

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# An Exploration of the effectiveness of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions and its impacts on Students' Entrepreneurial Career Intentions at Federal Polytechnic Ekowe

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Entrepreneurship education as an influencer of graduate entrepreneurial intention is gaining massive attention among practitioners, policy makers and academics across the globe. The proliferation of entrepreneurship courses in universities around the world is evident of this wide acceptance of entrepreneurship education as a strategy for graduate entrepreneurship. The purpose of this research paper is to ascertain the impact entrepreneurship education has on students' entrepreneurial career intentions. The paper includes a review of literature in entrepreneurship education (EE) and entrepreneurial intention (EI) to gain background knowledge. This research is a qualitative, interpretive phenomenological study and relies on narrative as a means of knowing, and as a form of communication. The scope of the study was year one students at the Federal Polytechnic of Oil & Gas Ekowe in the departments of Computer Science, Science Laboratory Technology and Statistics. The questionnaire was designed in a semi-structured way and distributed to students to be returned after 7 days to allow for proper articulation of narratives. A total of 42 students participated in the interview and 42 returned. 28.57% representing 12 students showed intention to start a business, 40.48% (17 students) desire to get a job after graduation while 13 students (30.95%) are unsure what they want to do after graduation. The results indicate that EE does not have any significant effect on students' entrepreneurial career intention but rather revealed that other factors like age, prior experience and parent's status could be huge influencers of graduate entrepreneurial career intentions. The originality of this research is that narratives and storytelling were used during data collection. This is not the common method adopted in entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention research.

**Keywords:** Effectiveness, Entrepreneurial Career Intention, Entrepreneurship Education, Exploration, Tertiary Institution

## Introduction

Entrepreneurship education is continually gaining massive interest among academics, policy makers and business professionals. It is opined that entrepreneurial engagement is the 21st strategy for economic growth and development of any nation (Nelson & Johnson, 1997; Afolabi, 2015; Sule, 2015; Akpan, Effiong & Ele, 2012). As a result, the Federal Ministry of Education through the NUC, NBTE and NCCE has made entrepreneurship education compulsory for every student in Nigeria tertiary institutions with the hope that it will spur graduate business startups (Fems, 2016). However, for over ten years of this policy implementation, Nigerian graduates still wallow in the vortex of unemployment and unrestrained job seeking as opposed to job creation (Fems, Poazi & Opigo, 2017).

The question of what influence graduates entrepreneurial pursuits as a career path is a fascinating subject, and investigating the role entrepreneurship education (EE) plays in graduate entrepreneurial intentions, behaviour and engagement is attracting increased interest amongst academics, policy makers and even industry professionals (Izedonmi & Okafor, 2010; Koe, Sa'ari, Majid & Ismail, 2012). The subject of EE and entrepreneurship intention (EI: Entrepreneurial Intention refers to the extent at which an individual is interested at becoming an entrepreneur under differing conditions) has received extensive investigation by researchers in diverse fields and from different perspectives (Gerba, 2012; Omuvwie, 2013; Malebana & Swanepoel, 2015; Nabi & Holden, 2008; Støren, 2014). These different perspectives include self-efficacy, personality traits, culture, age, family status, education and training, creative potential, need for achievement etc. (Frank, Korunka, Lueger & Mugler, 2005; Hamidi, Wennberg & Berglund 2008). Due to its perceived importance to economic growth and development by way of wealth creation, value addition and employment generation, entrepreneurship is considered a vital part of industrialization (Fems, 2016; Fems, Onu & Poazi, 2016). Academics have focused on the study of EE as the major influencer of EI because it is construed as an effective strategy in providing individuals with the ability to recognize commercial opportunities and the knowledge, skillsets and attitudes to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Fems, Poazi & Opigo, 2017). Intention as is studied by psychologists and other professionals has been proven to be the best predictor of future behaviour using the theory of planned behaviour (Krueger, Reilly & Casrud 2000; Krueger 2005). Although intention is important to predict future action, it does not always translate into action and so intention alone is not a good barometer to measure the impact of entrepreneurship education.

