

## **THE PLACE OF SKILL ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYMENT**

**STEPHEN CHUKWUMA ALUMONA (PhD)**

**Department of Sociology  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka**

### **Abstract**

*The paper THE PLACE OF SKILL ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYMENT examined the possible differences that skill acquisition can have on the issue of solving the unemployment problems that are bedeviling Nigeria at present. This is in view of the fact that employment creation which used to be championed by governments is no longer feasible. The paper noted the possible ways skill acquisition by individuals can help governments in providing employment for citizens. Recommendations were made as to how the combined efforts of governments and individuals can help in providing employment.*

### **Introduction**

The role intention has been acknowledged to be relevant in the managerial, intentions have the ability to predict both individual behavior and organizational outcome. Hence, the capability to understand and predict intentions becomes a point of interest for both managers and skill acquisition. Intentions have been proved to be the best predictors of individual behaviours particularly when the behavior is rare, hard to observe or involves unpredictable time legs. The establishment of new ventures and the creation of new values in existing ones as the two outcomes of skill acquisition intentions are good examples of such behaviors. It has been argued that most behaviours of social relevance such as health-related behaviors or establishment of new organizations are under volitional control.

Intention refers to a state of mind directing a person's attention (and therefore experience and action) towards a specific object or path in order to achieve something. Skill acquisition intention refers to a cognitive representation of actions to be implemented by individuals to either establish new independent venture or create new value within existing companies. Knowledge of skills education has continued to feature as a captivating theme in local summits and international conferences because of its potency as tool for mitigating unemployment and other social- economic challenges inhibiting sustainable development among human race. Skills education is a purposeful intervention by an educator in the life of the learner to impact skill acquisition qualities and skills acquisition to enable the learner survives in the world of business.

The level of unemployment of graduates in Nigeria has become a national issue as the number of graduates from public and private higher educational institutions that join the job market increases each year. Academic qualifications can no longer guarantee immediate employment upon graduate, instead graduates are required to show a positive attitude towards the changing job market by investigating skill acquisition as a possible basis for a career. In fact entrepreneurship would help these new graduates develop their own career and also ease the current unemployment issues by expanding the job market. Skill acquisition is therefore the solution to the problem of unemployment. The ability of new graduates to engage in skill behavior depends on a number of factor, thus there is need to conduct a study focusing on the entrepreneurial intentions and the factors affecting new graduates decision to engage in skill behaviour.

### **Research questions**

In other to solve the above problems the following questions are asked;

1. What is the effect of perceived behavior control on skill acquisition intention?
2. What is the effect of self-efficacy on skill acquisition intention?

### **Research hypothesis**

The following hypothesis will be tested in the study;

Ho: there is no significant relationship between perceived behavior control and skill acquisition intentions

Ho2: there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and skill acquisition intentions.

