

Academic Self-Concept, Self-Efficacy and Social Support as Determinant of Entrepreneurial intention among Emerging Adults' undergraduates of private Universities in Southwest Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated Academic Self-Concept, Self-Efficacy and Social Support as Determinant of Entrepreneurial intention among Emerging Adults' undergraduates' of private Universities in Southwest Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design of ex-post factor type and four research questions were answered. Data were collected using Academic Self-concept, Self-efficacy, Social Support and Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (ASSSSEIQ) a standardized validated instrument which has five sections with four sub-scales. Section A contains the demographic data of the respondents; section B to E contained Entrepreneurial Intention ($\alpha = 0.90$); Academic Self-concept ($\alpha = 0.89$); Self-efficacy ($\alpha = 0.90$) and Social Support ($\alpha = 0.87$) Scales respectively from 1,305 male and female emerging adults in 300 level of study in private universities in South-west, Nigeria selected through multistage sampling procedure from 9 private universities in three states (Ogun, Ondo and Oyo) selected from the South-west, Nigeria through the use of simple random sampling technique. Analysis of data was done using percentage, frequency counts, mean and standard deviation analyses statistical tool at 0.05 level of alpha significance. The findings revealed that the level of entrepreneurial intention of emerging adults' undergraduates of private universities in South-west, Nigeria is high. Also, the level of influence academic self-concept have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria is high. The level of self-efficacy of emerging adults undergraduates' of private universities in South-west, Nigeria is Low. However, the level of influence perceived social support have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria is

high. Therefore it was recommended that emerging adults' undergraduates should endeavour to be self-efficacious as it will help them to advance the conception that uncertainties associated with starting a new business enterprise are not unexpected and therefore demands fervent planning by any would-be entrepreneur.

Keywords: Academic self-concept, Emerging adults', Entrepreneurial intention, Self-efficacy, Social support, South-west Nigeria, Undergraduates

Introduction

Entrepreneurial intention which is a phenomenon that helps foster and increase the exploration of novel and innovative entrepreneurial activities that facilitates employment generation, industrialization, economic growth, sustainable development and wealth creation seem to be lacking in the creative mind-set of some emerging adults despite present day global high unemployment rate and socio-economic uncertainty (Amofah et al., 2020). This development is of grave concern to professionals in counselling and behavioural studies who are spiritedly focused in helping people develop the capability to attain sustainable socio-personal adjustment, creative adaptation, functionality, capacity development and productivity. These core concerns that serve as central goals of counselling and behavioural studies are pivotal to emerging adults' realisation of their sense of self-fulfilment, identity and wellbeing. Thus, emerging adults' quality of life may depend on their level of creativity, productivity, sources of livelihood and economic independence. Indeed, the feeling of adequacy, high self-worth, subjective happiness and sense of accomplishment that they could derive from contributing to their personal lives, family wellbeing and national development is quite unquantifiable. Interestingly, a recent report of University of

New Hampshire affirmed that with the present radical global economic crisis that has led to immense shortage of employment opportunities and the only opportunity through which emerging adults' can transform their lives positively and attain state of self-fulfilment and economic independence is through engaging in entrepreneurial activities (University of New Hampshire Report, 2024).

Also, Bouncken, et al., (2022) averred that entrepreneurship intention serves as a catalyst that promotes both economic and sustainable developments because entrepreneurship intention is an expressed effort that demonstrates the behaviour of an entrepreneur to initiate novel creative ideas that would create wealth, add value to human life and societal development. This implies that entrepreneurship intention is a noble characteristic attribute required of an entrepreneur to succeed as it could act as a stimulus for creativity, innovation and strategic vision to identifying opportunities, initiate, run and nurture a business venture for a positive reward. The postulation of Theory of Planned Behaviour reinforces this fact as it affirms that intention of individuals to be engaged in entrepreneurship activities are primarily influenced by different factors such as the ability to self-regulate and appropriately control behavioural and attitudinal dispositions and subjective

norms. These identified factors are important constituents of human self-concept. These factors they tend to reinforce emerging adults' aspiration to develop the needed entrepreneurship intention that would instigate their desire to start a business (Gui et al., 2021).

