

The Influence of Entrepreneurial Passion on the Self-Employment Intention among Plateau State Polytechnic Students

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Abstract- The rising rate of graduate unemployment is alarming, and worsening on yearly basis. With this, graduates still wait for white-collar jobs or other paid jobs to no avail. However, undergraduates need to develop the drive to be gainfully engaged as they progress in life. To contribute in addressing this, three hypotheses were stated on whether passions for inventing, founding and developing significantly influence self-employment intention of polytechnic students. The study adopted a quantitative approach and analysed the data from a sample of 374 students using multiple regressions model in SPSS version 26. The results showed that while passion for inventing strongly influences the self-employment intention of students, passion for developing had fairly influence, whereas passion for founding did not influence the self-employment intention of the Plateau State Polytechnic students. Recommendations were made that effective entrepreneurship education, mentorship, fundings, and social resources be provided for the students to stimulate their self-employment intention and equally transform it into a sustainable enterprise.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Passion, Inventing, Founding, Developing, Self-employment Intention

I. INTRODUCTION

Self-employment intention is the best approach and the willingness to personally engage oneself in a means of livelihood. It is seen as the simplest form of entrepreneurship since it rarely requires substantial financial investment, advanced management skills, or the legalities in setting up functional business [1]. Self-employment intention motivates individuals to plan and forethought the future success of new start-up businesses or existing enterprises. Globally, individuals develop self-employment intention as the readiness to create personal means of survival in terms of taking care of basic needs, creating career opportunities, and making a difference in the world [2]. In line with this, statistics have shown that developing countries demonstrate high self-employment rates such as Ghana-74.4%, Togo-78.7%, and Nigeria-81.3% due to low per capita income, deteriorating economies, and lack of potent determination to be self-employed [3]. As Nigeria's unemployment rate in the 4th quarter of 2020 rose to 33.3%, above the bad economic situations benchmark, it is worrying that majority of graduates, about 25 million (65%) are unemployed and this constitutes a serious threat to society at large [4,5,3,6]. More so, a lot of these graduates may be lacking the self-employment intention to alter the menace of unemployment into fortunes. Consequently, using entrepreneurial passion to achieve proactive self-employment intention is keenly proposed, with Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) to tie the relationship.

In this study, entrepreneurial passion means the love, desire and willpower to engage in a personal occupation. This offers the theoretical basis for understanding the variations in the intensity of desires, with which students engage in self-employment, and students with strong entrepreneurship passion are internally motivated to take full advantage of their current knowledge set which results in the positive behaviours of starting a business [8,9]. Passion in line with age, gender, and training antecedents can create entrepreneurial personality traits of persistence and contagious positive influence for behaviours towards venture creation [10,11,12]. Logically, when people cherish the desire for something, they can easily develop an action plan to achieve their desires. Thus, the logic behind how the identity domains of entrepreneurial passion will influence the self-employment intention of students is the focus of this study [13].

Three role identities of entrepreneurial passion were identified as inventor identity, founder identity, and developer identity for different aspects of the entrepreneurial process study [13,10]. The inventor identity enables entrepreneurs to focus on recognising, creating, and exploring new opportunities. Students with a passion for inventing are interested in creating new methods, measures and finding new solutions for common problems, while some entrepreneurs explore the entrepreneurial ideas deeper than the others and seek new answers to the market needs and demands [14,15]. The passion for founding emphasises the provision of funds,

human and social resources to establish a new venture [14]. The inclination to create a new business is a characteristic of entrepreneurs who have high levels of passion for founding. Passionate founders have a tougher desire to communicate and display a higher ability to acquire new resources. The developer identity of passion relates to activities of nurturing, growing, and intensifying the business once it has been formed [14,15].

Following this background, hypotheses will be investigated to ascertain the extent to which entrepreneurial passion influences self-employment intention among Plateau State polytechnic students.

- i. Passion for inventing has a significant influence on the self-employment intention of Plateau State polytechnic students.
- ii. Passion for founding has a significant influence on the self-employment intention of Plateau State polytechnic students.
- iii. Passion for developing has a significant influence on the self-employment intention of Plateau State polytechnic students.

Thus, this study is organised as section I for introduction, section II for related work, section III for the methodology, and section IV presented the results based on response rate, preliminary analysis, respondents' demographics, and hypothesis testing, followed with discussion. Section V concludes the findings and suggested future scope for further study.