Education in skill acquisition has not achieved sufficient maturity either in theory or in practice. Early courses on entrepreneurship have started in the United States in 1940s. Since those times, entrepreneurship education has increased considerably in the developed world. The number of Universities and colleges with entrepreneurship courses in their curricula has clearly increased in the United States since the late 1960s. The entrepreneurship- related courses of many schools such as "Entrepreneurship & Venture Creation," "Small Business Management," "Enterprise Development" occupy a significant place in their curricula. Increasingly large number of colleges and graduate schools have accepted entrepreneurship as a fundamental area. This trend became especially common in the universities in the United States, Canada and France in 1990s. The financial and economic crisis that emerged in 2008 and the subsequent global recession have led to the emergence of a new economic era with important effects on entrepreneurship education, too (Rae, 2010: 591). Those who received skill education earned 10% higher monthly income in comparison with those who did not. In addition, and more interestingly, it was found that the graduates who had received this education gained 62% more personal assets than those who had not received. The education in skills and culture existing in the United States have formed the basis of the strong infrastructure needed for the creation of worldwide organizations such as Microsoft, Oracle, Dell, and Wal-Mart. In addition to increasing the national welfare, such successful enterprises have created innovative products and services and strengthened the competitive advantage of the United States. Education in skills is an important method of encouraging education gives a feeling of independence and self- confidence to individuals, enables the recognition of alternative career options, broadens the individuals' horizons by enabling them to better perceive the opportunities, and provides the knowledge that individuals will use in developing new business opportunities. Through adequate entrepreneurship education, an individual acquires the skills and knowledge needed for establishing and developing a new business. However, what can change the entrepreneurship intentions of students during education programs is not what they learn about entrepreneurship itself, but rather what they learn about themselves and their own capabilities. Education in skill acquisition is the basic guide for innovation, competitiveness, and development. Due to their strong presence in basic sectors such as service and knowledge-based activities, smaller enterprises and entrepreneurs play a fundamental role in the economy of the European Union today. There is a strong positive correlation between economic performance and entrepreneurship in terms of growth, companies' lifetime, innovation, employment generation, technological change, increase in productivity, and export. Besides, entrepreneurship also contributes to the society. Entrepreneurship is a tool for personal development, and it provides social cohesion when everybody is provided with the opportunity to establish his/her own business regardless of his/her background or origins. One of the four strategic objectives of the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training, which was approved by the Council of the European Union in 2009, is enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training (European Council, 2009: In this respect, the basic knowledge created through entrepreneurship education broadly involves, determining opportunities, realizing the opportunities by producing new ideas and mobilizing necessary resources, establishing and managing a new enterprise, and developing creative and critical thinking skills. Entrepreneurship education has recently come to be considered as a process in which individuals are equipped with capabilities that they can in many areas of their lives.

In this context, skill acquisition covers the capability of individuals to transform their ideas into action. Entrepreneurship includes such elements as creativity, innovation, risk taking, and planning and managing projects. Entrepreneurship education contributes to the competitiveness of Europe, and at the same time, it provides social benefits. The report "Effects and Impact of Entrepreneurship Programs in Higher Education published by the European Commission in 2012 states that entrepreneurship education in higher education improves students basic competence in entrepreneurship, reinforces students' entrepreneurial intentions, and increases their employability. The mentioned port, which recommends that entrepreneurship education is disseminated to all disciplines and delivered through compulsory courses in universities, emphasizes that the

post-education monitoring activities should be performed repetitively. One of the action pillars of European Commission's Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan is entrepreneurial education and training to support growth and business creation. Investment in entrepreneurship education is one of the investments that will yield the highest return for Europe. Whether they establish an enterprise or not, those young people who receive entrepreneurship education improve their business knowledge and basic attitudes and skills that include creativity, initiative-taking, decidedness, team work, risk taking, and sense of responsibility. Such entrepreneurial mentality enables entrepreneurs to put their ideas into practice and increases their employability. The report, "Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs, Unlocking Entrepreneurial Capabilities to Meet the Global Challenges of The 21st Century", which was published by the World Economic Forum and focuses on entrepreneurship education, states that there are a number of approaches which are being effectively utilized and which support the call to action to "mainstream" education in skill acquisition. These approaches are developing leadership and life skills, embedding entrepreneurship in education, taking a cross disciplinary approach, utilizing interactive pedagogy, and leveraging technology. And the basic factors of success enabling efficient entrepreneurship education are considered as the entrepreneurial ecosystem, developing effective educators, curriculum development, engagement of business, advancing innovation, and sustainable funding. With its high dynamism to affect economic and social development, entrepreneurship is an inevitable element in the achievement of Turkey's 2023 targets. For this purpose, a strategy and action plan focusing on the topic of entrepreneurship has been created, and the Entrepreneurship Council has been carrying out its entrepreneurship and skill training activities under the coordination of (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization). The general aim of the Entrepreneurship Strategy and Action Plan of Turkey for the period of 2015-2018 is to disseminate the culture of entrepreneurship, to create a strong ecosystem, and to develop entrepreneurship. One of the strategic targets in the intervention areas determined for the purpose of achieving this general aim is the dissemination of formal and non-formal entrepreneurship education and the development of a consultancy system for entrepreneurs. This strategic target aims to embed the topic of entrepreneurship in university programs as well as primary/secondary education programs, to include entrepreneurship education in the curricula of the faculties of education, and to disseminate the KOSGEB trainings and entrepreneurship trainings within the framework of lifelong learning. Entrepreneurship education in higher education is delivered through formal education entrepreneurship courses), non-formal education, and various projects. KOSGEB confirms the skill acquisition courses that have been delivered in higher education institutions in accordance with the KOSGEB criteria since 2012 as "KOSGEB Practical Entrepreneurship Education" upon the requests of relevant higher education institutions KOSGEB, 2015).

