



## Effect of Gender on the Entrepreneurial Interest of Students in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to determine the effect of gender on the entrepreneurial interest of NCE Students in Colleges of Education in South West, Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 266 final year business education students in the three selected schools. The sample size of the study consists of the 266 final year business education students who were selected through stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled *Gender Effect on the Entrepreneurial Interest of NCE Students (GEIMENIN)*, developed by the researchers. The validity of the questionnaire was examined by 3 experts and the reliability value of 0.82 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while correlation technique was used to analyze the null hypotheses. Findings from the study reveal that gender and entrepreneurial personal attitude has no significant relation gender and entrepreneurial subjective has no significant relationship and gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency has no statistically significant relationship. The study therefore recommends that gender should not be considered in motivating students to establish business.

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### INTRODUCTION

The problem of unemployment amongst graduates in Nigeria has been a much-discussed issue. As an oil producing country, Nigeria should be one of the wealthiest and developed country of the world. However, indices of underdevelopment like unemployment has been on the rise in Nigeria over the years. Anah, Nwosu and Ezeji (2017) pointed out that Nigeria graduates' unemployment keeps increasing yearly in an economy with insufficient jobs to accommodate all. The National Bureau of Statistics (2017) similarly stated that the unemployment rate in Nigeria has been on the increase since the 2014 economic crisis. The agency further stated that the rate of unemployment as at 2016 stood at 14.2%, representing 13.6 million Nigerians.

Unemployment amongst youths and graduates is a global problem but it is more

evident in developing nations like Nigeria. It has social, economic and political negative consequences on the wellbeing of the nation. Segun (2010) describes it as a waste of human capital resources and generates lower national output of production. Furthermore, Unemployment is a menace that gives rise to criminal activities amongst youths and therefore distorts socio – economic growth, increase insecurity and economic instability (Adebayo, 2013).

The federal government had tried so many strategies to reduce the rate of unemployment in past years such as Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in 1986, and National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP), Youth with Innovation (YOUWIN) and National Economic Empowerment and Development (NEEDS), initiated in 2004. However, many of these

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initiatives of the Federal Government like NDE as stated by Means (2007), failed as a result of poor implementation and the inability to significantly reduce the high rate of unemployment.

As a way to enhance human resource development amongst graduate and create employment, the Nigeria Government introduced compulsory entrepreneurship education into the curriculum of schools of higher learning in 2006. This was done to make graduates of higher learning, irrespective of chosen field, to be innovative, resourceful and employers of labour (Yahaya, 2011). Entrepreneurship is a French word that means the act of being an entrepreneur or the act of setting up a business and taking up financial risk with the intention of making profit, Davis (1983), as cited in Igor (2005).

Similarly, Nwafor (2007) opined that entrepreneurship is the ability and willingness of individuals to seek investment opportunities, establish and run businesses successfully. Entrepreneurship education as stated by Akudolu (2010) is the acquisition of the right knowledge, attitude skills to enable learners understand life challenges and take the necessary steps to realize new trends and opportunities for meeting those challenges. This means that entrepreneurship education involves acquiring the needful skills necessary for facing the challenges of unemployment and exploring new trends in our changing world.

The objectives of entrepreneurship education as explained by Oborah (2006) are to provide small and medium companies the opportunities to accept qualified graduates to be trained on skills relevant to establish and manage small businesses, equip graduates with the training to make them creative and be able to identify new ideas and opportunities, provide education that is meaningful to the youths such that they could be self-reliant, stimulate enterprise growth and the consequent economic growth of less developed societies and provide graduates with skills that will make them meet the trending manpower needs of the society.

It is one thing to implement a policy such as entrepreneurship education but it is another for the students to build entrepreneurial interest.

Many factors have been argued to influence the entrepreneurial interest of graduates, one of which is the impact of gender. Scholars in this area lament that women are very few in the entrepreneurship field compared to men. Delmar and Davidsson (2000) suggest that societal belief holds that the male folk are more suitable for entrepreneurship because they are perceived to be more independent and agile. Longouritz and Minnik (2007) stated that the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) inspected the operation of entrepreneurship in many nations and the findings reveal that males are more than females in establishing businesses.