Academic self-concept is a construct that projects student personal views of their academic ability and competence in comparison to their colleagues while considering their perceptual view of their intellectual and attitudinal dispositions, and feelings about their focus and orientations towards success. Students' academic self-concept helps them develop the capacity to understand themselves better, distinguish self from others based on their level of academic attained accomplishment (Gui et al., 2021). Therefore, the ability to comprehend and have a good perception of one's academic dexterity and intellectual competence in been able to successfully accomplish academic concern positively boost students' academic self-concept level (Gui et al., 2021). Also, emerging adults with high academic self-concept are often seen to express high level of tolerance, confidence and determination in the face of uncertainty and taking risks with their involvement in initiating and engaging in entrepreneurial business activities (Gui et al., 2021).

Likewise, Basarkod and Marsh (2023) posit that academic self-concept is termed to be an individuals' sense of perception of their own skills, abilities and competences in their engaged academic task and subjects. An individuals' ability to have positive academic self-concept in a learning environment often make them to attain improvement and successive outcome in their educational

pursuit such as in good selection of courses, being persistent and resilient for improved academic achievement. In a school setting, the level of a learners' academic self-concept equally determines the outcomes of their resilience after monitoring their earlier achievement level. Overtime, research has essentially revealed that learners' academic self-concept is a significant predictor of their achievement in learning than other forms of motivational paradigms and this suggest that academic self-concept could be termed as one of the most vital constructs that motivates learners' to attain their peak performance (Basarkod & Marsh, 2023). Academic self-concept as a construct is used to define a students' discernment of their personal academic ability. The level of a students' academic self-concept is of importance because it determines the rate at which they invest time and intellectual resources in learning tasks that they project to attain success. Thus, academic self-concept is seeing to have associated educational and social outcomes. For example, as observed a students' academic self-concept relates with their desired determination to always study hard, pay attention in classroom teaching and learning experience, concentrate while learning, positively engaged in classroom learning activities, complete their homework, engage in student-teacher consultation, motivated to learn, prepare well for class test and often set target for high achievement in learning task (Keller et al., 2023).

In the same vein, it is of note that social support is a tangible resource for development of entrepreneurship intention as it influences emerging adults' desire to engage in entrepreneur activities. Social support can be said to imply tangible influences individuals receives from, friends, mentors,

family members and environment. This support motivates people that receive them to aspire for greater height in pursuit of success and stability. For example, it is established in Ugwueze et al., (2022) study in Nigeria among a total of 1383 students studying across federal government universities within south-eastern region of Nigeria that entrepreneurship intentions of students' has significant positive relationship with students' innovative ability, readiness to act, and support attain from family members. This is an indication that social support received by individual from family, friends and environment, help to shape their tendency to think creatively and be innovative in their perception of risk as a measure to enhance autonomy and foster entrepreneurship intention, resilience and high level of productivity (Ugwueze et al., 2022).

Also, Su et al., (2021) recent study in China that adopted the perspectives of planned behaviour theory using University support paradigm to further project the framework of planned behaviour theory to explain the impact of university support on student capacity to develop innovative entrepreneurial intention found that university support significantly enhanced university students' expression of positive attitude toward engaging in entrepreneurship activities, and this development highlights the vital roles universities' can play in developing spirited entrepreneurial intentions in students. Also, university support has significant impact on students' ability to self-regulate their behaviour. However, the impact of university support has higher effect on university students' attitude toward developing their entrepreneurship capabilities and becoming entrepreneurs than their behavioural control. Therefore,

encouraging university students to embrace entrepreneurship can have significant benefit on their social and economic development (Su et al., 2021).

Statement of the Problem

Lack of entrepreneurship intention and desired effort to initiate functional business ideas that would add value to self and society has made the unemployment and unproductivity nature of some emerging adults in Nigeria devastating and helpless. Year in and year out consistently witness the turning out of thousands of graduates from Nigerian Universities that end up roaming the streets looking for jobs that are nowhere to be found and this calls for change in attitudinal disposition towards embracing entrepreneurship enterprise initiative by undergraduates and graduates alike. This development makes this study a necessity.