### **Concept and Classification of skill Acquisition**

When the first skill acquisition course was offered in February 1947, 188 Harvard MBA students were enrolled. Approximately 50 years later, as many as 120,000 North American students are participating in skill acquisition courses (Katz, 2003). Not only in the USA but also in German-speaking countries, strong growth in skill acquisition courses and professorships can be observed (Klandt, 2004). In the context of this dissertation skill acquisition education programme (EEP) is defined: "... as any pedagogical programme or process of education for entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, which involves developing certain personal qualities. It is therefore not exclusively focused on the immediate creation of new businesses." found that there are four different kinds of entrepreneurship education programmes. The first, "Entrepreneurial Awareness Education", aims to increase knowledge about entrepreneurship and to influence attitudes that may impact intentions. The second category is described as "Education for Start- Up". These programmes are geared toward people who generally already have an entrepreneurial idea and need to solve practical questions about becoming self-employed. The third category, "Education for Entrepreneurial Dynamism", focuses on people who are already entrepreneurs and want to promote dynamic behaviours after the start-up phase. The last category "Continuing Education for Entrepreneurs describes life-long learning programmes and focuses on experienced entrepreneurs. Along with the different types of entrepreneurship education, there are four research streams of entrepreneurship education search. The first stream focuses on the role of entrepreneurship programmes on the individual and society. The second research stream is concerned with the simulation of skill acquisition programmes, for example, the use of multimedia environments or

curriculum development. The third stream researches the content and its delivery in entrepreneurship programmes, and the fourth stream concentrates on the needs of individual participants in skill acquisition programmes. According to this categorization, the context of this dissertation can be positioned in the first research stream, the analysis of the impact of an entrepreneurship programme.

### **Teach skill Acquisition**

Despite the rapid growth in numbers of entrepreneurship programs and courses (Katz, 2003), it has been challenging for educators and teachers to deal with the teaching of the subject, because there is lack of consensus on what to teach and how to teach skill acquisition. The skill acquisition discipline "remains particularly fragmented, often isolated, and surprisingly unsure of itself". Some researchers suggested that educators should increase the theoretical content of skill acquisition courses/programs because cognitive skills for entrepreneurial decision-making are largely developed through theory-based activities. However, other commentators argued that adoption of a more practically focused and active based approach to entrepreneurship education is more valid. In terms of teaching methods, some researchers suggested problem-based learning for skill acquisition where learning is student-centered with teachers acting as facilitators, while others suggested the project methods for the teaching of entrepreneur skills. In addition, some scholars emphasized the development of creativity projects central to venture success, while others stressed developing students appropriate personality traits, values, and attitudes of students regarding entrepreneurship, as these are essential to help them better cope with risks and uncertainties in entrepreneurship. From the review presented, it is evident that despite the rapid development of entrepreneur skills education programs, there is still not at generally accepted curriculum for the teaching of entrepreneur skills. The previous studies seemed to present diverse mechanisms of teaching the subject leading to an unclear picture for educators, policy makers and stakeholders to make decisions on founding or designing an effective entrepreneurship course or program. It is recognized that entrepreneurship education may be different across different contexts. However, the current diversity in entrepreneurship education is so confused that it inhibits a theory-driven education model for entrepreneurship that guides the teaching practice. As a professional domain, there should be a theoretical basis that features entrepreneurship education. To understand the skill acquisition education. it is crucial to understanding how entrepreneur skills education influences students' intentions toward entrepreneurship.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed in tabular form with simple percentage for easy understanding.

