

# Assessing the Impact of Entrepreneurship Education Degree Programme on Students' Entrepreneurial Attitude and Intention

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.803136S>

Received: 20 May 2024; Revised: 05 June 2024; Accepted: 11 June 2024; Published: 18 July 2024

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of entrepreneurship education degree programmes on students' entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions in South-west Nigerian universities. The introduction of these programmes, alongside compulsory entrepreneurship courses mandated by the National Universities Commission (NUC), aims to produce graduates who are job creators rather than job seekers. Utilizing a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design, the study sampled 590 students (274 first-year and 316 final-year students) and four lecturers from entrepreneurship education programmes. Instruments used included the Students' Attitude towards Entrepreneurship Questionnaire (SATEQ) ( $r=0.83$ ) and the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) ( $r=0.69$ ). Data were analyzed using frequency counts, means, and t-tests. Results indicate high initial entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions among students, with a significant improvement in attitudes but not intentions by the end of the programme. This suggests that while students develop a more favorable view of entrepreneurship, their intention to start businesses remains unchanged. The findings highlight the importance of effective programme delivery in enhancing entrepreneurial attitudes and propose several recommendations for stakeholders.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship education, Degree programme, Entrepreneurial attitude, Entrepreneurial intentions.

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a critical driver of economic growth, innovation, and job creation. It involves identifying market opportunities, managing finances, building teams, and marketing products and services (Kuratko, 2020; Kuratko et al., 2021). Recognizing opportunities amid chaos and contradictions is essential for entrepreneurship-driven policies. Despite its potential, many Nigerian graduates remain unemployed, prompting the federal government to mandate entrepreneurship education through the National Universities Commission (NUC). This initiative aims to equip students with the skills to become job creators and foster national development.

Since 2000, courses on Entrepreneurship Development (CED) have been mandatory for all Nigerian undergraduates, regardless of discipline (NUC, 2011). However, the persistent high unemployment rate among graduates suggests a disconnect between the objectives of entrepreneurship education and its outcomes. To address this, some universities have introduced Bachelor's degree programmes in Entrepreneurial Studies/Education, hoping to bridge the gap between education and employment.

Effective entrepreneurship education aims to produce graduates who can identify opportunities, take calculated risks, and create value through innovative thinking (Amosun, 2021). The success of these

programmes depends on the availability of qualified teachers and adequate infrastructure. However, Nigerian universities often lack the necessary resources and trained personnel to deliver practical entrepreneurial training effectively (Nwekeaku, 2013; Brown, 2012; Offerman et al., 2012).

This study examines the impact of entrepreneurship education degree programmes on students' entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions, focusing on universities in South-west Nigeria. The research uses the Antecedent, Transaction, and Outcome (ATO) evaluation model to assess the programme's effectiveness.

The rising unemployment rate among Nigerian graduates has led to increased crime and social vices. To mitigate this, universities introduced entrepreneurship education degree programmes, supplementing the compulsory entrepreneurship courses mandated by the NUC. Despite these efforts, unemployment remains high, suggesting challenges in programme implementation. This study addresses the gap in research by examining the specific impact of these programmes on students' entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. It goes with the following questions.

What are the attitudes of 100L students before enrolling in the entrepreneurship education degree programme? What are the entrepreneurial intentions of 100L students before enrolling in the entrepreneurship education degree programme? Has the entrepreneurship education degree programme significantly impacted final-year students' attitudes towards entrepreneurial business? Has the entrepreneurship education degree programme significantly impacted final-year students' intentions to start a business venture?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptual Review

#### Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a multifaceted concept with various interpretations. Idogho and Ainabor (2011) define entrepreneurship as an innovative act that reallocates existing resources for new wealth-producing capacities. Duru (2011) adds that it is a primary source of innovation, often involving new visions and business methods for both new and established companies. Kraus and Kauranen (2009) describe it as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish, and successfully run an enterprise. Nabi et al. (2006) highlight entrepreneurship as the pursuit of opportunity without regard to currently controlled resources, while Millman and Matlay (2008) see it as a driver of innovation and change that enhances productivity and economic competitiveness.

Entrepreneurship involves creating new enterprises or transforming existing ones to add value. It requires energy and passion, willingness to take calculated risks, teamwork, and the creative skill to marshal needed resources (Binuomote & Okoli, 2015). An entrepreneur is an individual who innovates, organizes, and manages a business venture, taking on risks to achieve economic gains (Shane, 2003). According to Vakili, Tahmasebi, and Tahmasebi (2016), entrepreneurship can be categorized into five types based on activity levels: administrative, opportunistic, acquisitive, incubative, and initiative entrepreneurship, each with unique characteristics and educational needs.

#### Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education aims to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and mindset necessary for business creation and management. It emphasizes innovation, creativity, and risk-taking, fostering skills such as leadership, communication, and problem-solving (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report 2021). Ajagbe (2014) notes that it prepares students to think creatively, analyze business ideas, solve problems, and

evaluate projects objectively. UNESCO (2008) asserts that entrepreneurship education increases students' ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes, acting as a catalyst for economic development and job creation (Oyebola et al., 2015).

The objectives of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities include developing entrepreneurial spirit, nurturing entrepreneurship knowledge, providing skills for global market competition, and enabling opportunity identification and exploitation (Lead City University, 2005). Nwekeaku (2013) states that it combines creativity, innovation, and business development. Shai (2009) and Enu (2012) categorize its curriculum into personal development, business development, and entrepreneurial skills development. Sanchez et al. (2017) classify entrepreneurship education into three types: teaching entrepreneurship (general knowledge), teaching to undertake (practical skills), and teaching through entrepreneurship (action-based learning).

### **Theoretical Review**

The Countenance Evaluation Model developed by Robert Stake, the Countenance Evaluation Model emphasizes the importance of descriptions and judgments in program evaluation. It assesses the alignment between what was anticipated and what actually occurred before, during, and after teaching (Ismail et al., 2018). The model focuses on descriptive and judgmental acts across three phases: antecedents (initial conditions), transactions (process of intervention), and outcomes (results achieved). Stake's model includes congruence (alignment between intents and observations) and dependencies (influence of antecedents on transactions and outcomes) as key analysis aspects (Popham, 1993; Ghulam et al., 2017).

This model is suitable for evaluating program or policy implementation, documenting expectations and observations about antecedents, transactions, and outcomes (Noer et al., 2017; Ismail et al., 2018). It involves describing and judging a program, analyzing congruence and contingencies, and identifying pertinent standards and judgments, making it useful for formative and summative evaluations (Ismail et al., 2018).

### **Empirical Review**

#### **Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Attitude**

Entrepreneurial attitude involves a mindset focused on innovation, risk-taking, and opportunity-seeking. It is characterized by a positive evaluation of entrepreneurial behavior (Amosun, 2021). Vamvaka et al. (2020) conducted a study among Greek undergraduate IT students, finding that affective attitude and perceived self-efficacy are strong predictors of entrepreneurial intention, emphasizing the role of emotions in entrepreneurship.

Su et al. (2021) extended the theory of planned behavior to include perceived university support, revealing that such support significantly affects students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship. The study found that university support has a greater impact on attitude than on behavioral control, highlighting the importance of a well-structured entrepreneurship course system in fostering entrepreneurial intention.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The population included first-year (100L) and final-year (400L) students, as well as lecturers from entrepreneurship education programmes in South-west Nigerian universities. A total sample of 590 students (274 100L and 316 400L) and four lecturers was selected. Data collection instruments included the Students' Attitude towards Entrepreneurship Questionnaire (SATEQ) with a reliability coefficient of 0.83 and the Entrepreneurial Intention

Questionnaire (EIQ) with a reliability coefficient of 0.69. Data analysis involved frequency counts, means, and t-tests.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Research Question 1

What is the attitude of 100L students before the entrepreneurship education degree programme?

Table 1 Attitude of 100L students towards entrepreneurship education

SN	Items	SD	D	A	SA	Sum	Mean	Remarks
1	I enjoy entrepreneurship education lesson	0	3	78	193	1012	3.69	Positive
2	Entrepreneurship education degree programme increase my interest in a career in entrepreneurship.	10	6	92	166	962	3.51	Positive
3	I consider entrepreneurship education as being important if not more important than any other courses.	16	20	107	131	901	3.29	Positive
4	Entrepreneurship education prepared me to make innovative and informed about career choice.	7	81	0	186	994	3.63	Positive
5	I am happy to have learned entrepreneurship education	3	7	77	187	996	3.64	Positive
6	I consider entrepreneurship a desirable carer option	3	7	115	149	958	3.50	Positive
7	The university encourage students to pursue entrepreneurship venture	25	12	98	139	899	3.28	Positive
8	My institution helps me to meet successful entrepreneurs who motivated me towards entrepreneurship as a career.	15	10	131	118	900	3.28	Positive
9	Due to entrepreneurship education, I am able identify business opportunities	3	7	70	194	1003	3.66	Positive
10	Due to entrepreneurship education, I can now create products and service that satisfy customer	7	13	97	157	952	3.47	Positive
11	Due to entrepreneurship education, I can successfully develop business plan.	9	6	98	161	959	3.50	Positive
12	Due to entrepreneurship education, I now have skills to create new business	4	11	81	178	981	3.58	Positive
13	Due to entrepreneurship education, I can now successfully identify source of business finance.	7	6	113	148	950	3.47	Positive
14	Due to entrepreneurship education, I can now perform feasibility studies to check my business ideas work.	20	24	101	129	887	3.24	Positive
15	Practical example as well as use of quest speakers such as successful entrepreneurs help me understand entrepreneurship better	10	23	117	124	903	3.30	Positive