Aim of the Study

The focal aim of this study is to empirically investigate academic self-concept, self-efficacy and social support as determinants of entrepreneurial intentions of emerging adults undergraduates of private Universities in Southwest Nigeria and to specifically:

1. Identify the level of entrepreneurial intention among emerging adults undergraduates of private Universities in South-West Nigeria;
2. Determine level of influence academic self-concept have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria;

3. Identify the level of influence self-efficacy have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria;
4. Assess the level influence perceived social support have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria;

Research Questions

The stated research questions will be answered in the study:

1. What is the level of entrepreneurial intention among emerging adults undergraduates in South-West Nigeria?
2. What level of influence does academic self-concept have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria?
3. What level of influence does self-efficacy have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria?
4. What level of influence does perceived social support have on entrepreneurial intentions among emerging adults undergraduates' of private Universities in South-West Nigeria?

Methods

This study adopted descriptive survey research design of ex-post factor type and made use of standardized questionnaires to collect quantitative data for the study. The population of the study comprised of 9000 private universities emerging adults' undergraduates' in their 300 level of study in

South-west, Nigeria and a sample size of 1,305 male and female emerging adults undergraduates in 300 level of study in private universities in South-west, Nigeria selected through multistage sampling procedure from 9 private universities in three states (Ogun, Ondo and Oyo) selected from the South-west, Nigeria through the use of simple random sampling technique. Regarding selection through multistage sampling procedure, first stage involved selecting three out of six states using the Simple random sampling technique (Basket method), these states are Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States. At the second stage, simple random sampling technique was also used in selecting three private universities in each of the three states. This is because Ondo State has only three private universities as at the time of the field work. Three was used as a benchmark to pick the number of private universities in each of the three randomly selected states. A sample of 1,305 male and female 300 level students were finally selected using the Taro Yamane formula (Yamane, 1967).

Instruments used for the Study

The instrument used to collect has five sections with four sub-scales. Section A contains the demographic data of the respondents; section B to E contained Entrepreneurial Intention, Academic Self-concept, Self-efficacy and Social Support Scales respectively.

Entrepreneurship Intention Questionnaire

was used to measure entrepreneurial intentions of emerging adult undergraduates used for the study. Entrepreneurship Intention Questionnaire constitutes the explanatory context of intention based on entrepreneurial intention, professional attraction and

entrepreneurial capacity that will make individuals' desired intention to becoming an entrepreneur more credible. This questionnaire is considered to be quite appropriate and an adequate model for analyzing university students' intention to become an entrepreneur. It has 16 items that are rated on a scale from 1 ("not at all true") to 4 ("exactly true") and its internal reliability is between .86 and .90.

The **Academic Self Concept Questionnaire (ASCQ)** was designed to assess students' academic self-concept in Singapore. It was used to measure the academic self-concept of emerging adults to be used for the study. The development of the ASCQ reflects the conceptualization of academic self-concept as a hierarchical model consists of one overarching higher order factor, academic self-concept, (20 items) and two first-order factors (academic confidence) and (academic effort). Academic confidence assesses students' feelings and perceptions about their academic competence while academic effort investigates students' commitment to and involvement and interest in schoolwork. Answers to the individual items were rated on a four-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' (1) to 'strongly disagree' (4). The validity and reliability of the ASCQ have been established by Liu et al (2005) in previous studies in Singapore with Cronbach's alpha (α) ranging between 0.71 and 0.89.

The **General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)** by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) is a self-report measure of self-efficacy. It has become a widely used instrument for measuring general self-efficacy. The GSE assesses a broad and stable sense of personal competence to deal effectively with a variety of stressful situations. It consists of 10 items that are rated on a scale

from 1 ("not at all true") to 4 ("exactly true"). The GSE sum score is calculated by summing the item scores, and ranges between 10 (lowest GSE) and 40 (highest GSE). The scale has been used in research with college students and population cohorts, as well as with clinical populations. The General Self-Efficacy Scale is correlated to emotion, optimism and work satisfaction. Negative coefficients were found for depression, stress, health complaints, burnout, and anxiety. Internal reliability for GSE = Cronbach's alphas between .76 and .90.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) by Zimet (2016) is a 12-item scale designed to measure perceived social support from three sources: Family, Friends, and a Significant Other. This scale has three different subscales designed to measure three dimensions of perceived social support. These dimensions are: 1) Appraisal Support 2) Belonging Support 3) Tangible Support. Each dimension is measured by 4 items on a 4-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' (1) to 'strongly disagree' (4). It has internal reliability Coefficient of between 0.81 and 0.87.

