

## Entrepreneurship Education: A Precursor to Graduate Entrepreneurship. The Yenagoa Experience

FEMS KURUTIMI M. & AGADA FRANKLIN  
Federal Polytechnic of Oil & Gas Ekowe, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

GODSAVE ALADEI  
Adaka Boro College of Education, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

POAZI FRANCIS D. W.  
Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine if entrepreneurship education forms a bed-rock for graduate entrepreneurship or, whether such other factors like self-efficacy, personality trait, need for achievement and locus of control, situational circumstances, family influence, experience and competence play a more vibrant role in motivating graduate entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The scope of this original research study is entrepreneurs within Yenagoa metropolis, the capital city of Bayelsa state, Nigeria. The sample targets are graduates engaged in entrepreneurship activities (graduates who own and run businesses). Stratified sampling technique was adopted and 101 responses were gotten from a total of 300 questionnaires issued. Bar chart, tables and percentages were used to analyze the data collected. The findings revealed that, personality traits, situational circumstance, need for achievement and experience/competence were the foundational factors stimulating graduate entrepreneurs to engage in entrepreneurial pursuits. Of all, personality trait showed the highest score with 73 (73%) out of 101 entrepreneurs agreeing. Experience/Competence and situational circumstances followed behind with 66 (65%) and 63 (62.4%) respectively. Entrepreneurship education revealed the least score with 13 (12.3%) out of 101 participating entrepreneurs, thus evident, even though the study findings cannot be generalized due to the smallness of the scope, that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is not a pre-cursor to graduate entrepreneurship although has an insignificant impact on graduate entrepreneurial engagement. All hope however, is not lost, as this shows that something can be done to increase the impact of entrepreneurship education on graduate entrepreneurship in Yenagoa, Nigeria.

*Keywords:* Creative Destruction, Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship Education, Graduate Entrepreneurship, Precursor

## Introduction

Nigeria as a country is witnessing massive turnout of graduates every year, with over 150 Institutions of Higher Learning (IsHL) across the country, over 500,000 graduates emerge every year from diverse disciplines besides those who studied abroad and come back to the country to hustle for jobs (Kazeem, 2016) of which between 150,000 and 200,000 graduates are churned out from universities alone each year (Mike, 2016; Nda-Isaiah, 2013). According to Dr. Charles Ugwu, the Director, Professional Development Directorate, Chartered Institute of Personnel Management, out of these huge numbers that graduate every year, only as few as 20% get employed by organizations (Mike, 2016). In another report, it is recorded that no less than 5.3 million Nigerian youths were jobless as at 2014, while an alarming total of 1.8 million graduates enter the labour market yearly (Premium Times, 2014). However, this number contradicts the number reported by Nda-Isaiah in 2013 when it was reported to be 40 million unemployed youths in the country (2013). The International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) also reported that an estimated 17 million Nigerian professionals are available in every field in diaspora, no doubt the country could be construed to have the required human resources for her growth and development and inclusion in the league of top 20 biggest economies in the world (Premium Times, 2017; Champions Newspaper, 2017; SME Online, 2017; Soludo, 2015).

However, the findings from the National Survey jointly sponsored by the Education Trust Fund (ETF) now Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), and the Nigeria Universities Commission (NUC) in 2004, on graduate unemployability revealed thus: of the over 100 individuals and 20 corporate organizations interviewed, 44% rated science graduates as average in competence and creativity, in leadership skills and innovation 63% and 56% rated graduates as average respectively. On skills that are prerequisite like oral communication and report writing, entrepreneurial, problem solving, information technology, analytical and even decision making, 60% of the interviewees rated graduates as poor. In explaining the reasons for the huge unemployment rate from the data analyzed, the researcher concluded that Nigerian graduates lack the capacity to be employed and so are “*simply unemployable*” (EI, 2012).

If all these qualities that should be gained through university education is lacking in the Nigerian graduates, what then is missing for graduates to attain these qualities? Ocho used the term “*functional education*” which he described as a process by which students are equipped with occupational skills and competencies that will enable them become self-reliant, adept in living, entrepreneurial, creative and innovative in problem solving, and contributing members towards their society’s economic development, as being lacking in the educational system (as cited in Unachukwu, 2009). In his view, entrepreneurship education (EE) is key to achieving functional education as it will stimulate entrepreneurial thinking in graduates thereby produce graduate entrepreneurs. In this research, we have used the term ‘graduate entrepreneurs’ to mean graduates that venture into business ownership and management. Graduates as used in this study are classified as those holding a Doctorate, Master’s, a Bachelor’s degree or even HND or its equivalent in any field of study. It is believed that the entrepreneurial quality of the graduate entrepreneur is critical in the

survival, thriving, as well as sustenance of a business venture. Graduate entrepreneurship has been receiving increased attention in recent times especially because of the ongoing recession in the global economy which is pushing more graduates towards entrepreneurial engagements (Baldry, 2009; Mitra et al., 2011). As a consequence, the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced EE as a compulsory course of study in all Nigeria ISHL with the hope that it will solve the unemployment problems and engender job creation by graduates rather than job seeking thereby create wealth for themselves and in the process, develop the economy as a whole.

The purpose of this paper is to ascertain whether EE is a pre-requisite for graduate entrepreneurship, the success of entrepreneurial engagements and the quality of such entrepreneurs using Yenagoa: a rural-urban city in Nigeria as the scope of study. The paper explores entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur to understand both concepts from diverse perspectives. Then EE and its importance in the Nigerian context are discussed. Thirdly, EE and the development of graduate entrepreneurs are discussed from available literature. Finally, findings were discussed and measured against literature, and recommendations made on the way forward.