Notwithstanding, little attention has been given to the study of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education teaching techniques as well as the assessment criteria and key performance indicators used in the measurement of success of EE in influencing students' EI (Mwasalwiba 2010; Fayolle, Gailly & Lassas-Clerc 2006; Samuel, Ernest & Awuah 2013). Instead, researchers have continued to prove, through their research findings that there is a positive

relationship between EE and students' EI. However, most of the researches have focused on developed economies and less on underdeveloped, especially Nigeria: which is an emerging economy and in dire need of entrepreneurs to accelerate her economic growth for inclusion in the league of top 20 developed nations for the achievement of her national vision: Vision 2020, which has now been re-described as Vision 2030 - a programme designed by the recent administration in line with the prescriptions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Vision 2030 as it is commonly referred to, is an all-encompassing framework devised by the federal government to spur economic growth and development in Nigeria (Akingboye, 2016; Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, 2010; Oghifo, 2016). The framework offers a pattern for the sustainable development of the country both politically, socially, infrastructurally and economically. As a national vision, one of its main goals is for Nigeria to be among the top 20 largest economies of the world by the year 2030 (Omona, 2017; Samuel, Ernest & Awuah 2013; Ogundipe, Kosile, Olaleye & Ogundipe, 2012).

Again in the literature on EE reviewed, it was discovered that there is scarce research on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education and how it affects students' EI in Nigeria Polytechnics. Also, literature revealed that there are no clear indicators or measurement criteria to assess the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programmes and the evaluation of the success of the EE in Africa (Kabongo & Okpara 2010), particularly in Nigeria. The uniqueness and originality of this research was that no studies of this nature: using narratives and storytelling in data collection have been carried out in the context of Nigeria Polytechnics. Therefore, this research is timely, vital, relevant and significant.

As a result, the purpose of this original research is to explore and evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education and how it impacts students' entrepreneurship career intentions in Nigerian Polytechnics with a focus on Federal Polytechnic of Oil & Gas Ekowe.

## Review of Literature

### Entrepreneurship Education & Entrepreneurial Intentions

Entrepreneurship education has become of strategic importance to academics, political policy makers and industry professionals around the world, even in Nigeria, as it is seen as a sustainable approach to training and equipping students with skills sets, knowledge and competencies needed for entrepreneurial engagement to bolster economic growth and development (Olufunso, 2010). Entrepreneurship on the other hand is increasingly gaining attention as it is regarded as the engine that drives economic growth and development (Schumpeter, 2004); and as a sustainer of a country's competitiveness in facing the increasing trends of globalization (Gorman, Hanlon & King, 1997; Ogundipe, Kosile, Olaleye & Ogundipe, 2012). Entrepreneurship is also viewed as a key instrument for the promotion of entrepreneurial activities for sustainable economic growth and development (Nabi & Linan 2011); and as a "force that mobilizes other resources to the unmet market demand" (Nwazor, 2012, pp. 51). Entrepreneurship in this paper is defined as the process of putting together all the

factors of production required to bring a product or service to the marketplace in order to meet a pressing public need, at a price above the cost of production (Fems, Agada, Godasve & Opigo, 2017). By 'process' we mean from conception of the idea, to feasibility study, prototyping, financing, recruiting, managing, production, sales etc. In one of his writings, Schumpeter described entrepreneurship as what entrepreneurs do (Fems, Poazi & Opigo, 2017) and entrepreneurs according to Koroye & Banabo are "people who seek to start businesses, control and direct its procedures along with risks, opportunities and uncertainties in order to make profit (cited in Koroye, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education is considered globally as a crucial strategy for the "creation of an entrepreneurial and innovative culture for social and economic change" (Marques & Albuquerque 2012); hence, it is believed that entrepreneurship education can stimulate entrepreneurial intention amongst students for future engagement in entrepreneurial activities (Olufunso, 2010). In the recent past years, intentions have been viewed from both psychological and entrepreneurial viewpoint as a key influencer of the decision to engage in any activity including becoming an entrepreneur (Armitage & Conner 2001). Hence, using his theory of planned behaviour (TPB): a renowned model used in the prediction of future behaviour, Azjen concludes that "a person's beliefs and attitudes regarding a particular behaviour inform their intention to perform that behaviour" (1991, p. 34 cited in Fems, Poazi & Opigo, 2017) in the future. This is because, every entrepreneur first had the intention to start and own a business before they eventually started, and intentions have motivating factors. As a result numerous research have focused on EE as a motivating factor in influencing students' EI (Krueger 2005; Byabashaija, Katono & Isabalija, 2010; Nabi & Linan, 2011; Fini, Grimaldi, Marzocchi & Sobrero, 2009; Askun & Yildirim 2011; Basu & Virick 2008; Ekpoh & Edet, 2011; Ogundipe, Kosile, Olaleye & Ogundipe, 2012; Samuel, Ernest & Uwah, 2013; Matlay, 2008; Ferreira, Fernandes & Ratten, 2017). This is so because it has been proven to help students develop entrepreneurial skills and build their self-efficacy, thereby altering their perception and attitude towards entrepreneurship and position them for entrepreneurial engagement. Notwithstanding, Omuvwie (2013) concludes from his research findings that, EE has no significant impact on undergraduate EI in Nigerian universities, and that the teachers/teaching techniques lack the propensity and thrust to stimulate their interest. On the contrary, Ekpoh & Edet (2011) and Nwafor (2012) suggest that there is a strong positive impact EE has on students EI in Nigerian institutions of higher learning (IHL). Other factors such as personality traits, culture, age, family status, motivation, gender and religion have also been studied as positive influencers of EI (Carr and Sequeira, 2007; Hattab 2014; Kautonen, Luoto & Tornikoski, 2010; Schwarz et al. 2009; Fems, Koroye & Godsava, 2017). This leads to the research question.