Method of Data Collection

The researchers introduced themselves to the appropriate authorities in the private universities from which respondents were sampled. This was to facilitate collection of data for the study. The data collection exercise was carried out by the researchers with the help of three research assistants who were engaged and trained to assist in the administration and collection of the questionnaires across the selected private universities in South-west, Nigeria. The administration and collection of administered questionnaires lasted for two months.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analysed using percentage, frequency counts, mean and standard deviation analyses, at 0.05 alpha level. Percentage, mean and standard deviation analyses were used for demographic and research questions analyses. Demographic information obtained shows that out of the 1103 respondents, 492 (44.6%) were male, while 611 (55.4%) were female. The data suggests that there are more female students than male emerging adult undergraduates in private

universities in South-west, Nigeria. Majority of the emerging adults' undergraduates are between the ages of 18 and 20. This connotes that emerging adult in private universities in South-west, Nigeria are early emerging adults.

Results

Research Question One: What is the level of entrepreneurial intention among emerging adults undergraduates in South-West Nigeria?

Table 3: Level of Entrepreneurship Intention among Emerging Adults undergraduates of Private Universities in South-west, Nigeria

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean (\bar{x})	SD.
1	I am ready to make anything to be an entrepreneur	487 (44.2%)	396 (35.9%)	154 (14.0%)	66 (6.0%)	3.18	0.888
2	My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur	245 (22.2%)	418 (37.9%)	264 (23.9%)	176 (16.0%)	2.66	0.994
3	I will make every effort to start and run my own firm	553 (50.1%)	242 (21.9%)	154 (14.0%)	154 (14.0%)	3.08	1.093
4	I am determined to create a firm in the future	685 (62.1%)	88 (8.0%)	132 (12.0%)	198 (18.0%)	3.14	1.200
5	I have very serious thought of starting a firm	597 (54.1%)	418 (37.9%)	66 (6.0%)	22 (2.0%)	3.44	0.697
6	I have got intention to start a firm some day	641 (58.1%)	242 (21.9%)	44 (4.0%)	176 (16.0%)	3.22	1.100
7	A career as entrepreneur is attractive for me	421 (38.2%)	462 (41.9%)	154 (14.0%)	66 (6.0%)	3.12	0.864
8	If I had the opportunity and resources, I would like to start a firm	553 (50.1%)	396 (35.9%)	88 (8.0%)	66 (6.0%)	3.30	0.854
9	Being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction for me	597 (54.1%)	264 (23.9%)	198 (18.0%)	44 (4.0%)	3.28	0.895
10	Among various options, I would rather be an entrepreneur	267 (24.2%)	396 (35.9%)	110 (10.0%)	330 (29.9%)	2.54	1.154
11	To start a firm and keep it working would be easy for me	377 (34.2%)	462 (41.9%)	154 (14.0%)	110 (10.0%)	3.00	0.939
12	I am prepared to start a viable firm	333 (30.2%)	418 (37.9%)	154 (14.0%)	110 (10.0%)	2.80	1.059
13	I can control the creation process of a new firm	157 (14.2%)	418 (37.9%)	132 (12.0%)	396 (35.9%)	2.30	1.103
14	I know the necessary practical details to start a firm	135 (12.2%)	264 (23.9%)	462 (41.9%)	242 (21.9%)	2.26	0.938
15	I know how to develop an entrepreneurial project	69 (6.3%)	132 (12.0)	374 (33.9)	528 (47.9)	1.77	0.891
16	If I try to start a firm, I would have a high probability of succeeding	465 (42.2%)	418 (37.9%)	132 (12.0%)	88 (8.0%)	3.14	0.917

Weighted Average Mean (\bar{x}) = 2.89

Threshold: mean value of 0.000-1.499 = Very Low Level; 1.500 -2.499 = Low Level; 2.500 -3.499 = High Level and 3.500 to 4.500 = Very High Level