In contrast, Kickul et al (2008) opine that the female folk have in the last three decades made immense growth in entrepreneurship field. Nonetheless, the female folk are still fewer than their male counterpart in the field of entrepreneurship. Studies have demonstrated that female entrepreneurs are still lagging behind in the field of entrepreneurship compared to their male counterpart.

Similarly, in Nigeria Adelowo and Akinwale (2023) provide evidence that being male or female has nothing to do with the interest towards entrepreneurship or starting businesses. These contradictory findings makes the results in the study areas to be inconclusive, hence the need to carry out the study. More so, the aforementioned studies tested the difference in interest levels of the male and female folks, but none tested the effect of gender itself on the entrepreneurial interest of students. These have created a gap to be filled by this study and therefore the study was done in three selected federal colleges of education South West, to test the effect of gender on the entrepreneurial interest of NCE students.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Youths are considered the most important human resource of a nation. They are expected to be productive and in recent times, the Nigerian government has made moves to make them even more productive by integrating entrepreneurship education in all fields of study. Universally, Entrepreneurship emerged as a



growing study area to practitioners, researchers and government. This is a result of technological advancement, globalization and the emergence of economies striving to sustainably develop themselves. However, there has been an outcry of rising unemployment world over, especially in developing countries over the years. This study is therefore a necessity, as the call for compulsory entrepreneurship education to help reduce unemployment had been implemented since 2012 which is over a decade old. Yet, the issue of unemployment till present is a burning national discussion in Nigeria. The study thus focused on the factor such as gender that is argued to be a consideration for entrepreneurial interest in students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial personal attitude among NCE final year students.
2. Ascertain the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial subjective norm among NCE final students.
3. Determine the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency among NCE final year students.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were raised in the study.

1. What is the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial personal attitude of NCE final year students?
2. What is the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial subjective norm of NCE final year students?
3. What is the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency of NCE final year students?

### **Hypotheses**

1. Gender has no statistically significant relationship with entrepreneurial personal attitude among NCE final year students.

2. Gender has no statistically significant relationship with entrepreneurial subjective norm among NCE final year students.
3. Gender has no statistically significant relationship with entrepreneurial risk tendency among NCE final year students.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Entrepreneurial Interest***

Entrepreneurial interest is the intention an individual has in establishing a business in future. Ajzen (2011) posit that this intention is an indication of an individual's readiness to carry out a behavior. Applying this to entrepreneurship, Girmaldi, Marzocchi and Sobrero (2012) opine that entrepreneurial interest is the state of the mind that directs one to set goals and nurture this commitment to a time when it is possible to actualize the set goals. An individual that has interest in establishing a business exhibit some set of features that are pointers or predictors. These features are antecedents that predict one's interest in entrepreneurship.

### ***Entrepreneurial Personal Attitude***

The personal attitude of an individual towards entrepreneurship could either be negative or positive (Linan and Chen, 2009). That is, one's attitude could be used to predict one's interest in establishing a business. Ajzen (1982) posit that the attitude of a person is the choice of generally responding either favorably or unfavorably towards behave or. If it is the choice of an individual to respond favorably towards entrepreneurship, this attitude plays a major role in building his interest in establishing a business in future.

### ***Entrepreneurial Subjective Norm***

Wedayanti and Giantari (2016) in Utami (2017) opine that subjective norm are the opinions of others to an individual by way of advice on whether the individual should or should not carry out certain behaviors and the motivation to willingly or not do something that is considered paramount. In the context of entrepreneurship,

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subjective norm is the views of others, especially friends and family that they share with an individual and therefore becomes important to that individual.

having entrepreneurial risk tendency should have features that predict their willingness and ability to make decisions that involves uncertain results. Junehed and Davidsson (1998) suggest that entrepreneurial risk is the readiness of firms to assign important resources that have the ability to provide opportunities whose return may be uncertain.