Does Entrepreneurship education have a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions and pursuits in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Of all the papers reviewed in the writing-up of this literature on EE as an influencer of EI, just a fragmented portion was conducted in the context of any African country (Mwasalwiba 2010; Sherman, Sebora & Digman 2008; Fayolle, Gailly & Lassas-Clerc 2006; Lourenco & Jones 2006; Pfeifer, Peterka & Jeger, 2013). One study carried out recently focused on the ineffectiveness of the implementation of EE programmes and teaching methodology in Kenyan

universities (Mkala & Wanjau 2013). In this research, it was concluded that EE programme contents, teaching and assessment methods were too “insensitive to entrepreneurship learning, and the training resources provided by the institutions are insufficient” to stimulate EI and produce entrepreneurs (Mkala & Wanjau 2013, p. 1). Some others addressed the assessment criteria used in measuring the effectiveness of EE programmes and teaching methods in Europe and America (Hytti & O’Gorman 2004; Pfeifer Peterka & Jeger, 2013; de los Monteros & van Dorp 2010; Moylan, McGreevy & Heagney 2006; O’Neil, Hays & Bagwell 2013; Sidhu, Singer, Suoranta & Johnsson, 2014). However in the context of EE and its impact on students career intentions amongst Nigerian Polytechnic students and other African countries’ university students, quite a few studies have been made (Ekpoh & Edet 2011; Ogundipe, Kosile, Olaleye & Ogundipe, 2012; Samuel, Ernest & Uwah, 2013; Gerba 2012; Fatoki 2014; Hattab 2014;).

The conclusions from these studies are that EE has a positive impact on university students’ EI. The debate however is no longer whether entrepreneurship can or should be taught in schools but rather, what and how it should be taught (Henry, Hill & Leitch, 2005; Lourenco & Jones 2006). Gendron (2004) in a similar remark concludes that the debate has shifted from whether or not entrepreneurship can be taught to “how to continuously improve its content and delivery to meet the needs of our current students”.

### **Assessing EE Programmes’ Teaching Approaches**

The success of any educational programme lies in its programme content and delivery approach as not all teaching methods will produce the same results, and so it is with EE. Despite the unanimity upon the teachability of entrepreneurship as established in EE literature, models of successful EE programmes and effective teaching approaches are rather indefinable. Programme contents and teaching approaches differ from institutions in different countries, even those within the same country (Hytti & O’Gorman 2004). However, the speedy growth of both demand and supply of EE beckons for scrutiny of EEP design, delivery and modes of assessment. Researches investigating the US and EU experiences in EE have been well established in the literature. Hytti & O’Gorman (2004) identified 8 teaching methods adopted in Europe, these include the traditional (teacher centric) teaching technique, ‘learning by action’, ‘immersion in real life situation’, ‘counseling/mentoring by entrepreneurs’, ‘case studies’, ‘business simulation’, ‘games and competition’, study visits and workshops. In their study of Babson College’s (The world’s top entrepreneurship school) pedagogical approaches to EE, Lourenco & Jones (2006) recognized 30 different pedagogical approaches including 10 traditional which are articulation of concepts through theoretical frameworks, lectures, question and answer sessions, and advice and feedback sessions; and 20 alternative approaches which include individual activities, group presentations and role-play activities used simultaneously. The mixture of methods as used by Babson College is said to be one of the most effective in producing entrepreneurs via EE. Pittaway & Cope (2006, p. 4) express their opinion on EE pedagogic approaches that:

“Entrepreneurs learn primarily through learning-by-doing and reflection: which includes ‘learning by copying and opportunity taking; and learning from

making mistakes'. And that, learning how to be entrepreneurial can only be acquired through learning by doing or by direct observation."

