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**Assessment of Students' Attitudes towards Entrepreneurship Development Initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete (Case Study of Faculty of Communication and Information Science)**

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**Abstract**

*This study assesses the attitudes of students of Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives. It raises five (5) objectives and questions to achieve its aims. It adopts case study method as its research design and the students of Faculty of Communication and Information Science are its population. It uses simple random sampling technique to administer questionnaires to 250 students. Out of the 250 questionnaires administered, only 200 are returned, representing 80% return rate. The study's findings reveal that the students are aware of entrepreneurship initiatives through the Centre for Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training and concludes that entrepreneurship initiatives available in Kwara State University, Malete are highly effective to helping the students in becoming self-dependent and establish their businesses after graduation, while it recommends, among others, that entrepreneurship initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete, should be practical oriented in order to give students the opportunity to learn the technicalities attached to their discipline's entrepreneurial activities.*

**Keywords:** Assessment, Attitudes, Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurship initiatives, Entrepreneurship development initiatives, Kwara State University, Students.

## **Introduction**

University is the highest institution of learning in every country. It is the centre of learning that offers admissions to students to study different courses, conduct in-depth research to advance the frontiers of knowledge and award degree certificate to students after fulfilling the required conditions of being awarded certificate. University is considered to be the prime place for education and developmental effort of nations across the world. And in other for a university to meet its mandate, universities have been training and exposing students to entrepreneurial initiatives, so that they can be their own boss, be an employer of labour of their graduation and contribute to the entrepreneurship development in their communities.

Entrepreneurship development in Nigeria was not quickly given the needed attention until the last decade of the 20th century. Akiri, Onoja and Kunazang (2016) noted that right after the reinstatement of democracy in 1999, the primary focus of Obasanjo's policies centered on accelerated development through entrepreneurial education (which he made mandatory for college students of all disciplines) and the creation of condition favourable to a new business regime built on innovation and adaptability. This period ushered in economic reforms and a renewed focus on entrepreneurs' development as the only viable means of sustained growth. Nigerian leaders initiated a massive programme of disinvestment and financial deregulation aimed at boosting business development across the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) space.

When the Federal Government of Nigeria recognized the role entrepreneurship plays in jumpstarting the growth and development of the economy, it decided on two things in 2009. One, that entrepreneurship education should be made a general studies course for all undergraduates of the tertiary institutions. The second was that a centre for entrepreneurial development be established in each of the tertiary institutions where different skills would be taught. At the end of their programme of study, graduates of the tertiary institutions would be able to set up their own businesses with a view to contributing to the economy (National Open University of Nigeria [NOUN], 2016).

## **Statement of the Problem**

The alarming rate of unemployment among the graduates in Nigeria has become a scourge with no end in sight. This is well buttressed by the recent figures released by the Trading Economics (2021), which revealed that the unemployment rate in Nigeria currently stands at 33.30%. This growing wave of unemployment challenges the Nigerian government to devise a means of equipping the Nigerian graduates with entrepreneurial skills. The entrepreneurial skills will groom graduates on how to be self-reliant after their graduation, be independent and become their own boss, create job opportunities for others by being an employer of labour and sustainably contribute to the economic conditions of Nigeria, by directly or indirectly participate in the Medium and Small-scale Enterprises in Nigeria.

However, as important as entrepreneurial initiatives and trainings are to the undergraduates, it has been observed that undergraduates in the Nigerian tertiary institutions have not prioritised entrepreneurship. This has affected their attention to develop interest in entrepreneurial initiatives, programmes and policies instituted by the government to make entrepreneurship attractive to them. Thus, this study is designed to assess attitudes of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives.

## **Objectives of the Study**

This study is conducted with general and specific objectives. The general objective is to assess the attitudes of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives.