A total of 133 (one hundred and thirty three) questionnaires were distributed and 133 questionnaires were returned.

Question 1

Gender distribution of the respondents.

Gender distribution of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid				
Male	77	57.9	57.9	57.9
Female	56	42.1	42.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

From the above table it shows that 57.9% of the respondents were male while 42.1% of the respondents were female.

The positions held by respondents

Question 2

The position held by respondents

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid				
Economist	37	27.8	527.8	27.8
Accountant	50	37.6	37.6	65.4
Business managers	23	17.3	17.3	82.7
Agriculturist				
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

The above table shows that 37 respondents which represent + 27.8% of the respondents are economist, 50 respondents which represents 37.6% year accountant, 23 respondents which represents 17.3% of the respondents are business managers, while 23 respondents which represents 17.3% of the respondents agriculturist.

**Test of Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between perceived control and skill acquisition intentions.

**Table III**

There is no significant relationship between perceived behavioral control and entrepreneurial intentions

Response	Observed	Expected N	Residual
Agree	40	33.3	6.8
Strongly agreed	50	33.3	16.8
Disagreed	<b>26</b>	33.3	-7.3
Strongly disagreed	17	<b>33.3</b>	-16.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>		<b>100.0</b>

	There is no significant relationship between perceived behaviour control and entrepreneurial intentions
Chi-squar	19.331 <sup>a</sup>
Df	
Asymp	3
Sig.	.000

a. 0 cell (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum

**Decision Rule:**

The researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between perceived behaviour control and entrepreneurial intentions as the calculated value of 19.31 is greater than the critical value of 7.82

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that state there is a significant relationship between perceived behaviour control and entrepreneurial intentions

**Test of Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions

Table V

There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions

Response	Observed	Expected N	Residual
Yes	73	44.3	28.7
No	33	44.3	-11.3
Undecided	<b>27</b>	44.3	-17.3
<b>Total</b>	133		<b>100.0</b>

	There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions
Chi-squared	28.2 <sup>a</sup>
Df	
Asymp	2
Sig.	.000

Decision rule:

The researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions as the calculated value of 28.211 is greater than the critical value of 5.99

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that states that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions.

**Conclusion**

Haven completed the study, the researcher conclude that Self-efficacy is one of the significant dimensions in predicting the intention of an individual as those who tend to have greater level of self-efficacy seems to have higher intention level towards starting up the business venture . On the entrepreneurship education aspect, students with different academic majors showing different anticipation towards the skill trainings, where business major students are more interested in starting up new venture as they were familiar and well exposed with the management, accounting and marketing knowledge, meanwhile, the non- business students who are gaining lesser skill trainings exposure are more attentive in technical field. From the environment aspect, most of the respondents of this study seemed to show their efforts in utilizing the availability that provided by the faculties, management and also people around them as one of the method in educating them in matters related to skill acquisition . In conclusion, two dimensions which are self-efficacy and perceived behavioural control had shown their significant effect on the creation of entrepreneurial intention among fresh graduate in Nigeria. This indicates that by strengthening these elements, they will help in boosting up the interest among the potential youth in venturing themselves into entrepreneurship field.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations were made,

1. Any work that aims to improve the skill trainings intention of young university students should address the issue of changing the mentality of these graduates from earning to making profits. In these ways the behavior of these graduates may have been controlled.
2. Also any work that aims to improve acquisition of skills intention of young university students should focus on improving their confident level to specific performances and attainment. With these the self-efficacy of these graduates will grow.

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