**Entrepreneurial Risk Tendency**

This is the willingness to want to take risk involved in entrepreneurship. Individuals

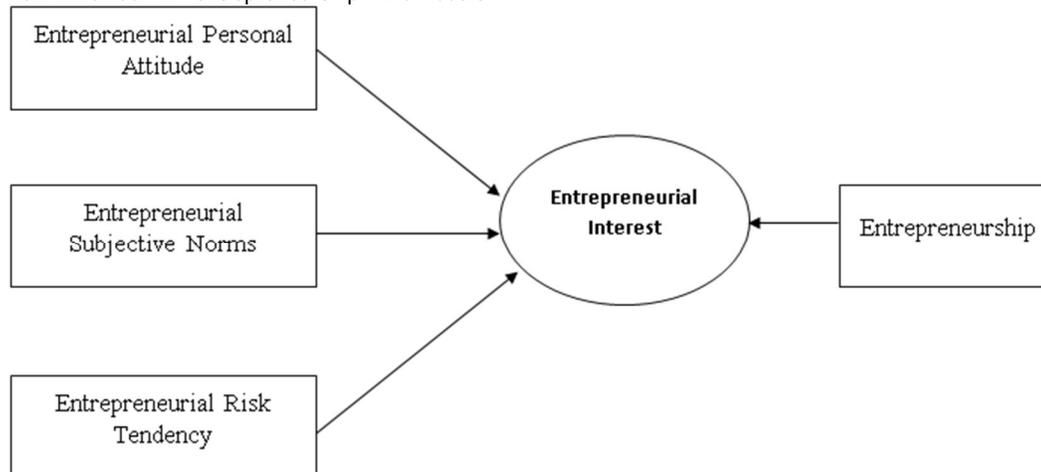


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is underpinned by the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), the theory has three assumptions on which it is based. These assumptions are attitudinal antecedents of intention are attitude towards behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. However, this study modified Ajzen (1991) theory by including risk tendency in line with previous study. Because this study believe risk tendency predicts individual’s intention and behaviour.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study used descriptive research design to examine the effect of gender on the entrepreneurial interest of NCE Students in Colleges of Education. This design is chosen because of the nature of the study, as it needs primary source of data collection. The population of the study is 266 final year students of business

education department in some selected colleges of education. The selected colleges of education are three federal colleges of education in the South West of Nigeria. They are Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Federal of Education, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, and Federal College of Education, Iwo Osun State. Based on the nature of the study, stratified random sampling technique was used. Hence, 266 students form the sample size of the study because 266 is a manageable size.

Additionally, the study used questionnaire titled gender effect on the entrepreneurial interest of students (GEIMENIN) as the research instrument, in the bid to achieve the objective of the study. This instrument is considered by the researchers to be the most appropriate because it has the advantage of gathering data on the different opinions of the respondents. The questionnaire was structured into three sections, aimed at capturing information

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on the responses that predicts the entrepreneurial intention of the respondents.

The validity of the instrument was assessed by 3 experts and Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine a coefficient value of 0.82 which indicates that the instrument is reliable. Data collected was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis

technique to test the hypotheses. The questionnaire was designed using 4 point Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and disagree questions concerning entrepreneurial personal attitude were eight, entrepreneurial subjective norm were six and that of entrepreneurial risk tendency were nine.

## RESULTS

**Table 1** Descriptive analysis of gender and entrepreneurial personal attitude

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>
Gender	266	1.748	1.8265	265
Entrepreneurial Personal Attitude	266	1.214	1.232	

Table 1 describes the behavior of the variables, gender and entrepreneurial personal attitude where it can be seen that the overall mean rating of NCE final year students (gender) and their entrepreneurial personal attitude were 1.748

and 1.214 respectively. The mean score of gender differs from that of entrepreneurial personal attitude with a value of 1.214.

**Table 2** Descriptive analysis of gender and entrepreneurial subjective norm

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>
Gender	266	1.884	.8075	265
Entrepreneurial Subjective Norms	266	1.216	1.232	

Table 2 shows the descriptive result of the behaviour of gender and entrepreneurial subjective norm. The mean of gender is 1.884

while that of entrepreneurial subjective norm is 1.216

**Table 3** Descriptive analysis of gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>
Gender	266	1.3824	.7499	265
Entrepreneurial Risk Tendency	266	1.8106	1.232	

Table 3 reveals the behaviour of gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency. The mean of gender is 1.3824 while that of entrepreneurial risk tendering is 1.8106.