The specific objectives go as thus:

1. To know the entrepreneurship development initiatives available to students of Kwara State University, Malete,
2. To determine if the students of Kwara State University, Malete, have interest in entrepreneurship development initiatives available in their University,
3. To ascertain the level of effectiveness of entrepreneurship development initiatives to the students of Kwara State University, Malete,

4. To determine the factors influencing the attitude of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives,
5. To proffer possible solutions to the factors influencing the attitude of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the entrepreneurship development initiatives available to students of Kwara State University, Malete?
2. Do the students of Kwara State University, Malete, have interest in entrepreneurship development initiatives available in their University?
3. What is the level of effectiveness of entrepreneurship development initiatives to the students of Kwara State University, Malete?
4. What are the factors influencing the attitude of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives?
5. What are the possible solutions to the factors influencing the attitude of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship development initiatives?

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **Entrepreneurship Development Initiatives in Nigeria**

Ogundele and Abiola (as cited in Chioma, Ukoha and Alagah, 2018) revealed that the role of government in entrepreneurship development in Nigeria became significant after the Nigeria civil war (1967-70). Since the mid-1980s, there has been an increased commitment of government to entrepreneurship development especially after the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986. Added to this are the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Association of Nigeria (SMEDAN).

Entrepreneurship initiatives in Nigeria also include the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB), Industrial Development Centres, Second Tier Securities Market, World Bank SME I AND II Loan Schemes, National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND), People's and Community Banks, Fiscal and Monetary Policies, National Poverty Eradication, Advisory

Agencies, Bank of Industry, Bank of Agriculture, Microfinance Banks, Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme (SMIEIS), the Nigerian Agricultural and Rural Development Bank Credit Scheme and the Seed Capital for Small Business and the introduction of entrepreneurship as a general course across tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

For the purpose of the study, some entrepreneurship development initiatives in Nigeria are reviewed below:

### **National Directorate of Employment (NDE)**

National Directorate of Employment (NDE) is one of the steps taken by the Nigerian government to promote entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. It was established as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), in November 22, 1986, with the objective to promptly and effectively fight unemployment by designing and implementing innovative programmes, which are directed towards the provision of training opportunities through the guidance and management support services to graduate farmers and small scale entrepreneurs.

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was established on the 24th October, 1986 and it commenced full operations in January 1987 with the primary aim of promoting skill acquisition, self-employment and labour intensive work scheme. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was targeted at school leavers, apprentices, graduates etc. The programme was to address four (4) major areas; (1) Small Scale Enterprises programme, (2) Vocational skill development programme, (3) Rural employment promotion programme, (4) Special public work programme (National Bureau of Statistics and Economic Development of Nigeria, 2016; Chioma, Ukoha and Alagah, 2018)

### **Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (Youwin)**

The Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria programme is a collaboration of the Federal Ministries of Finance, Communication Technology and Youth Development to organize an annual Business Plan Competition (BPC) for aspiring young entrepreneurs in Nigeria. The programme provides a one-time Equity Grant of N1million - N10 million to 1,200 selected aspiring entrepreneurs to start/expand their business concepts and mitigate start up risks; and to further

generate some 80,000-110,000 new jobs for unemployed Nigerian youths over a three-year period (Akande and Okuwa, 2009).

### **The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (YEPP)**

The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme was launched on 15th of March 2016 by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). The objective of the YEDP scheme is to inspire and harvest the entrepreneurial abilities of Nigerian youths towards creating over one million direct jobs by 2020 (Amaefule, 2016). According to the CBN Governor, Mr. Godwin Emefiele, “the programme was to ensure that the creative energies of the over 64 million Nigerian youths were harnessed to stimulate growth, address restiveness and promote economic development”. The programme guidelines stated that the targeted beneficiary groups are National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members and those with not more than 3-5 years post – NYSC experience (CBN, 2016).