#### ***Brief Background of Yenagoa***

Yenagoa is one of the eight (8) local government areas and a small rural-urban city, which is the capital city of Bayelsa state in the South-South Niger Delta region of Nigeria with a population of about 407,260 people; which constitutes 23.9% of the state's population (City Population, 2017). The state itself has a population of 1,704,515 according to the 2006 census figures, which accounts for about 1.2% of Nigeria's population (Bayelsa.gov.ng 2017). Bayelsa is referred to as a civil servant state as no major Multinational Corporation is present in the state even though companies like Shell Petroleum, Agip Oil Company, Julius Berger, Schlumberger, Daewoo Construction and a host of other oil producing and servicing companies. As a result, small business engagement by the people of Yenagoa is the available means through which the people survive. Commercial activities are increasing day by day as people migrate continually from the rural areas and other much developed cities to do business in Yenagoa. Currently, there is no available information pertaining to the estimated number of businesses registered and unregistered, operating in Yenagoa. Although according to Business List, about 236 businesses are registered and in operation in Yenagoa (2017), while Nigeria Directory puts the number at 262 businesses (2017). However, by observation, there are well over 1,000 businesses that operate in the city including trading activities because almost every building on Mbiama/Yenagoa road which is about 19 miles long (Distance Calculator, 2017).

#### **Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs**

Entrepreneurship is crucial for the growth and development of any economy as it is regarded as the "engine" for innovation that drives economic advancement, job and wealth creation (Abd-Rani & Hong, 2012; Alberti et al., 2004; Watkins-Mathys, 2009); as the dynamic process of creating or transforming an organization for the singular purpose of creating new products/services or adding value to existing products/services through the skillful coordination of resources (Izedonmi & Okafor,

2010) and; as the indispensable lever to cope with the new competitive economic landscape Hitt & Reed (cited in Alberti et al., 2004). However, the creative and innovative ingenuity of entrepreneurs to transform ideas into profitable business conglomerates have attracted the attention of both academics and policy makers to take another look at entrepreneurship. In line with the increasing relevance of entrepreneurship, countries like Singapore, United Kingdom, Brazil, Australia, Malaysia and even India have since 1990s endorsed EE programmes into every level of their educational systems. In Malaysia for instance, entrepreneurship plays a very critical role as they envisage being a fully developed nation come 2020, and EE has been the catalyst of the growth of entrepreneurs (Abd-Rani & Hong, 2012). Because of the dynamism of the process of entrepreneurship, it is essential that entrepreneurship be taught for the transference of its skills, competencies and knowledge from an expert to a protégé. As a result, there is a growing interest in the development and design of academic programmes to encourage and foster entrepreneurship in all levels of education. Finkle & Deeds (2001) in their recent studies also observed that the demand for entrepreneurship centres and faculties have escalated extraordinarily during the last 10 years. Again, Kuratko & Hodgetts together emphasize that entrepreneurship:

*“involves an application of energy and passion towards the creation of an enterprise and this includes the willingness to take calculative risks; team work; the creative skill to marshal needed resources; fundamental skill of building solid business plan; and finally, the vision to recognize opportunity where others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion”* (cited in Izedonmi & Okafor 2010).

Entrepreneurship is more than being smart, it is the adeptness an individual possesses that enables him collaborate with others and act in the face of opportunities and challenges. The European Commission Communication summarizes it this way:

*“Entrepreneurship refers to an individual’s ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports everyone in day-to-day life at home and in society, makes employees more aware of the context of their work and better able to seize opportunities, and provides a foundation for entrepreneurs establishing a social or commercial activity”* (cited in Watkins-Mathys, 2009, p. 3).

Entrepreneurship however, cannot be discussed without the mention of two key elements as it does not function in a vacuum. These elements are: 1) the entrepreneur and 2) an enabling environment. Entrepreneurship has been described as the act of being an entrepreneur (Shane, 2003) and also as the service entrepreneurs render (Akanwa & Agu, 2005). It is also viewed as a dynamic process towards increasing

capitals: that is, a process which generates new components using creativity and innovation as a tool, and is achieved by using time and risks, etc. (Arasteh, 2003; Ghasemi, 2011). In fact, entrepreneurship is an endless and rudimental resource in all societies. Entrepreneurship is not anything else but a course of purposeful activity that fuses together creativeness, risks, innovation and personal success that requires the individual to take moral, financial and even social responsibility to set up structures to foster a profitable business idea. While there is no generally agreed upon definition of entrepreneurship, in this paper, we have defined it as “*the primary catalyst for innovation*” (McFadzean et al., 2005, p. 351), and entrepreneurial engagement which is congruent with Schumpeter’s “*creative destruction*” that brings about drastic economic change (Betta et al., 2010, pp. 237).