### Hypothesis testing

**Table 4:** Gender relationship with entrepreneurial personal attitude among final year students.

Variable	Statistics	Gender	Entrepreneurial Personal Attitude
Gender	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.417** 0.120
	N		266

S=significant in 0.05 level.

The table showed that the total of 266 respondents for gender has a mean (1.784) and standard deviation of (1.8265) while the total of 266 respondents on entrepreneurial personal attitude has a mean (1.214) and standard deviation of (1.232), (r= **0.417**, df= 265, P-value

(0.120 > 0.05). Since the P-value is greater than 0.05 level of significant. This implies that there is no significant relationship between gender and entrepreneurial personal attitude. The study therefore failed to reject the null hypothesis one

**Table 5:** Gender relationship with entrepreneurial subjective norm among final year students.

Variable	Statistics	Gender	Entrepreneurial subjective norm
Gender	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.377** 0.156
	N		266

S=significant in 0.05 level.

The table showed that the total of 266 respondents for gender has a mean (1.8841) and standard deviation of (.8075) while the total of 266 respondents on entrepreneurial subjective norms has a mean (1.216) and standard deviation of

(1.232), (r= **0.377**, df= 265, p>0.05). This implies that there is no positive relationship between the gender and entrepreneurial subjective norms. Therefore the study failed to reject the null hypothesis two.

**Table 6** Gender has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial risk tendency among final year students

Variable	Statistics	Gender	Entrepreneurial Risk Tendency
Gender	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.225** 0.123
	N		266

S=significant in 0.05 level.

The table showed that the total of 266 respondents for Gender has a mean (1.3824) and standard deviation of (.7499) while the total of 266 respondents on entrepreneurial risk tendency has a mean (1.816) and standard deviation of (1.232), (r= **0.225**, df= 265, p>0.05). This implies that there

is no positive relationship between the gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency. Therefore the study failed to reject the null hypothesis three.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between

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gender and the entrepreneurial personal attitude of NCE final year students. This implies that gender difference does not have strong effect on the entrepreneurial personal attitude of Business education students in their final year. It could mean that one personal attitude asides the ones used as predictor, have relationship with gender. This finding is similar to the findings of Mardisenton and Khaisani (2019). Smith, Sardeshmukh, and Combs (2016), Mahlaole and Malebana (2021) contradicts the findings of Santos, Room and Linan (2016).

The study also showed that there is no statistically significant relationship between gender and entrepreneurial subjective norm. This finding is similar to the finding of Dempsey and Jeinings (2014) and Mersha and Sriram (2019) Mothibi and Malebana (2019). However, this finding contradicts the findings of Karimi et al (2014), Palupi and Santos (2017) and that of Olajojo et al (2018) who found out that gender should be one of considerations for business activities. Also, according to the findings of the study, there is no statistically significant relationship between gender and entrepreneurial risk tendency of NCE final year students. This implies that gender does not influence the entrepreneurial risk tendency of NCE final year business education students. This finding is in contrast with the findings of Zeffane (2015) but similar to the findings of Mardisenton and Kharsani (2019).

## CONCLUSION

From the result gotten in this study, the study concludes that gender does not have effect on the entrepreneurial personal attitude of NCE final year students, gender does not have effect on the entrepreneurial risk tendency of NCE final year students. Generally, the study concludes that gender and entrepreneurial interest has no relationship. Researchers who interested in the study area can use the findings of this research as a resource material as well as a baseline for their study.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study makes the following recommendation based on the findings.

1. All students irrespective of gender should build their interest in entrepreneurship so as to bridge the gap between the employed and unemployed.
2. All students of higher learning, irrespective of gender should be encouraged to establish business after graduation
3. Government should invest more in entrepreneurship education so that entrepreneurship education can be more practical based.
4. All stakeholders should motivate all students irrespective of gender by making funds available and accessible to ensure start-ups.

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