Despite the success of these teaching approaches, the debate is still on which method(s) best stimulate students' interest in pursuing entrepreneurship as a career? McKeown et al. suggest that triangulation of methods is the best teaching approach to produce skilled, knowledgeable and daring graduate entrepreneurs (cited in Lourenco & Jones 2006). Besides, how do we measure the effectiveness of certain teaching techniques? There is no consensus on a standard framework for the design, delivery and assessment of EE yet, even though some sort of framework for distinguishing effective from non-effective EEP and delivery approaches are in use in UK and USA, they are inapplicable in the Nigeria context (Pfeifer et al. 2013). According to Gibbs, the difficulty in designing a framework of criteria for EE delivery assessment is that, different institutions have different objectives, target audience and motivation for introducing EE and so, assessment criteria should be measured against the goals, objectives, target audience and motivation for the programmes (2006). In their study, Westhead et al. (cited in Hytti & O'Gorman, 2004) identified four important limitations to measurement of effective EEPs – the difficulty in establishing relationship between teaching approaches and impacts due to the significant time lag between the educational input and subsequent output; unclear how to measure output of teaching approaches- should it be measured against starting a new business, entrepreneurial activity during one's career or venture performance etc. Notwithstanding, Hytti & O'Gorman are of the opinion that certain items can be measured to determine the effectiveness of EE pedagogical approaches, like voluntary attendance rate, student participation and motivation, students' awareness, interest and intentions; venture creation by students and alumni; resulting innovations; impact on the community and publications by teachers etc.

## Statement of Research Problem

In 2004, the government of Nigeria through its Federal Ministry of Education introduced 'Entrepreneurship Development' as a course to be integrated into undergraduate programmes and undertaken by every student in the country's higher institutions (Akudolu, 2010). Although others like Akinboade, (2014) and Agbolahor, (2016) are of the opinion that EE was introduced into institutions of higher learning in Nigeria in 2006. Irrespective of the date it commenced, the ultimate aim of the programme is to spur graduate entrepreneurship for economic growth and development to accomplish the country's goal of becoming one of the top 20 economies of the world by the year 2020. Other objectives include to:

- Reduce poverty and unemployment amongst youths.
- Instill entrepreneurial mindset/culture amongst undergraduates for engagement in entrepreneurial activities and initiatives after graduation.
- Develop and improve the entrepreneurial culture, skills and mindsets, competencies and capabilities of students while preparing them for engagement in industries and the business world.

Then in 2007, the government took a step further to implement the policy to make “Entrepreneurship Education” compulsory for every student across all degree awarding institutions in the country irrespective of their course of study (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014; Onuma, 2016; Agbolahor, 2016). After 10 years of entrepreneurship education however, the objectives of the programme are far from being reached or seem to be yielding no positive results as over 80% of graduates in the country still grapple with unemployment long after graduation (Fems, Abara & Poazi, 2016) instead of creating jobs for themselves and employing others. The irrefutable prevalence of high unemployment rate in Nigeria is continually spiraling into the growth of violence, extreme poverty and segregation amongst the citizenry (the rich & poor), as the educational system and EE programmes undertaken is failing to empower those that pass through it with the desired entrepreneurial skills, mindsets and competencies for entrepreneurial engagements.

Again, there are no performance indicators to measure the success of EE and no criteria for evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme are set. It is a well-established notion that the success/failure of a programme cannot be ascertained without any yardstick to evaluate the effectiveness and robustness of the programmes (Akpan, Effiong & Ele, 2012). This is crucial as it will enable policy makers, industry professionals, funders and educators evaluate and review programme content, teaching approaches and students’ learning experience/process, which could inform the redesign of future curriculum and Entrepreneurship Education Programmes (EEPs) restructuring to accommodate and cater to the dynamic nature of the entrepreneurial world in today’s 21st century business ecosystem. As a result, it is both logical and empirical to find answers to questions like: why the seeming failure of the EE? Is EE a formidable strategy for student empowerment and economic development? Why is the programme not stimulating student entrepreneurial intentions and producing graduate entrepreneurs? Why are most Nigerian graduates still considered ‘unemployable’ when the EEPs are supposed to develop their entrepreneurial skills, mindsets and competencies? How are the EEPs taught, and what is the impact of the pedagogic methodology on students’ entrepreneurial intentions? How robust is the EEP content, does it include issues relevant to this contemporary business environment? How is student’s attitude to and perception of EE? Does it impact their learning process and influence their choice of career options? Are there peculiar challenges faced by academics and students in the school environment that stifle the teaching/learning processes?