According to Peter Drucker, entrepreneurship is impossible without an entrepreneur, thus defining an entrepreneur as a person who creates something new, different, and is capable of shifting and transforming values (1970). Schumpeter describes the entrepreneur as a person who takes the initiative to design new combinations out of non/pre-existing things, consequently “*becoming a promoter of innovative progress; and a generator of economic progress*” (1942, pp. 34 cited in Fems, et al, 2016). The entrepreneur has also been viewed as an individual that possess certain abilities and skill sets to recognize and evaluate an opportunity, initiate a business plan, organizes and assembles other factors of production, bears all risks in order to take advantage of the opportunities and takes appropriate actions to ensure success (Unachukwu, 2009; McFadzean et al., 2005); and as one who can convert what he loves doing into a money making venture (Osolor, 2013). Hong et al. (2012) classified the entrepreneur into two categories of persons: as a leader charged with the responsibility of decision-making and management in an organization and secondly, as a founder or innovator/inventor who takes risks to set up a new business venture. Unlike many authors who view the entrepreneur as the risk bearer (Drucker, 1970; Knight 1921) Schumpeter differs, he is of the opinion that the capitalist is the one that bears the risk while the entrepreneur “*reflects a kind of person willing to put his or her career and financial security on the line and take risks in the name of an idea, spending much time as well as capital (wealth created in other to create further wealth) on an uncertain venture*” (cited in Ekankumo & Kemebaradikumo, 2011, pp. 197). He sees the entrepreneur as an agent capable of combining human resources and opportunities into a productive organism (Schumpeter, 2004). Schumpeter speaks of these various groups of human resources as workers, financiers/funders, capitalists and landlords, but keeps them separate from the entrepreneur throughout his work. Nonetheless, taking into cognizance the uncertain nature of any business venture, the entrepreneur can be said to be a risk taker.

The skill sets and decisiveness of an entrepreneur are either in-born or learnt through experience or training. However, it is an agreed upon fact that not all entrepreneurs are born, some are trained. In congruence with this assertion, Peter Drucker, noted for his out-of-the-box managerial thinking stated that entrepreneurship “*is not magic, is not mysterious, and it has nothing to do with genes. It is a discipline. And like any discipline it can be learned*” (cited in Alberti, et al., 2004, p. 2). Therefore, training/education is a critical part of the development of entrepreneurs, as it is believed that the quality of the entrepreneur determines to a large extent the success of a business venture. In fact, there is a widespread idea that EE would produce more

and better skilled and equipped entrepreneurs than has ever been in the past; and that education would increase the probability of attaining entrepreneurial success (Kirby, 2002), hence, the emergence of entrepreneurship education.

### *Entrepreneurship Education*

The first recorded lecture on entrepreneurship was in 1938 at Kobe University, Japan by Shigeru Fijii. He was said to be the pioneer of entrepreneurship teaching. Afterwards courses in small business management began to emerge in the 1940s and then in 1947, Myles Mace of Harvard Business School introduced the first well-articulated entrepreneurship course in USA (Katz, 2003; Alberti, 2004). Since then EE has become popular and has expanded tremendously in most industrial economies, and is gaining much interest and wide acceptance amongst academics, policy makers and even industry professionals globally (Matlay & Carey, 2006). Entrepreneurship programmes have been proliferated in universities all over the world. This is symptomatic of the general belief and assumption that EE is a sustainable economic development strategy to help build and prepare individuals to be responsible and enterprising, adept in unfathomable entrepreneurial thinking that will contribute to the economic growth and development of a nation. Irrespective of its widespread acceptance, there is no agreed upon definition of what EE means. Different institutions, academics and countries define the concept from differing points of views. Bechard and Toulouse view EE as “*a collection of formalized teachings that informs, trains and educates anyone interested in business creation or small business development*” (cited in Unachukwu 2009, p. 216). According to Osalor, EE is not a once and for all event rather it is “*a lifelong learning process, starting as early as elementary school and progressing through all levels of education, including adult education. Entrepreneurial education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in widely different contexts*” (2013, p. 3).

The essence of EE therefore, is to alter the perception and attitude of the students and in the process, equip them with relevant and requisite knowledge, skill sets and motivation to promote entrepreneurial engagement in a multiplicity of settings, either to start own businesses or to manage another's. Entrepreneurship education seeks to furnish students/protégés with fundamental knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to exploit opportunities in this increasingly knowledge-based economy. Some of the benefits of entrepreneurship education according to findings from University of Arizona (2000) and Hong et al, (2012) include:

- Entrepreneurship graduates are 3 times more likely to start up a new business venture.
- Entrepreneurship education increased the probability of graduate business startups by 25%.
- Entrepreneurship graduates are three times more likely to be self-employed.
- Entrepreneurship graduates are more likely to be employed full time and less likely to work for government or nonprofit organizations.
- Have annual incomes that are 27% higher and own 62% more assets.
- Entrepreneurship education increases the earning capacity of graduates.

- Entrepreneurship graduates working for large firms earn 30% more and have job satisfaction more than their counterparts.
- They are more ready and better fortified to face obstacles head-on positively than non-entrepreneurship graduates.

Although there have been numerous studies proving the positive effect of EE on the desirability to start a business and the feasibility of starting one for those who attended entrepreneurship programmes (Watkins-Mathys, 2009), there is still very little empirical evidence of the positive impact of entrepreneurship education on graduate entrepreneurial success especially in Nigeria. Industrialists believe that mere entrepreneurial awareness is not enough for graduates to develop entrepreneurial practices. The development of entrepreneurial practices requires pragmatic pedagogical approaches capable of instilling transversal entrepreneurial skills. For scholars, it has been very difficult to ascertain clearly the effect education and training has on small and medium size enterprise (SME) performance, either at the start-up stage or other stages in their development (Alberti et al., 2004).

