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THE IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON SELF-EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES AMONG FOURAH BAY COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship education is a catalyst for the diminution of unemployment in Sierra Leone. The study evaluates the causal nexus between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives among Fourah Bay College students. Using regression analysis, data collected were primary data through the administration of questionnaires and simple percentage ranking techniques were used to analyze the questionnaires. The result shows that entrepreneurship education is an important policy and it has positive effect on self-employment initiatives. From the study, the following are some of the recommendations: The University of Sierra Leone should establish a center for entrepreneurship and innovation that will offer degree programs in entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education facilitators should be people who are not only qualify academically but have the practical experience as well. Business competitions should be held for students. This will accelerate the self-employment initiatives among students.

Key Words: Unemployment, Sierra Leone, Economic Development, Entrepreneurship, Initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment among youths is a social problem that is hang gliding in developing countries especially Sierra Leone. In economics, it is believe that government does not create jobs but the enabling environment for the private sector to flourish. It is an affair of accuracy that entrepreneurship education is an accelerator in the diminution of unemployment in Sierra Leone. However, while most Sierra Leone universities and other tertiary institutions have initiated entrepreneurship courses in their curricular; little research is available to assess its impact and to know whether a relationship exists between student entrepreneurship education and their self-employability capacity.

Entrepreneurship education focuses on the development and application of an enterprising mindset and skill in the specific contexts of setting up a new venture, developing and growing an existing business, or designing an entrepreneurial organization (Jiddah, 2016).

The oxford dictionary defines self-employment as working for oneself, as being an independent business person. According to **Ekundayo and Babatunde (2014)** entrepreneurship education in Nigeria seems to be pursued largely in tertiary institutions with a number of polytechnics, colleges of education, professional institutes and universities offering one or few entrepreneurship courses. The prolonged and heightened interest in the field of entrepreneurship is impelled by several factors: some being, as a means of revitalizing stagnated economies; stimulating developing economies and coping with unemployment problems by providing new job opportunities for graduates and the likes.

For instance, Nwangwu (2007) in his view supported entrepreneurial education and also argued that graduates with adequate skills and training will be creative and innovative in identifying noble business opportunities.

Hence, this study is to see whether entrepreneurship education acquired from the university by students will increase their level of business start-ups, which meant to increase graduate business birth rate after graduation in Sierra Leone.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Unemployment is a precedence of dissertate in Sierra Leone in recent years with the churning out of graduates overloading further the already saturated labour market. The current education system does not appear to be producing graduates with the required skills and this leads to the continuous increase in the rate of unemployment. It is evident that government has

initiated many programmes that are fantastically amazing on paper to alleviate this problem but the problem still remains dissonated as unemployment rate is still very high in Sierra Leone. Could it be that entrepreneurship education can help solve this problem that will make graduates self-employed? It is in line with this that this study tries to probe the relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives, using Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone as a case study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives?
2. What factors that determine the employability of students of Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone?
3. In what ways can the employability of Sierra Leonean graduates be enhanced?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives in Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone.

Specific objectives

1. To analyze factors that determine the employability of students of Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone
2. To examine the ways in which the employability of Sierra Leonean graduates be enhanced

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H₀: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW (CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK)

Entrepreneurship Education

Oguntimehin and Olaniran (2017) explained entrepreneurship education as pragmatic and meaningful interaction between learner and instructor developing the ability of the learners to identify, evaluate and generate ideas and solving business problems in a unique way. Entrepreneurship education is a catalyst for economic development and job creation in any society. This is because it seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings (Okafor, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education is the kind of education given to people with a view if developing entrepreneurship qualities properly followed-up with support services for smooth take-off and successful running of business (Varela and Jimenez, 2001). According to Mauchi *et al.* (2011), entrepreneurship education is defined as the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize commercial opportunities and the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act on them. Adebayo and Kolawole (2013) described entrepreneurship education as a specialized training to the students or trainees to acquire skills, ideas, managerial abilities and capabilities for self-employment than employed for wage pay.

In a similar vein, Ekankumo *et al* (2011) stressed that entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students (especially those in tertiary schools) with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial studies in a variety of setting. From these assertions, it is obvious that a well implemented entrepreneurship education will climax in economic empowerment and development. The above views show that entrepreneurship education in scope, nature and characteristics is a rebranding education culture meant to guarantee a comprehensive educational system re-engineering obvious deficiencies of the existing education system. It aims at equipping the students with requisite skills and capacities needed for the global workforce.

Self-employment

Self-employment defines as a form of employment where a person is his/her own boss, creates a new venture and makes all the decisions. According to Abdulkarim (2012) self-employment is an art of working for oneself. Self-employment is the act of generating one's income directly from customers, clients or other organizations as opposed to being an employee of a business or person. When one is self-employed, it means one is carrying on one's own business rather than working for an employer. This implies that self-employment is a situation in which an individual works for him/ herself instead of working

for an employer that pays salary or wages (Afolabi et al, 2017).