II. RELATED WORK

Self-employment intention is defined as the willingness of an individual to exhibit engagement in entrepreneurial activities associated with self-employment initiatives of working for oneself [7]. As the intention is a proven predictor of subsequent behaviour, the stronger the intention to engage in self-employment, the more likely for one to be self-employed [16,17]. On the other hand, entrepreneurial passion involves the personal joy an individual derives from engaging in specific activities associated with the role of an entrepreneur [15]. Entrepreneurial passion enhances the rationality of entrepreneurial behaviour, based on uncommon risk-taking, intense concentration, and unshakable faith in pursuing a dream [18]. It is expected that students who develop a strong entrepreneurial passion for self-employment intention will eventually establish their businesses. Thus, existing empirical studies between entrepreneurial passion and self-employment intention are worth reviewing.

The literature review has revealed a paucity of studies on the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and self-employment intentions. However, some of the studies conducted on this subject area are between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial intention [9,19,20,21,22]. These studies found consistent significant relationships between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial

intention. In this case, entrepreneurship intention (EI) and self-employment intention (SEI) are expected to produce similar results because they appear to be similar alternative word in use. It is important to note the slight difference that exists between EI and SEI, even though the two terms are frequently used interchangeably. EI is generally the intention to begin an innovative enterprise with the role of providing resources and other factors of production for the operation of the business, while SEI in some contexts refers to the intention to start any business that does not match up with innovative enterprise but operating it by oneself or using unpaid family workers [23]. Since there are little or no prior studies on this relationship, theoretical prediction between entrepreneurial passion and self-employment intention is necessary.

The Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) by Shapero and Sokol in 1982 provides a framework for determining entrepreneurial intention [24]. It is assumed that any model that can determine entrepreneurial intention can equally determine self-employment intention. When passions for inventing, founding and developing align with EEM's assumptions of perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, and propensity to act, they ought to influence the self-employment intention of students positively and significantly. EEM proposes that two prerequisites should be met before students can be self-employed. First, an individual student must perceive the idea of self-employment as dependable. Second, to be self-employed is initiated by some types of dislocating event emanating from neutral, negative, and/or positive experiences. Neutral events may take the form of graduating from university, negative events may include losing one's job, while positive events may include receiving an inheritance or venture capital from a stakeholder [25,26].

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts the quantitative research approach through a step-by-step method of research design, population, sampling, data collection instrument, and method of data analysis. A cross-sectional research design is used so that each of the participants can respond to the same type of instrument within a particular period. The population for this study consists of 10,500 students of the Plateau State Polytechnic, from all the seven departments in the school Administration and Business Studies from which a sample size of 374 students was rationally derived (from Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 table) from the school of Administration and Business Studies, Plateau State Polytechnic. Furthermore, entrepreneurial passion and self-employment intention instruments were adapted from recently used scales [11,27,4]. All items of the instrument are structured on a five-point Likert scale of strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Lastly, the multiple regressions model from Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 is employed to analyse the data.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of the data collected from the field survey are presented and interpreted, while the discussion was held with supportive texts within the purview of entrepreneurial passion and self-employment intention. This further unravels the implications associated with anticipated findings from the study.

Response Rate

The response rate stands at 93.6% (350) out of the 100% (374) questionnaires disseminated to participants. The remaining 6.4% (24) questionnaires were not returned while some were returned but completely without response. However, the 6.4% cannot interfere with the representativeness of the sample in generalising of results, since it is often difficult to achieve a 100% response rate [28].

Preliminary Analysis

The data were first checked for missing values using the multiple imputation method, to ensure that issues of missing completely at random (MCAR) or missing at random (MAR) are dealt with appropriately, but no case was found [29]. Furthermore, the values skewness and Kurtosis were within the acceptable benchmark of $\leq +1$ or -1 which is an indication of data normality [30]. The independent variables (passions for inventing, founding, and developing) positively correlated each other, and there was no case of multi-collinearity as the values of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance did not exceed 4 and not less than 0.10 respectively (see table 1) [31]. With these satisfactory conditions, the data is fit (with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.787) for the multiple regressions analysis to proceed.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demography shows that more females, 57.1% participated in this study than the male students of 42.9%. The age bracket of 18-30 years also responded highest as 60% in the survey more than other age brackets with 31-43 years (30.6%), 44-57 years (6.3%) while 58 years and above (3.1%). Furthermore, the majority of the participants constituting 85.1% were singles while 14.3% were married and 0.6% were divorcees. These participants are from different classes in their respective departments; with a slight majority of 26.6% from National Diploma (ND1) followed by ND2 (26.3%), then Higher National Diploma (HND1) 24.3%, and HND2 (22.8%). This blend of respondents, especially in terms of age, is appropriate for responding to issues of self-employment employment since a huge proportion of unemployment is found among the youth population.