### *Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria*

The focus on EE has never been more vital as it is today in Nigeria especially as the country is threatened with enormous developmental challenges and crises that span across every sector of its economy (Thaddeus, 2012). Even though the practice of entrepreneurship in Nigeria can be traced back to the days of 'trade by barter' (Oyelola et al., 2013), this focus is spurred by the recognition of the degree to which EE serves as a sustainable strategy for economic development, at least as evident in developed economies (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2012; Unachukwu, 2009; Abd Rani & Hong 2012; Hong et al, 2012; Carayannis, Evans, & Hanson, 2003; Katz, 2003). Although formal EE is new and still very nascent in Nigeria: up till now, only a handful of IHL have started offering 'Entrepreneurship' as a major or a degree programme at undergraduate level but none in postgraduate levels across the country (Fems, 2016), though programmes to educate youths/graduates for self-reliance and entrepreneurial pursuits have been initiated since the 1980s. In 1986 for instance, the 'National Directorate of Employment' (NDE) was birthed followed by the establishment of 'Work For Yourself Programme' (WFYP) in 1987. Both the NDE and WFYP were joint programmes to offer training, foster entrepreneurship and offer financial assistance to startup entrepreneurs (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010). These programmes were instituted as a result of the collapse of Nigeria's economy which resulted in massive layoffs and retrenchment of workers; and high unemployment amongst the youths. This experience marked the beginning of policies embracing entrepreneurship teachings in Nigeria (Jimah & Unuigbokhai, 2011). Consequently in 2004, the National Universities Commission (NUC) introduced 'Entrepreneurship Development' as a course into the curriculum of Nigerian Universities, with the sole aim of challenging and equipping graduates with entrepreneurial skills and competencies. And then in 2007, entrepreneurship development became a compulsory module for every student in Nigeria's IsHL (Amadi, 2012; Olorundare, & Kayode, 2014). Although there are a number of researchers in favour of the argument that EE could help Nigeria gravitate towards

the achievement of Millennium Development Goals and Vision 2020 (Mitra, et al. 2011; Olorundare, & Kayode, 2014), ten years of entrepreneurship education has passed but Nigerian graduates are yet to demonstrate their competence in creating new business ventures. According to statistics from the Manpower Board and the Federal Bureau of Statistics, the country still lingers with startling unemployment rate at over 70% of its 80 million youth population and poverty at over 70%; and only a fraction of about 16% of young graduates have jobs not related to subsistent agriculture; thus, suggesting a waste of young, enthusiastic and talented graduates (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010).

### *Entrepreneurship Education and Graduate Entrepreneurship*

In their research into entrepreneurial potential of secondary school and university students, Křištofiaková & Krelová assert that “*it is necessary to introduce the subject of entrepreneurship into all types of secondary schools and university programmes. Without the development of entrepreneurial skills, our graduates will not be able to succeed in labour market*” (2012, pp. 2). They are of the opinion that EE is critical for the development of graduate entrepreneurs and should be thoroughly taught from primary to university level to instill entrepreneurship thinking in the students from early age.

Graduate entrepreneurs in this paper refer to graduates that own and/or manage their own businesses. Following the comment from Awogbenle & Iwuamadi resulting from their research findings; entrepreneurship development programmes (EDPs) in IsHL are most vital now for successful graduate entrepreneurship and, are of the opinion that EDPs can equip students with the requisite skills, resilience and competencies needed for productive, efficient and sustainable entrepreneurial engagement (2010). However, no matter how robust the EDP training programmes are, without adequate and corresponding provision for funding of incubators in university campuses and graduate startups, the programmes would turn out to be a mere waste of time and energy; and would lack what it takes to churn out graduate entrepreneurs as is seen in Nigeria today.

There is broad acceptability that EE is a vital channel through which any nation can experience the springing up of quality entrepreneurs and new industries. It is assumed that the knowledge entrepreneurship graduates gain through EE programmes would enable them venture into businesses after graduation and equip them with the capability and resilience to overcome unemployment and business challenges by being resourceful, ingenious, innovative and persistent. It is also believed that EE has obvious effect on cultivating graduate entrepreneurship, enriching their knowledge of business process and improved entrepreneurial qualities. Entrepreneurial quality in this paper is used to refer to all the essential characteristics that lead to entrepreneurial success. The quality of an entrepreneur is important as it will determine the success or failure of an enterprise. Contrary to the opinions of many scholars as regards EE being the prerequisite for entrepreneurial quality, Abd Rani & Hong (2012) opine that, entrepreneurial quality is largely dependent on external environmental and psychological factors – family background, work experience, social support, pressures associated with unemployment, desire for achievement, creativity, competitiveness and self-interest, initiative and leadership, locus of control and men-

toring etc. However, they did not deny the relevant role university experience plays in boosting student entrepreneurial intention; and enhancing graduate entrepreneurial quality. Johannison is also of the opinion that, “*to teach individuals to become not only more enterprising but businessman as well...is an undertaking that in both time and scope is beyond the capabilities of an academic business school*” (cited in Matlay, 2008. P. 348). The argument is that, the skills traditionally taught in universities and the teaching approaches are essential but not sufficient to make a successful graduate entrepreneur. Student entrepreneurial intention as used in this paper is the intention a student has to start a business after graduation as a result of EE undertaken as a course during academic studies.