However, in this research, we seek to ascertain the impact EE has on students’ career choice especially as it relates to entrepreneurial engagement. Does EE stimulate entrepreneurial intention in students in the polytechnics?

## Research Methodology

This research is a qualitative, interpretive study and it relies on narrative as a means of knowing, and as a form of communication (Schwandt, 1998; Hamilton, 2006a; 2006b; Polkinghome, 1988). Narratives or storytelling approaches have gained acknowledgement as a valid methodology in the interpretive

phenomenological study of entrepreneurship (Hjorth & Steyaert, 2004; Berglund, 2007; Seymour, 2006; Cope, 2009). According to Gherardi & Nicolini (2002), narratives is a means of data collection that allows participants to tell their own stories without been led in a particular direction like structured questions in a questionnaire and therefore, are a formidable approach to unskewed data collection. The potency of this type of qualitative study is embedded “in its capacity to provide insights, rich details and thick descriptions” (Jack & Anderson, 2002, p. 473) that will enable accurate, unbiased and unassumed conclusions.

A purposive sampling technique was adopted in data collection. This approach was adopted because the researcher wanted to find out the impact entrepreneurship education would have on non-business students who ordinarily would not have interest in running an enterprise. Data collection was drawn from the stories of National Diploma (ND) year one students from three (3) departments: Science Laboratory Technology (SLT), Computer Science Technology (CST) and Statistics (STAT) in Federal Polytechnic of Oil & Gas, Ekowe. These departments were chosen because they were ordinarily not business oriented in their nature. Also, ND year one students were chosen because they are fresh from secondary school and have never taken any course in entrepreneurship.

### Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed in a semi-structured way. Questions seeking to extract demographic information were structured but questions seeking to obtain the impact of entrepreneurship education on career aspirations were open ended to allow participants to tell their narratives lucidly. In this section of the questionnaire, only one question was asked which was:

- What do you want to be and do when you graduate?

The questionnaires were distributed to the students after the final lecture on the entrepreneurship course and were asked to return it in a week’s time (7 days). This time lag was allowed to encourage students to articulate properly their responses. Table one shows the total number of students that participated in the survey.

**Table 1:** Total Number of Participants

Group 1 Computer Science Technology (CST)	Group 2 Science Laboratory Technology (SLT)	Group 3 Statistics (STAT)	Total	%
16 (38.10%)	23 (54.76%)	3 (7.14%)	42	100

Table 1 above shows the total number of students that partook in the survey from the three (3) departments and the percentage they represent.

After the questionnaires were received from all the 42 participants, the responses were divided into three (3) segments: those that want to “Start a Business” which was further separated into categories of businesses, those that desire to “Get Paid Jobs” in a well-established organization and those that are



“Uncertain/Unsure” what they want to be or do when they graduate. Table 2 displays the responses from the students.

**Table 2:** Responses from Participants

Groups	Start a Business	Get a Paid Job	Uncertain/Unsure	Total %
CST	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	7 (43.75%)	16 (100%)
SLT	6 (26.09%)	10 (43.48)	7 (30.43%)	23 (100%)
STAT	2 (66.67%)	0 (0%)	1 (33.33%)	3 (100%)
(CST+SLT+STAT)	12 (28.57%)	17 (40.48%)	13 (30.95%)	42 (100%)

Table 2 above portrays the responses from the respondents in the different departments and different segments as well as the percentage they represent accumulatively.

Again, from the responses, we were able to deduce some distinct categories of businesses students intend to startup after graduation. Table 3 below illustrates the responses.

**Table 3:** Categories of Intended Business Startups by Students

Groups	Hospital	Catering	Fashion House	Medical Laboratory	Importation	Business Centre	Software Company	Total
CST	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	4
SLT	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	6
STAT	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Total	4	1	2	1	1	1	2	12

Table 3 shows a display of the categories or kinds of businesses that the students intended to startup when they graduate from their various programmes.

