

In line with the findings of this study it is recommended entrepreneurship education should be not only be taught and examined at the cognitive level only, it should be extended to the affective and the psychomotor domain. Also, students should also be given room to express their entrepreneurial intention and encouraged to become employer of labor against the culture of training them to become an employee. Moreover, the government has the responsibility of creating an enabling environment to stimulate entrepreneurial intention in young would-be entrepreneurs.

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