Research has fully established the relationship between EE and students entrepreneurial intention however, the rate to which intention has been transformed into action (actually starting a business after graduation) is yet to be ascertained especially in Nigeria (Shane, 2004; Dean, 2004; Villanueva et al, 2005; Matlay, 2008; Izedonmi & Okafor, 2010). There is however, paucity of rigorous empirical research to corroborate the claims of most universities that their students benefitted greatly from the EE programmes and have upon graduation, gone to startup new ventures. In relation to graduate business startup, Bass & Hatcher (2005) after their survey of Meridian Community College, Mississippi, USA reported that, of the 157 out of 478 students that participated in the College’s JumpStart Entrepreneur Training Program: a 15-week entrepreneurship education scheme, over 67 started a new venture with the provision of a \$90,000 grant as startup incentive; of which 57 are still operating with over 80 jobs created.

In another survey conducted in 1988 by Stirling University involving 5,375 graduates from 10 universities in Scotland and England, it was reported that 9.7% (about 521) of graduates in the research went on to become business owners within a period of five years after graduation. However, the researchers acknowledged that up to 20% of the graduates in the sample already had some measure of entrepreneurial experience before enrolling in the entrepreneurship courses; and that this prior experience gained before acquiring EE tends to greatly enhance their overall performance as entrepreneurs. The report also indicated that 78% of these entrepreneurs were still in business five years later considering the high rate of business failures. Thus, opining that businesses owned and run by graduate entrepreneurs are better, more profitable and sustainable than those managed by non-graduates. Consequently, in another research covering a ten-year (1997-2006) period with sample size of 64 students selected across 8 universities in the United Kingdom, it was observed that as at the tenth year, 8 had become sole traders, 31 had become Micro-Business owners, 16 owners of Small business; 5 became Partners in enterprises and 4 Partnered in established Enterprise totaling 64 (Matlay & Carey, 2006). A few other researches have also proven relationship between EE and new business creation. A 50 year review of Young Enterprise in the United Kingdom also revealed substantial differences between those who had experienced enterprise and entrepreneurship education (either at school or at university – the study does not distinguish) and those who did not with 42% of Young Enterprise alumni being owners of a business (although not necessarily a start-up) compared to 26% of those in a control group with similar characteristics without EE. Also in Norway, it was found that 21% of 25-34 year olds that took part in the Young Enterprise programme have started their own businesses

compared with 4.5% in this age group across the entire population (Dept. of Business Innovation & Skills, 2013). Again, it was found that companies owned by entrepreneurship education graduates, in general, were larger and have more sales than those owned by non-entrepreneurship education graduates. In the case of Nigeria, no research has been made to reveal to correlation between entrepreneurship education and graduate business startup.

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive survey design was used for this study to gather data from the field. The reason for its use is to collect detailed and factual information to find out what is prevalent within a particular group (Kowalczyk, 2014), in this case 'graduate entrepreneurs'. The target population for this research is graduate entrepreneurs within the Yenagoa metropolis that took entrepreneurship as a module during their course of study in the university or its equivalent. All participants are graduates who own or run businesses. In the use of descriptive design, surveys, observations or case study methods are usually adopted for data collection Borg & Gall, 1989 (cited in AECT, 2001) and in this research, we have opted for the survey method. The purpose of this research paper is to acquire accurate profile of the relationship between entrepreneurship education and graduate entrepreneurship engagement, and descriptive survey design is most suitable as it enables the researcher to collect detailed and factual information that describes an already existing phenomenon (Easterby-Smith, et al. 2008; Ezeani, 1998; Ogundele, et al. 2012).

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and 101 were returned. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted. It is particularly useful when the researcher seeks to highlight a specific subgroup within a set population (Saunders, et al. 2009). This was because it enables the researchers to screen all participants to ensure everyone that participated meets the target participants but randomly (Easterby-Smith, et al. 2008). The questionnaire used Likert 5 point scale: 5 being the height of agreeableness (Strongly Agree) while 1 for height of disagreeableness Strongly Disagree). The questionnaire was primarily designed to realize the purposes of this research study. Tables and charts were used to analyze the data collected from the field to show differences in response.

The questionnaire was divided into two (2) segments, the first segment collected demographic information such as age, sex, occupation, educational background etc. the second segment was divided further into five (5) groups: Personality Traits, Need for Achievement, Situational, Entrepreneurship Education and Experience/Competence with six (6) questions in each group that measure the correlation of these factors with entrepreneurial engagements. Likert scale of five points: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree was adopted. Of the 101 participants, 53 (52.5%) were male while 48 (47.5%) were female. 67 (66.3%) of the participants' age range from 31-40 years, while 34 (33.7%) were of the age range of 20-30.

Overleaf is a bar chart showing the results from the research findings.

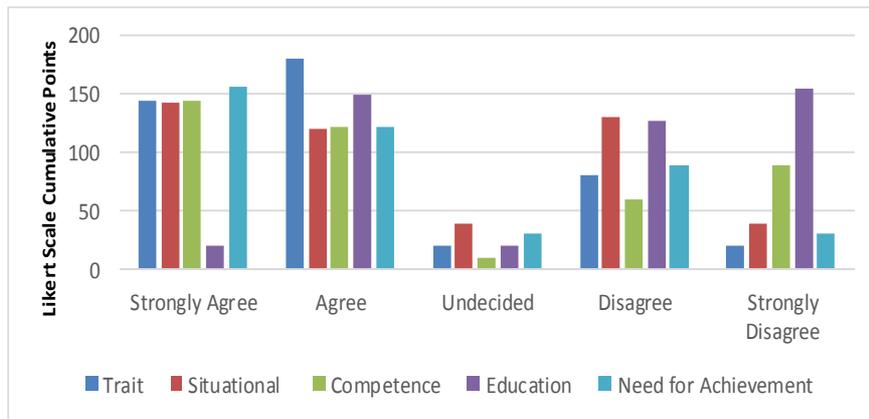


Figure 1 - Cumulative response from respondents

### Findings and Discussion

The chart above shows a striking revelation. Entrepreneurship education shows the least of all reasons for entrepreneurial engagement by graduates, while trait, need for achievement and situational circumstances were the most stimulating factors in graduate entrepreneurial engagement. Below is a table that shows the number and percentage of the participants' responses to the questions in the different parts of the second segment of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Showing the number/percentage of responses from questionnaires analyzed