**Figure 1:** Accumulative Responses from Participants

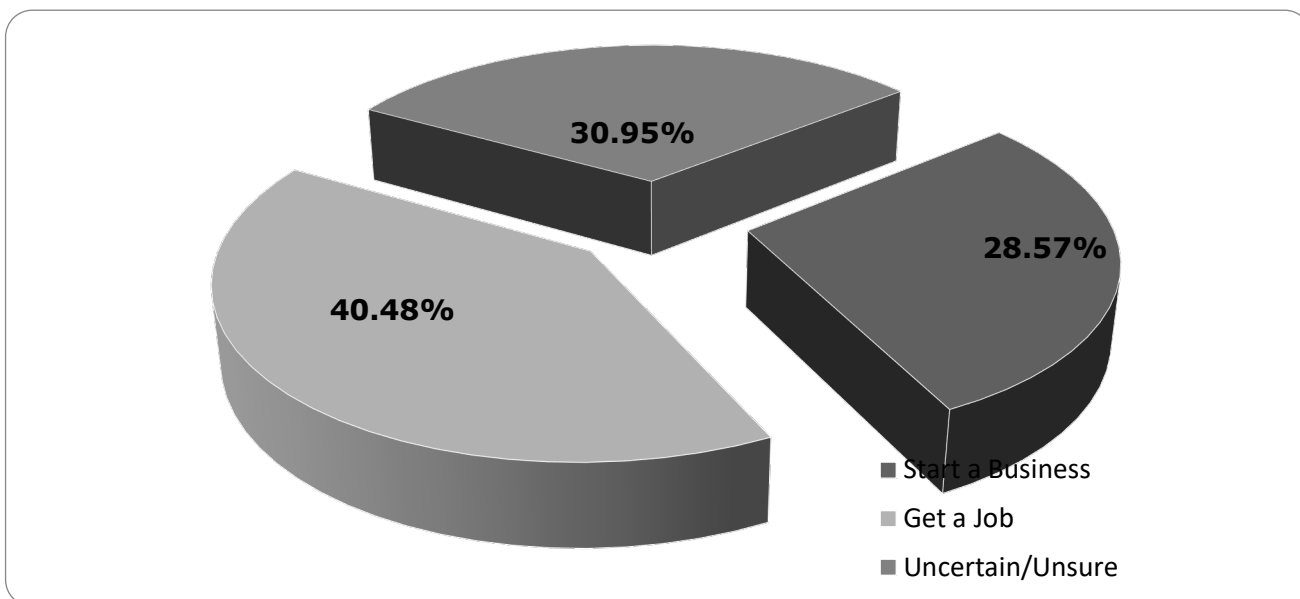


Figure 1 is a pie chart reflection of the accumulative responses gotten from the student in percentage form.

## Findings and Discussion

Upon collection of the data, it revealed that a total of 42 responses were realized, which meant 100% returns from respondents. The population was dominated by 28 males students representing 66.67 percent while the remaining 14 (33.33%) were female students. The average age was 22, with the oldest student reaching 36 (male student). All the students had never taken any course on entrepreneurship except 2 students who said they have had some level of apprenticeship working with their fathers. Of the 42 students that participated, 12 (28.57%) demonstrated the intention to start a business of their own after graduation. Below are excerpts extracted from the narratives provided by the students. As part of the ethics of research writing, the names of respondents are coded using both alphabets and figures. This was done to ensure anonymity and confidentiality: that data they provide cannot be traced and tracked back to them (Crow & Wiles, 2008; Kaiser, 2009; Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC, 2017).

N-14-01

*“I want to become a medical doctor and so after I graduate from here I will pursue a degree in medicine and afterwards, get a job in a well-established hospital where I can be grounded in the profession for a few years to garner experience and after then, I will start my own hospital”.*

A-01-01

*“I do not really want to work for anybody but for the sake of getting some work experience; I will work a bit with a software based computer firm to learn from the experts and maybe in a year’s time I will pull out and work on my own from home. Then once the business starts doing well and I am making profits, I will get an office space, look for partners and grow from there. At least what I have learnt from EED 126 (Course code for - Introduction to Entrepreneurship) has taught me that most successful businesses are started or run by more than one person – Bill Gates and Paul Allen, Steve Jobs and Steven Wozniak, Sergie Brin and Larry Page. So, I will get a partner too”.*

S-19-02

*“Although I am studying Computer Science Technology for now, what I really want to do when I graduate is to start a business in the fashion industry. The course we have taken in entrepreneurship has shown me that if I pursue my passion with diligence and patience, I will enjoy what I am doing and over time it will fetch me money beyond what I can imagine. So once I graduate, I will take on apprenticeship with my friend’s brother who is already a professional fashion designer in Lagos”.*

Their narratives reveal that for some, even though they intend to start a business after graduation, they still want to do some work to gain expertise and

experience through apprenticeship, while for some others, what they are currently studying is not in line with their future aspirations.