### **Microfinance Banks/Institutions**

Microfinance is vital to the development of entrepreneurship activities in Nigeria. People have access to capital for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria through microfinance. Microfinance has affected entrepreneurship in the country positively. The major contribution of microfinance institutions to the developing economies like that of Nigeria is its role in promoting entrepreneurship development in the nation (Mayowa, 2012).

One of the goals of entrepreneurship routed by successful Nigerian government has been the reduction of unemployment and poverty alleviation. A cordial thrust in public policy for the achievement of indigenous entrepreneurship through the provision of long term loans and equity capital by banks for enterprise. Given the gap between savings and invertible funds, the short fall is provided by credit delivery. Many newly developed and developing countries have therefore made credit delivery an endurable strategy in the development of entrepreneurship in both industry and agriculture.

### **Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Foundation**

In 2015, the Foundation launched the TEF Entrepreneurship Programme, a \$100 million commitment by Tony Elumelu to empower 10,000 African entrepreneurs over 10 years. Building on the Programme’s success and its unique ability to identify, mentor and fund entrepreneurs

across Africa, the Foundation is increasingly sharing its robust delivery platform and working in partnership with institutions such as United Nations Development Programme, the African Development Bank, the International Committee of the Red Cross, GIZ, and United Bank for Africa Plc, to create meaningful and permanent impact across Africa.

The Tony Elumelu Foundation is the leading champion of entrepreneurship in Africa, with the objective to empower women and men across the African continent, catalysing economic growth, driving poverty eradication and ensuring job creation. The Foundation believes that the private sector has critical role to play in Africa development and that the private sector must create both social and economic wealth. It was founded by African investor and philanthropist, Tony O. Elumelu, and representing his personal commitment to creating a new generation of entrepreneurs, through his investment company, Heirs Holdings, the Foundation is active in all 54 African countries (The Tony Elumelu Foundation [TEF], 2021).

### **Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions**

Entrepreneurship education was introduced into the curricula of the Nigerian Higher Education Institutions in 2006 and it took effect in 2007/2008 academic session. Entrepreneurship education is made of all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. As such, it goes beyond business creation (Enu, 2012). It is about increasing student's ability to participate and respond to societal changes. Entrepreneurship education can be divided into three aims that are: learn to understand entrepreneurship, learn to become entrepreneurial and learn to become an entrepreneur.

Olorundare and Kayode (2014) sees entrepreneurship education the type of education designed to change the orientation and attitude of the recipients and the process will equip them with the skills and knowledge to enable them start and manage a business. It aims at developing the requisite entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, competencies, and disposition that will predispose the individual to be a driving force in managing a business. This type of education is open to all and not exclusively the domain of the some self-acclaimed business gurus. This is more so true in the sense that these behaviours can be practiced, developed and learned. Therefore, it is important to expose all students to entrepreneurship education (Akpomi, 2009).

## Methodology

This study adopts case study method to assess students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship development initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete. The method supports the researchers to have an in-depth understanding of the students and their attitudes towards entrepreneurship development initiatives in their school. The study's population are 1598 students of Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Kwara State University, Malete. It uses Taro Yamane formula to pick a sample size of 250 students, while simple random technique is used to give equal opportunity to every member of the population to be selected. A questionnaire titled "*Assessment of Students' Attitudes towards Entrepreneurship Initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete*" is used for data collection. Out of the 250 questionnaires administered, 200 are returned, making the return rate of the questionnaire to be 80%. This shows that the data collected is valid for analysis as posited of Rubin and Babbie (2011) that response rate is found to be appropriate for analysis, if it is up to 70% or more. The data gathered is presented and analysed with simple percentage and frequency table.