S / N	FACTORS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	Personality Traits	33 (32.6%)	40 (40.4%)	5 (4.5%)	18 (18%)	5 (4.5%)
2	Need For Achievement	30 (30.2%)	25 (25.5%)	9 (8.4%)	28 (27.4%)	9 (8.4%)
3	Situational Circumstances	34 (33.8%)	29 (28.6%)	2 (2.3%)	14 (14.1%)	22 (21.2%)
4	Entrepreneurship education	3 (2.7%)	10 (9.6%)	5 (4.5%)	49 (48.7%)	34 (34.5%)
5	Experience & Competence	37 (36.5%)	29 (28.5%)	7 (7%)	21 (21%)	7 (7%)

Source: Author's Computation

In this analysis, we would combine the results of strongly agree and agree together, as well as disagree and strongly disagree together to get the aggregate of positive and negative responses. Considering personality trait as a factor that stimulates entrepreneurial engagement, 73 (73%) of the 101 respondents agree that trait is the stimulating factor for entrepreneurial engagement; 55 (55.7%) of the participants ticked Need for Achievement; 63 (62.4%) are of the opinion that situational circumstance caused them to pursue entrepreneurship; another 66 (65.%) ticked experience and competence as a stimulating factor for engaging in entrepreneurship while only 33 (32.3%) of the participants agree that entrepreneurship education was a stimulant in their pursuit of entrepreneurship. However, 83 (83.2%) of the participants are of the opinion that entrepreneurship education had nothing to do with their decision to pursue business as a career path. Although the research findings cannot at this moment be generalized due to the scope of the study, the study shows a 12.3% positive correlation between entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions and graduate entrepreneurial engagement overall. However, it is evident that, from this research findings, that graduates in Nigeria engage more in entrepreneurship activities not because of the entrepreneurship programmes they attended while in school but because of other factors.

This result thus, confirms some of the findings as reported in the literature review and as well points to the weakness of entrepreneurship education programme in the Nigeria tertiary institutions. It is apparent from the research findings that, entrepreneurship education is not a primary requirement for entrepreneurial engagement. However, the little positive link between EE and graduate entrepreneurship in Nigeria can be harnessed and improved upon if close attention is paid to the content or delivery mode of the course to enhance its effectiveness. The surprisingly new knowledge added to the body of graduate entrepreneurship research is that, Yenagoa has never been studied and this result even though cannot be generalized shows the insignificant impact EE has on stimulating graduate entrepreneurship in the area; which can be presumed could be similar across the nation as all tertiary institutions in Nigeria use similar curriculum. However, what have been revealed from the research report is that quite a number of graduates are running their own businesses in Yenagoa which is good for the economy of the state.

## **Conclusion**

The finding from the research study is evident there is more to be done to make entrepreneurship education in Nigeria to be able to stimulate entrepreneurship engagement as we have seen in many other countries. Although the positive correlation is low, it shows that it is possible to improve the programme either by mode of teaching or beefing up the modules. This thus reveals, even though the study findings cannot be generalized due to the smallness of its scope, that entrepreneurship education is not a pre-requisite for graduate entrepreneurship but has a positive impact on graduate entrepreneurial engagement. The implication here is that, entrepreneurship education should produce entrepreneurs and must not be one of the modules that students take as part of the requirement for the possession of a degree. Finally, the engagement of graduates in small scale businesses was unexpected and surprising as the youths in Yenagoa have always been tagged to be lazy, militants and irresponsi-

ble but the research results showed a vibrant set of youths ready to take on risks and challenges as inherent in business startup and management.

### **Recommendations**

As a result of this research findings, the following are recommendations for further study.

1. A study should be carried out to measure in a broader scale the impact of entrepreneurship teaching methods on graduate entrepreneurial engagement.
2. A research be conducted to evaluate the success rate of businesses run by graduates that took entrepreneurship courses and those that did not.
3. Another should also be conducted to ascertain if businesses run by entrepreneurship graduates are larger in terms of income than those run by non-entrepreneurship graduates.

### *Correspondence*

Fems Kurotimi M. &  
Centre for Entrepreneurship  
Federal Polytechnic of Oil & Gas Ekowe, Bayelsa  
Bayelsa State  
Nigeria  
Email: kurotimifems@gmail.com

Agada Franklin  
Centre for Entrepreneurship  
Federal Polytechnic of Oil & Gas Ekowe, Bayelsa  
Bayelsa State  
Nigeria

Godsave, Aladei  
Department of Accounting  
Adaka Boro College of Education  
Bayelsa State  
Nigeria

Poazi, Francis D. W.  
Department of Business Administration  
Niger Delta University  
Bayelsa State  
Nigeria