16	I am very happy and satisfied with how the entrepreneurship programme is taught.	11	6	89	168	962	3.51	Positive
17	I want to work for myself after completing the school	6	10	69	189	989	3.61	Positive
18	The idea of working for myself is very appealing to me	10	89	0	175	977	3.57	Positive
19	I consider self-employment as very important	9	74	0	191	995	3.63	Positive
20	My personal satisfaction with self-employment is very high	13	6	75	180	970	3.54	Positive
	Total	188	421	1608	3263	19150	3.50	Positive

Criterion mean= 2.5

Table 1 illustrates the attitude of 100L students towards entrepreneurship education. The findings indicate a generally positive attitude, with mean scores for all 20 items above the criterion mean of 2.5.

**Summary of Key Findings:**

**Highest Scoring Items:**

- Enjoy entrepreneurship education lessons (3.69)
- Ability to identify business opportunities (3.66)
- Happiness with having learned entrepreneurship education (3.64)
- Considering self-employment as very important (3.63)
- Desire to work for oneself after school (3.61)

The overall mean score of 3.50 suggests a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education among 100L students before the programme began.

**Research Question 2**

What is the entrepreneurial intention of 100L students before the entrepreneurship education degree programme?

Table 2 Entrepreneurial intention of 100L students

SN	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	Sum	Mean	Remarks
1	I would rather own my own business than earn a higher salary employed by someone else.	50	25	102	97	794	2.90	High
2	I would rather own my own business than pursue another promising career.	52	33	62	127	812	2.96	High
3	I am willing to make significant personal sacrifices in order to stay in business.	43	27	126	78	787	2.87	High
4	I would work somewhere else only long enough to make another attempt to establish my business.	32	24	166	52	786	2.87	High
5	My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur.	42	20	79	133	851	3.11	High

6	I will make every effort to start and run my own firm.	42	9	64	159	888	3.24	High
7	I am determined to create a business venture in the future.	42	15	65	152	875	3.19	High
8	I have very seriously thought of starting a firm.	45	10	80	139	861	3.14	High
9	I consider it to be very likely that in the future I will be running my own firm.	39	15	65	155	884	3.23	High
10	I plan to launch my own business someday.	39	9	78	148	883	3.22	High
11	I read books on how to set up a firm.	53	22	110	89	783	2.86	High
12	I spend time learning about starting a firm.	36	22	123	93	821	3.00	High
13	I attend seminars and conferences that focus on a “start your own business planning.”	16	76	105	77	791	2.89	High
14	I participate in seminars that focus on writing a business plan.	17	78	104	75	785	2.86	High
15	I prefer to be an entrepreneur rather than to be an employee	36	12	95	131	869	3.17	High
16	I have thought seriously to start my own business after completing my study.	36	19	102	117	848	3.09	High
17	I am up to the task of setting up my business	36	24	97	117	843	3.08	High
18	Among various options, I would rather be an entrepreneur	36	18	91	129	861	3.14	High
19	I am up to the task of setting up my business	39	31	95	109	822	3.00	High
20	To set off a business and keep it functioning would be easy	18	31	147	78	833	3.04	High
21	I am capable to control the formation process of a new business	39	31	98	106	819	2.99	High
22	My qualification has offered me with adequate knowledge required to start a business	9	24	152	89	869	3.17	High
23	It would be very easy for me to develop a business idea	40	21	110	103	824	3.01	High
24	I am prepared to do anything to be an entrepreneur	43	16	81	134	854	3.12	High
25	Being an entrepreneur implies more merits than demerits	36	23	97	118	845	3.08	High
26	I believe I am completely able to start a business	45	12	100	117	837	3.05	High
	Total	961	647	2594	2922	21725	3.05	High

Criterion mean= 2.5

Table 2 shows the entrepreneurial intention of 100L students before the programme. The overall mean score of 3.05 indicates a high level of entrepreneurial intention.