THEORITICAL REVIEW

Risk Taking Theory (RTT): Another theory that supports entrepreneurship education is the risk taking theory of Richard Cantillon and John Stuart Mill.

The theory perceives entrepreneurship as a mental education that stimulates individuals to take calculated risk for which future stream of benefits are guaranteed and people taking big risk have to contend with a great responsibility (Alam and Hossan, 2003).

Human Capital Theory (HCT): This theory exponent that human capital development that will lead to labour productivity can be enhance through education. In the words of John F Kennedy the progress of a nation can be no swifter than the progress in education the human mind is our fundamental resource. Therefore, human capital theorists encourage investment in nation's workforce because expenditure on training and development is a productive investment like investment on physical assets (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008). Furthermore, human capital enhancement through quality education is a critical factor that promotes economic prosperity in industrialized nations (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Oluwakemi and Adedapo (2017) in their paper titled: Assessing Nigerian graduate employability examined the employability of Nigerian University outputs in the labour markers in South-Western, Nigeria. The findings revealed that the employability of Nigerian University outputs is low and the rating of these Universities outputs were insignificantly different with respects to their sex, type of organization where they work and their educational qualification.

Segal et al., (2005) stated that self-employment is a function of entrepreneurship knowledge and it is reasonable to assume that participation in entrepreneurship education and previous entrepreneurial experience would increase an individual's entrepreneurial knowledge. Students with high entrepreneurial self-efficacy may be drawn to self-employment's desirable benefits in comparison with the benefits obtained through employment.

In another study carried out by kumara (2012) from Sri Lanka, has revealed that students who have received entrepreneurial education often develop positive attitudes and beliefs towards self-employment and entrepreneurship intention to a large extent. Students who passed through entrepreneurship education expressed interest in starting their own business in the future.

Furthermore, Owusu-Ansah (2004) in his study revealed that entrepreneurship education serves a medium of increasing students' interest in entrepreneurship career. In addition, some previous studies have reported findings on the impact of entrepreneurship education on career intentions and aspiration of tertiary students in Ghana. It was found that most people were motivated to a large extent to start-up a business by virtue of their exposure to entrepreneurship trainings. A large mismatch appears to exist between university outputs and labour market demands.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research designed to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment in Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. The population of the study is 100 students which comprised of students from four faculties from different departments drawn from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. In order to achieve the research objectives, purposive sampling technique was employed.

This study was analyzed using SPSS statistical instrument. The analysis was done using regression analysis, descriptive statistics which include frequency count, percentage and graph. Correlation analysis will permit us to estimate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives of university students. Also, an online questionnaire was also structured using google form and the questionnaires were administered via social media such as facebook, whatsapp, email and others.

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of demographic data

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	64	64.0
Female	36	36.0
Total	100	100.0
Age		
<20	23	23.0
20 – 30	74	74.0
31 – 40	2	2.0
>40	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0
Faculty		
Arts	26	26.0
Social science and law	51	51.0
Pure and applied science	11	11.0
Engineering and architecture	12	12.0
Total	100	100.0
Level of study		
Certificate	11	11.0
Diploma	2	2.0
Degree	87	87.0
Postgraduate	-	-
Total	100	100.0
FBC Entrepreneurship course		
Yes	24	24.0
No	76	76.0
Total	100	100.0
Level of professional attraction		
Salaried work	33	33.0
Self-employment	52	52.0
Liberal profession	15	15.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field survey (2018).

Analysis in Table 1 reveals that there were more male participants compared to female. Majority of the participants were still young in age as 74% of them fell within the ages 20 to 30.

76% of the participants said no they have not taken any entrepreneurial course in the university. Only 24% said yes they have. Also, 33% preferred salaried work, 52% self-employment and 15% prefer liberal profession.