## References

- Abd Rani, S. H. B. & Hong T. S., (2012). Antecedents and consequences of entrepreneurial quality among graduate entrepreneurs. *Asian Journal of Business and Management*, 2(9), pp. 44-55.
- Akanwa, B., and C.N. Agu, 2005. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and practice in Nigeria*. Owerri: Resources Development Centre.
- Alberti, F., Sciascia, S. & Poli, A. (2004). *Entrepreneurship education: Notes on an ongoing debate*. 14th Annual IntEnt Conference. University of Napoli, Italy.
- Amadi, M. N., (2012). *Entrepreneurship in higher education in Nigeria: An imperative for sustainable development*. Department of Educational Administration, University of Lagos, Akoka.
- Arasteh, H. R., (2003). Entrepreneurship and Higher Education: Principles and Obstacles. *Rahyafi*, 29, pp. 5-13.
- Awogbenle, C. A. & Iwuamadi C. K., (2010). Youth unemployment: Entrepreneurship development programme as an intervention mechanism. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(6), pp. 831-835.
- Baldry, H., (2009). *Recession forces graduates into self-employment*. Birmingham: Birmingham Post. Available at: [www.birminghampost.net/birmingham-business/birmingham-business-ET53,5476news/business-entrepreneurship/2009/02/11/recession-forces-graduates-into-selfemployment-65233-22901489/#ixzz19bMaz4a5](http://www.birminghampost.net/birmingham-business/birmingham-business-ET53,5476news/business-entrepreneurship/2009/02/11/recession-forces-graduates-into-selfemployment-65233-22901489/#ixzz19bMaz4a5) [Accessed 15 July 2014].
- Bass, S. & Hatcher, W., (2005). A Sustainable Entrepreneurship Training Program. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 29: 643–644, 2005
- Bayelsa.gov.ng (2017). *Facts About Bayelsa*. Available from: [www.bayelsa.gov.ng](http://www.bayelsa.gov.ng)
- Betta, M., Jones, R. & Latham, J., (2010). Entrepreneurship and the innovative self: A Schumpeterian reflection. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 16(3), pp. 229-244.
- Business List, (2017). *Companies in Bayelsa, Nigeria*. Available from: <http://www.businesslist.com.ng/state/bayelsa>
- Carayannis, E. G., Evans, D. & Hanson, M. (2003). A cross-cultural learning strategy for entrepreneurship education: Outline of key concepts and lessons learned from a comparative study of entrepreneurship students in France and the US. *Technovation*, 23, pp. 757–771

Champions Newspaper, (2017). Federal government moves to safeguard \$20 billion remitted by Nigerians in Diaspora. *Champions Newspaper, May 23*. Available from: <http://www.championnews.com.ng/federal-govt-moves-to-safeguard-20-billion-remitted-by-nigerians-in-diaspora/>

City Population, (2017). *The population Development in Bayelsa*. Available from: <http://www.citypopulation.net/php/nigeria-admin.php?adm1id=NGA006>

Dean, A. S., (2004). Educating Entrepreneurship Students about Emotion and Learning from Failure. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3(3), pp. 274-287.

Department of Business Innovation & Skills, (2013). *Enterprise Education Impact in Higher Education and Further Education*. Final Report.

Distance Calculator, (2017). *Mbiama to Swali Market –Yenagoa*. Available from: <https://www.distancecalculator.net/>

Drucker, P., (1970). *The Practice of Management*. USA: Harper and Row.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., Jackson, P. & Lowe, A. (2008). 3rd eds. *Management Research*. London: Sage.

Ekankumo, B. & Kemebaradikumo, N., (2011). Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education (EE): strategy for sustainable development. *Asian Journal of Business Management*, 3(3), pp. 196-202.

El, B., (2012). *Problems of youth entrepreneurship in Nigeria*. Available from: <http://myschool.com.ng/cu/connect2me/46432/blog/1735.html> [Accessed 14 October, 2015].

Ezeani, S. I. (1998). *Research Methods: A Realistic Approach*. Ibadan: Elohim Publishers.

Fems, K. M. (2016). *Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century*. Yenagoa: Printessence Impressions.

Fems, K. M., Abara, O. & Poazi, F. D. W. (2016). Entrepreneurship: Cure for Economic Under-development. A Theoretical Perspective. *International Journal of Social, Behavioural, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering*, 10 (9), pp. 3075-3080.

Finkle, T.A. & Deeds, D. (2001). Trends in the market for entrepreneurship faculty during the period 1989-1998. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 16(6), pp. 613-630.

- Ghasemi, F. et al., (2011). The relationship between creativity and achievement motivation with high school students' entrepreneurship. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, pp. 1291 – 1296.
- Hong, Z., et al., (2012). Entrepreneurship quality of college students related to entrepreneurial education. Empirical study on psychological and behavioral characteristics. *Energy Procedia*, 17(1), pp. 1907-1913.
- Izedonmi, P. F. & Okafor, C., (2010). The effect of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 10(6), pp. 49-60.
- Jimah, M.S & Unuigbokhai, O. A., (2011). *Entrepreneurship education: A tool for sustainable development in Nigeria*. Auchi: Auchi Polytechnic.
- Katz, J. A., (2003). The chronology and intellectual trajectory of American entrepreneurship education 1876–1999. *Journal of Business Venturing* 18, pp. 283–300.
- Kazeem, Y. (2016). About half of the university graduates in Nigeria cannot find jobs. *Quartz Africa*. Available from: <https://qz.com/603967/about-half-of-the-university-graduates-in-nigeria-cannot-find-jobs/>
- Kirby, D. A., (2002). *Entrepreneurship education: Can business schools meet the challenge?* Paper presented at the ICSB World Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Knight, F., (1921). *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit*. USA: Springfield Publication.
- Kowalczyk, D. (2014). *Descriptive Research Design: Definition, Examples & Types*. Available from: <http://study.com/academy/lesson/descriptive-research-design-definition-examples-types.html>
- Krištofiaková, L. & Krelová, K. K., (2012). *Preparedness of graduates for entrepreneurial environment*. International Conference: The Future of Education. Slovak University of Technology, Slovakia.
- Matlay, H. & Carey, C., (2006). *Entrepreneurship education in the UK: A critical perspective*. Paper presented at the ISBE Conference, Cardiff.
- Matlay, H., (2008). The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial outcomes. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 15(2), pp. 382-396.
- McFadzean, E., O'Loughlin, A. & Shaw, E., (2005). Corporate entrepreneurship and innovation part 1: the missing link. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 8 (3), pp. 350-372.