Summary of Key Findings:

- Effort to start and run a firm (3.24)
- Considering the likelihood of running a personal firm in the future (3.23)
- Planning to launch a personal business someday (3.22)
- Determination to create a business venture in the future (3.19)
- Preference to be an entrepreneur rather than an employee (3.17)

The overall mean score of 3.05 suggests high entrepreneurial intention among 100L students prior to starting the entrepreneurship education programme.

**Research Question 3**

Has the entrepreneurship education degree programme made a significant impact on final year students in terms of attitude towards entrepreneurial business?

Table 3 t-test analysis of impact on final year students' attitude

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	P
Entrepreneur attitude	attitude of 100L students	274	64.64	10.049	588	- 3.351	0.001
	attitude of 400L students	316	67.02	7.174			

Table 3 presents the t-test analysis comparing the attitudes of 100L and 400L students. The results indicate a significant difference ( $t = -3.351, p < 0.05$ ).

- The mean attitude score for 100L students is 64.64, while for 400L students it is 67.02.
- The significant t-test result suggests that the entrepreneurship education degree programme positively impacted the attitudes of final year students towards entrepreneurial business.

**Research Question 4**

Has the entrepreneurship education degree programme made a significant impact in terms of entrepreneurial intention?

Table 4 t-test analysis of impact on final year student' entrepreneurial intention

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	P
Entrepreneur intension	Intention of 100L students	274	79.29	21.641	588	- 0.685	0.494
	Intention of 400L students	316	80.33	15.080			

Table 4 shows the t-test analysis comparing the entrepreneurial intentions of 100L and 400L students. The results indicate no significant difference ( $t = -0.685, p > 0.05$ ).

- The mean entrepreneurial intention score for 100L students is 79.29, while for 400L students it is 80.33.
- The lack of significant difference suggests that the entrepreneurship education degree programme did not significantly impact the entrepreneurial intentions of final year students.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 1. Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship Education (Research Question 1):

- The positive attitude of 100L students towards entrepreneurship education before the programme is beneficial. This pre-existing positive outlook can facilitate the teaching and learning process, motivating instructors and enhancing student engagement.
- These findings align with the studies by Vamvaka et al. (2020) and Su et al. (2021), which also reported high and beneficial student attitudes towards entrepreneurship programmes.

### 2. Entrepreneurial Intention (Research Question 2):

- The high entrepreneurial intention among 100L students before the programme is a positive indicator for the success of the entrepreneurship education programme. High intention levels are crucial for the effective implementation of the programme.
- This supports the argument by Oyebola et al. (2015) that high entrepreneurial intention is essential for successful entrepreneurship education.

### 3. Impact on Attitude (Research Question 3):

- The significant positive impact on the attitudes of final year students towards entrepreneurial business indicates that the entrepreneurship education programme effectively enhanced students' attitudes. Improved attitudes suggest a higher likelihood of students establishing their own businesses post-graduation.
- These findings are consistent with those of Huber et al. (2012) and Williamson et al. (2013), who reported positive effects of entrepreneurship education on students' attitudes.

### 4. Impact on Entrepreneurial Intention (Research Question 4):

- The programme did not significantly impact the entrepreneurial intentions of final year students. Although there was a slight increase in the mean scores, it was not statistically significant.
- This contradicts findings by Williamson et al. (2013), Adetayo et al. (2015), and Nwosu (2019), who reported changes in intentions and attitudes post-programme. However, the slight increase suggests that the programme may still be beneficial, albeit not significantly altering intentions.

## CONCLUSION

The introduction of the entrepreneurship education degree programme aimed to produce job creators rather than job seekers. While the programme significantly enhanced students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, it did not significantly impact their entrepreneurial intentions. Effective programme delivery remains crucial for translating positive attitudes and high intentions into actual entrepreneurial engagement.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Lecturers should enhance the use of learner-centered teaching methods to foster active learning.
- NUC should promote the implementation of entrepreneurship education degree programmes across more universities to increase the number of self-employed graduates.
- Government agencies should reorient youths on the importance of entrepreneurship for personal and national development.



- Parents should support and encourage their children's entrepreneurial intentions by providing necessary resources and engaging in entrepreneurial activities themselves.
- The government should create an enabling environment for young entrepreneurs to translate their intentions into reality.
- Government agencies should offer financial support to universities promoting entrepreneurship education to encourage broader implementation and improve programme outcomes.

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