## Data Presentation, Analysis, Discussion and Interpretation

### Demographic Information of the Respondents

Responses	F	%	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	108	54%
	Female	92	46%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Age Range</b>	14 – 19 years	75	37.5%
	20 – 23 years	72	36%
	24 – 29 years	40	20%
	30 and above years	13	6.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Department</b>	Library and Information Science	98	49%
	Computer Science	55	27.5%
	Mass Communication	47	23.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Level</b>	100	24	12%
	200	36	18%
	300	48	24%
	400	92	46%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The above table shows that majority of the students are male with 54 %, while the females have 46 %. It further reveals that majority of the students are within the age range of 14-19 years with 37.5 %, followed by 20-23 years with 26 %, 24-29 years have 20 %, while 6.5 % of the respondents are within the age range of 30 and above years. It also indicates that majority of the respondents are Library and Information Science students with 49 %, followed by 27.5 % from Computer Science, while students from Mass Communication has 23.5 % and finally reveals that majority of the students are 400 level students with 46 %, followed by 300 level with 24 %, 200 level students are 18 %, while 100 level students are 12 %.

**Research Question One: What are the entrepreneurship development initiatives available to students of Kwara State University, Malete?**

S/N	Attributes	Yes	(%)	No	(%)
a.	National Directorate of Employee (NDE)	12	6	188	94
b.	Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (Youwin)	17	8.5	183	91.5
c.	Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA)	15	7.5	185	92.5
d.	The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (YEPP)	14	7	186	93
e.	Microfinance Banks/Institutions	14	7	186	93
f.	Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Foundation	162	81	38	19
g.	Entrepreneurship Courses	194	97	6	3

The table for Research Question One indicates that the Nigerian Directorate of Employment (NDE), Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (Youwin), Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA), The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (YEPP), Microfinance Banks/Institutions initiatives, with 94%, 91.5%, 92.5% and 93% respectively are not offered at Kwara State University, while the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Programme and

Entrepreneurship Courses are entrepreneurship initiatives in Kwara State University, with 81% and 97% respectively.

There is no need to be surprised about why Entrepreneurship Courses has 97%. This is because through the Centre for Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training, Kwara State University trains students on entrepreneurship from 100 level first semester till students' last semester. The Centre's entrepreneurship programmes are designed to expose students to both the theoretical and practical aspects of entrepreneurship. When students get to 400 level, the Centre has a provision to offer a special entrepreneurship certificate to those who have registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission.

Also, that 81% of the students believed that Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Programme is being offered in their school is impressive. The implication of this is that, though, the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Programme is not directly offered in tertiary institutions, but it is an initiative that is opened to all African entrepreneurs, offering them opportunities to scale up their businesses by granting them a sum of 5,000 US dollars. The programme is being conducted annually and beneficiaries are selected through rigorous processes.

**Research Question Two: Are students of Kwara State University, Malete, interested in entrepreneurship development initiatives in their school?**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>No of res.</b>	<b>Per (%)</b>
1.	Yes	172	86
2.	No	28	14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

The table for Research Question Two reveals that majority of the respondents, 86% are interested in the entrepreneurship initiatives in their school, while 14% of the students are not interested. What the results of this table imply is that the students are interested in the entrepreneurship initiatives in their school. The level of interest of the students can influence their attitude towards

the entrepreneurship initiatives and motivate them to go extra miles on making the initiatives work for their vantage.

**Research Question Three: What is the level of effectiveness of entrepreneurship initiatives offering in Kwara State University, Malete?**

S/N	Attributes	No of res.	Per (%)
1.	Highly effective	55	27.5
2.	Partially effective	70	35
3.	Undecided	28	14
4.	Partially ineffective	21	10.5
5.	Highly ineffective	26	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Table for Research Question Three indicates that 35% of the respondents believed that the entrepreneurship initiatives in their school are partially effective, followed by 27.5% highly effective, 14% undecided, 13 % highly ineffective, while 10.5% partially ineffective.

From the results of the table, it can be deduced that more than average percentage of the students believed that the entrepreneurship initiatives in their school is effective. Based on the interactions the researcher had with some students while administering the questionnaire, most students admitted that the training and skills they acquired through the entrepreneurship initiatives have equipped them to be self-dependent and also exposed them to the processes required to standardise a business.