Mike, U. (2016). Graduate Unemployment in Nigeria. Hubpages, October 24. Available from: <https://hubpages.com/education/Graduate-Unemployment-in-Nigerian>

Mitra, J., Abubakar, Y. A. & Sagagi, M., (2011). Knowledge creation and human capital for development: The role of graduate entrepreneurship. *Education + Training*, 53(5), pp. 462-479.

Nda-Isaiah, S. (2013). Nigeria's 80 Percent Graduate Unemployment. All Africa, September 23. Available from: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201309230235.html>

Nigeria Directory, (2017) Browse Categories Yenegoa L.G.A Based Statistics. Available from: [http://www.directory.org.ng/lga\\_bayelsa\\_yenegoa&page=1](http://www.directory.org.ng/lga_bayelsa_yenegoa&page=1)

Ogundele, O. J. K., Akingbade, W. A. & Akinlabi, H. B. (2012). Entrepreneurship training and education as strategic tools for poverty alleviation in Nigeria. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(1), pp. 148 -156.

Olorundare, A. S. & Kayode, D. J., (2014). Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities: A Tool for National Transformation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education*, Vol. 29, pp. 155–175.

Osalar, P., (2013). Entrepreneurial education revolution: An imperative for Sustainable Development in Nigeria. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/11/entrepreneurial-education-revolution-imperative-sustainable-development-nigeria-1/> [Accessed January 23, 2016].

Oyelola, O. T., et al., (2013). Entrepreneurship for sustainable economic growth in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development Studies*, 2(2), pp. 197-215.

Premium Times, (2014). 1.8 million Nigerians enter job market yearly, says Okonjo-Iweala. *Premium Times*, April 1. Available from: <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/157886-1-8-million-nigerians-enter-job-market-yearly-says-okonjo-iweala.html>

Premium Times, (2017). Federal government moves to safeguard \$20 billion remitted by Nigerians in Diaspora. *Premium Times*, March 23. Available from: <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/226905-federal-govt-moves-to-safeguard-20-billion-remitted-by-nigerians-in-diaspora.html>

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, (2012). *Enterprise and entrepreneurship education: Guidance for UK higher education providers*. Gloucester: QAA. Available from: [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A., (2009). 5<sup>th</sup> ed. *Research Methods for Business Students*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

- Schumpeter, J. A., (2004). *On the concept of social value*. In Clemence, R.V. (Ed.), *Essays on Entrepreneurship, Innovations, Business Cycles, and the Evolution of Capitalism*, 7th ed. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, pp. 1-20.
- Shane, D. (2003). *A general theory of entrepreneurship: the individual opportunity nexus*. Pittsburg, USA: Edward Elgar Publication.
- Shane, S., (2004). *Academic Entrepreneurship: University Spin-offs and Wealth Creation*, Northampton, M.A: Edward Elgar.
- SME Online, (2017). *Nigerians In UK Seek Collaboration To Boost Investment*. Available from: <https://www.smeonline.biz/2017/02/20/nigerians-uk-seek-collaboration-boost-investment/>
- Soludo, C. (2015). *Is Nigeria Losing Her 17 Million Diaspora?* *Africa Heritage Magazine, January 4*. Available from: <http://www.africanheritagemagazine.de/is-nigeria-losing-her-17-million-diaspora/>
- Thaddeus, E. (2012). *Perspectives: Entrepreneurship Development & Growth of Enterprises in Nigeria*. *Entrepreneurial Practice review*, 2(2), pp. 31-35
- The Association for Educational Communications and Technology, (2001). *A Handbook of Research for Educational Communications and Technology*. Available from: <http://www.aect.org/edtech/ed1/41/41-01.html>
- Unachukwu, G. O., (2009). *Issues and challenges in the development of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria*. *African Journal Review: An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal*, 3(5), pp. 213-226.
- University of Arizona, (2000). *Entrepreneurship education impact study. Graduate entrepreneurs prosper, innovate*. Karl Eller Center - Berger Entrepreneurship Program. Tucson, Arizona. Retrieved from: [www.bpa.arizona.edu/programs/berger](http://www.bpa.arizona.edu/programs/berger)
- Villanueva, J., Forbes, D., Zellmer-Bruhn, M & Sapienza, H., (2005). *The Entrepreneurial Intentions of Academic Scientist-Inventors*. Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, National Science Foundation Research Work, Grant No. 0322512
- Watkins-Mathys, L., (2009). *Developing Student-led Entrepreneurship Learning: the South-East England Collaborative Model*. Buckinghamshire: Buckinghamshire New University.