Again, 40.48% of the students representing 17 of them said they will get jobs in prestigious Multinational Corporations to earn good money to enjoy a good life after all the hard work in school and shun the risks and struggles inherent in entrepreneurship. One of the respondents has this to say:

M-13-03

*“I know that owning your own business is good and probably will make you earn a lot of money like Dangote, Bill Gates and the likes, but for me I just want to graduate, get a good job in a big company like Shell or Chevron or all of those kinds of companies. I am not caught up in the hassles in starting a business. It’s too rigorous and difficult. I have seen family members and friends lose plenty of money starting businesses with the dream that it will succeed and most of them did not. The stress is too much, if I were younger I would have taken the risk to try out some business idea but now, I need something more secure”.*

Meanwhile, 13 (30.95%) of the students that participated were unsure what they want to be or do when they graduate. From one of the narratives of the students, it was revealed that fear of the unknown makes people not to want anything other than that which come to them as they go along in life.

P-16-05

*“There are many things in my mind I would like to do when I graduate but I am not sure which one exactly I want to pursue when I graduate. I don’t want to plan too much and give myself high hopes because if things don’t work out the way I want I might get depressed. So instead I will just wait till when I graduate, I will know what I will pursue. But for now I am still making my choice”.*

Again, 2 of the students who showed interest in engaging in business pursuit after graduation were those who had fathers that are businessmen from whom they have learnt the trade and have already desired to start a business even before they took any course on entrepreneurship. However, one salient aspect of this research findings which was not originally intended to be scrutinized is that, of all those that have the intention to start a business after graduation, only one of them is of the age of 33 years, while the remaining 11 were between 19-22 years of age; which suggests that age could influence a student’s decision to pursue entrepreneurship after graduation as suggested by the findings of Kautonen, Luoto & Tornikoski (2010). From the story of P-16-05, it was evident that fear of the unknown and the uncertainty of the future could inhibit those that feel elderly from entrepreneurial pursuits.

## Conclusion

The search for quality entrepreneurs to solve problems of this 21st century’s complex economies of the world by building innovative and novel businesses has ushered in entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions as a formidable

strategy to influence graduate student's entrepreneurial intentions. This research paper has debated the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education (EE) in Nigeria tertiary institutions and its impact on students' entrepreneurial career intentions since its introduction into undergraduate programmes in 2004. Existing literatures were reviewed to gain perspectives on what other scholars and researchers have done. The suppositions of existing literatures that EE has a direct influence and impact on students' entrepreneurial career intention was contrary to the findings from this research as the findings here revealed no significant impact of EE regarding student's entrepreneurial intention with just 28.57% representing 12 students out of 42 demonstrated intention to start a business after graduation. Besides, two students out of the 12 students opted to start businesses because they had prior experiences working with their businessmen fathers. Findings also reveal that Nigerian students still prefer to look for corporate jobs rather than engage in the grueling process of starting and running a business of their own. A surprising aspect of the findings which was not a case for consideration in this research was that, age and fear of the unknown seem to be a constraining factor to entrepreneurial pursuits. In all, it is evident that EE is not effective in inspiring student's entrepreneurial career intentions in Nigeria tertiary institutions as revealed at the Federal polytechnic of Oil & Gas, Ekowe.

Even though the impact of EE on entrepreneurial intentions was revealed to be insignificant, the results cannot be wholly generalized as the sample size was small constituting a small proportion of the entire students in Nigeria tertiary institutions.

### ***Recommendation for Further Research***

Consequence upon this research result, the following were recommended:

- A research should be conducted to ascertain the link between age and prior experience of students as possible influencers of entrepreneurial engagement, using a phenomenological and interpretive research approach that allows storytelling/narratives as valid approaches to data collection.
- A larger sample size cutting across multiple tertiary institutions in the country should be conducted using both questionnaires and face-to-face interviews that allow narratives and storytelling for data collection.

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