**Research Question Four: What are the factors influencing attitudes of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship initiatives?**

S/N	Attributes	Yes (%)	No (%)
a.	Lack of capital	194 97	6 3
b.	Difficulties in getting loans	180 90	20 10
c.	Poor state of infrastructure	182 91	18 9
d.	Unstable Nigerian economy	194 97	6 3
e.	Inconsistent government policies	190 95	10 5
f.	Poor knowledge of how to run a business	148 74	52 26
g.	Marketing strategy challenge	180 90	20 10
h.	Lack of patience	176 88	24 12

Table for Research Question Four shows that 97% of the students believed that lack of capital and unstable Nigerian economy are the major factors influencing their attitudes towards entrepreneurship initiatives in their school, followed by inconsistent government policies (91%), poor state of infrastructure (91%), difficulty in getting loan and marketing strategy challenges (90%), lack of patience (88%), while poor knowledge of how to run a business is 74 %.

From the results of the table, it can be deduced that lack of capital and unstable Nigerian economy are affecting the students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship initiatives in their school. However, further studies have revealed that poor pedagogical delivery, lecture period and venues, availability of practical training, personality of the lecturer, etc., also plays crucial roles in influencing students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship initiatives in tertiary institutions.

**Research Question Five: What are the possible solutions to factors influencing the attitudes of students of Kwara State University, Malete, towards entrepreneurship initiatives?**

S/N	Attributes	Yes (%)	No (%)
a.	Stable economy should be ensured	194 97	6 3
b.	Consistent policies should be made	194 97	6 3
c.	There should be quick and easy access to adequate capital and funding	194 97	6 3
d.	Availability of infrastructure and social amenities	192 96	8 4
e.	Students should possessed adequate knowledge of how to run business	190 95	10 5
f.	Students should possessed adequate knowledge of marketing strategy	190 95	10 5
g.	Students should be willing to become entrepreneurs	182 91	18 9

Table for Research Question Five indicates that 97% of the students believed that stable economy should be ensured, consistent policies should be made and there should be quick and easy access to adequate capital and funding are the major solutions to the factors influencing their attitudes towards entrepreneurship initiatives in their schools, followed by availability of infrastructure and social amenities with (96%), students should possessed adequate knowledge of how to run business and marketing strategies (95%) respectively, while students should be willing to become entrepreneurs has 91%.

The obvious thing that can be deduced from the results of this table is that there are many solutions to the problems affecting students attitudes towards entrepreneurship initiatives in KWASU, with most of the students' responses indicating that students strongly believed that providing the

suggested solutions will go a long way in influencing their attitudes towards entrepreneurship initiatives in their school.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Entrepreneurship initiatives are important aspect of every growing, developing and sustainable economy. This study has revealed that through the Centre for Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training, there are some entrepreneurship initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete and students are interested in these initiatives. The entrepreneurship initiatives available in Kwara State University, Malete are highly effective to helping the students in becoming self-dependent and establish their businesses after graduation. However, some common problems associated with entrepreneurship initiatives are lack of capital, unstable Nigerian economy, inconsistent government policies, poor infrastructure, marketing strategy, difficulty in getting loans.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. The entrepreneurship initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete, should be designed to expose students to strategies on how to market their products and services.
2. Entrepreneurship initiatives in Kwara State University, Malete, should be designed towards guiding students on how to access loans in respect to the entrepreneurial activities they engage in.
3. The entrepreneurship initiatives offered in Kwara State University, Malete, should be practical oriented in order to give students the opportunity to learn the technicalities attached to their entrepreneurial activities.
4. Students of Kwara State University, Malete, should develop the willingness of becoming entrepreneurs because there is minimal assurance of securing white collar jobs.
5. Students of Kwara State University, Malete, should continuously learn how to run businesses and acquaint themselves with the emerging practices required to manage a business to success.

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