Hypothesis Testing

Testing of hypotheses is an important statistical concept that provides the analytical procedure to authenticate or invalidate propositions. Three hypotheses were proposed earlier in this work, as such the standardized regression values are used for interpretation.

Table 1: Multiple Regressions Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	7.172	1.076		6.665	0.000		
PIN	0.549	0.067	0.433	8.138	0.000	0.743	1.345
PFO	0.010	0.080	0.007	0.120	0.905	0.905	1.528
PDE	0.194	0.076	0.147	2.551	0.011	0.639	1.565

PIN – Passion for Inventing, PFO – Passion for Founding, PDE -Passion for Developing, SEI -Self-Employment Intention

a. Dependent Variable: SEI

Table 1 shows that passion for inventing positively (0.433) and significantly ($0.000 < 0.05$) influences self-employment intention of students. The passion for founding also positively (0.007) and insignificantly ($0.905 > 0.05$) influences the self-employment intention of students. More so, the passion for developing positively (0.146) and significantly ($0.011 < 0.05$) influences the self-employment intention of students. These results are appropriately supported by positive t-values of 8.138, 0.120, and 2.551, also designating passion for inventing as the best influencer of self-employment intention of students, whereas passion for founding as worst and with almost no effect in the model.

Discussion

Hypothesis one established that passion for inventing is a strong determinant of self-employment intention of Plateau State polytechnic students. This is an indication that the students love creating new methods, taking advantage of opportunities, and finding new solutions for common problems [15]. Some students use this opportunity to engage in personal hustling to pay their fees and provide certain basic needs. For example, students between the ages of 18-30 years are seen with a strong passion for inventing in the area of innovation and information and communication technology as they provide phone and computer hardware and software solutions to users. This further confirms that the students' passion for inventing aligns better with their desirability, feasibility, and propensity to act on their self-employment intention.

Hypothesis two found a very weak positive and non-significant influence between the students' passion for founding and self-employment intention. This implies that the majority of the students cannot provide funds and social resources to invest and establish their occupation. On the other hand, getting external funding is sometimes not easy and experiences have it that business grants most often fall into the wrong hands in Nigeria, who do not eventually invest such in venture establishment. From this finding, it is inferred that students' passion for founding does not align with their desirability, feasibility, and propensity to act on self-employment intention.

Hypothesis three demonstrated a fairly positive and significant influence between students' passion for developing and self-employment intention. The students' passion for nurturing and growing their occupational intention could not have been better than what it is, since

their passion for founding was not significant [14,15]. However, a fairly positive and significant influence of passion for developing on self-employment intention is an indication of purported desirability, feasibility, and propensity to act to sustain their means of livelihood.

V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

From the above findings, it is informative to conclude that passion for inventing strongly and significantly influences the self-employment intention of the Plateau State Polytechnic students, while passion for developing have fairly significant effect on the students' intention to be self-employed. On the other hand, passion for founding does not significantly influence the self-employment intention of the students. The implication of these is that the students are passionate about occupations that can pay their daily bills without huge investment in capital input which can produce more sustainable rewards. Notwithstanding, the key stakeholders of tertiary institutions need to promote practices that would drive the passion of the students to found and sustainably grow their occupations. Therefore, providing effective entrepreneurship education, mentorship, fundings, and social resources are surely recommended to help in developing the self-employment intention of the students and transforming it into a sustainable enterprise.

However, it is important to identify a few limitations in this study. First is the use of a cross-sectional survey approach, where the data was collected over a particular period and short time. Probably, the results may slightly vary whenever a new set of students are admitted and/or some of the old students remained in the school for a long time. In addition, this research was conducted on the students of the School of Administration and Business Studies of the Plateau State Polytechnic. Other faculties of the school, schools within and outside the state, and schools in other countries may have their unique entrepreneurship situations in terms of entrepreneurial passion and self-employment intention. It is therefore suggested that these findings may be applied with particular attention to the pervasive effects of context.

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