Table 2: Computation of data collected

S/N		SD	D	N	A	SA
1	In my university, people are actively encouraged to pursue their own ideas	14 (14)	8 (8)	9 (9)	28 (28)	41 (41)
2	In my university, you get to meet lots of people with good ideas for a new business	11 (11)	10 (10)	11 (11)	35 (35)	33 (33)
3	Starting my own business sounds attractive to me	4 (4)	4 (4)	6 (6)	2 (2)	58 (58)
4	Self employment is the best way for me to take advantage of my education	5 (5)	10 (10)	6 (6)	32 (32)	47 (47)
5	I am confident that I would succeed if I start my own business	3 (3)	1 (1)	7 (7)	37 (37)	52 (52)
6	It would be easy for me to start my own business	6 (6)	16 (16)	27 (27)	34 (34)	17 (17)
7	Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality	3 (3)	4 (4)	3 (3)	22 (22)	68 (68)
		TD	D	N	A	TA
8	I love challenges	4 (4)	2 (2)	12 (12)	34 (34)	48 (48)
9	I am creative and innovative	2 (2)	1 (1)	9 (9)	39 (39)	49 (49)
10	I enjoy taking calculated risks	3 (3)	11 (11)	20 (20)	36 (36)	30 (30)
11	I am discipline and hard working	3 (3)	-	6 (6)	24 (24)	67 (67)
12	I love to challenge the status quo	2 (2)	1 (1)	15 (15)	40 (40)	42 (42)
13	I like to try new routes, new foods, new places and totally new experiences	1 (1)	-	4 (4)	37 (37)	58 (58)
14	To start a firm and keep it working would be easy for me	9 (9)	16 (16)	22 (22)	29 (29)	24 (24)
15	I can control the creation process of a new firm	3 (3)	5 (5)	17 (17)	48 (48)	27 (27)
16	I know the necessary practical details to start a firm	4 (4)	21 (21)	19 (19)	35 (35)	21 (21)

17	I know how to develop an entrepreneurial project	4	16	23	31	26
		(4)	(16)	(23)	(31)	(26)
18	If I start a firm, I would have a high probability of succeeding	2	1	11	33	53
		(2)	(1)	(11)	(33)	(53)

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Note: SA, A, U, SD, D, TD and TA denote strongly agree, agree, undecided, strongly disagree, disagree, totally disagree and totally agree.

Test of hypothesis

In testing the hypothesis, questions 1 and 4 as contained in table 2 were used.

Table 3

Response Required	Responses from question 1	Responses from question 4
Strongly disagree	14	5
Disagree	8	10
Neutral	9	6
Agree	28	32
Strongly agree	41	47

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Table 4

Responses to question 1 (X)	Responses to question 4 (Y)	X ²	Y ²	XY
14	5	196	25	70
8	10	64	100	80
9	6	81	36	54
28	32	784	1024	896
41	47	1681	2209	1927
100	100	2806	3394	3027

Source: Author's computation (2018)

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2} \sqrt{n(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{5(3027) - (100 \times 100)}{\sqrt{5(2806) - (100)^2} \sqrt{5(3394) - (100)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{15135 - 10000}{\sqrt{14030 - 10000} \sqrt{16970 - 10000}}$$

$$r = \frac{5135}{5200.72} \quad r = 0.9689$$

Table 5: Interpretation of the size of correlation

Correlation	Negative	Positive
None	-0.09 to 0.0	0.0 to 0.09
Weak	-0.3 to -0.1	0.1 to 0.3
Strong	-0.1 to -0.5	0.5 to 1.0

Source: Authors' computation (2018).

This shows that (0.9689) of the participants' response is positive, that entrepreneurship education has strong positive relationship with self-employment initiatives.

Test of Hypotheses

In testing the hypothesis, questions 1 and 4 as contained in table 2 were used.

The t-statistics was also estimated in table 6 below.

Table 6: t-statistics coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.399	.326		10.412	.000
1 Entrepreneurship education and pursuing ideas	.177	.082	.214	2.165	.033

a. Dependent Variable: Self-employment is advantageous for my education

The estimated result for entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives derived is presented in table 6 above examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among Fourah Bay College students. The table reports entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on self-employment initiatives in Sierra Leone. In magnitude, a unit change in entrepreneurship education enhances self-employment initiatives by 0.177 units. The t-statistics shows that entrepreneurship education was significant at 5% critical level with self-employment initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper examines the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone students. Using the regression analysis, the findings revealed that entrepreneurship education is an important policy and it has positive impact on self-employment initiatives. Furthermore, it shows that entrepreneurship education has influenced students' interest in entrepreneurial activities and building their choice of business. This further confirms the results of Afolabi et al (2017) that entrepreneurial education equipped students with adequate skills and training that are useful in identifying business opportunities.

This research work recommends that to encourage Fourah Bay College students in embracing entrepreneurship education, and make the course a source of self-employment initiates for students, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. The University of Sierra Leone should establish a center for entrepreneurship and innovation that will offer degree programs in entrepreneurship education.
2. Entrepreneurship education facilitators should be people who are not only qualify academically but have the practical experience as well.

3. Business competitions should be held like the Freetown pitch night for students and soft loan be given to the best ideas.
4. The teaching of entrepreneurship courses should go beyond social and management sciences student but also to the pure and applied, engineering science students and arts students.
5. There should be a special ministry of business development that will help spur business acumen.
6. The central government should establish entrepreneurship hub across the country.

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