

CONTRIBUTION OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL INTEREST IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the contribution of family structure to the entrepreneurial interest of students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Four hypotheses were tested in the study. The study adopted correlation survey design. Snowballing as well as random sampling technique was used to select 150 students in public tertiary institutions in the State as sample for the study from the population of all the students in these institutions. The instruments used for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Family Structure Questionnaire" (FSQ) and "Students Entrepreneurial Interest Questionnaire" (SEIQ) which were validated by two experts and the reliability index estimated was 0.87 and 0.89. The instrument was administered on the spot and retrieved by the researcher and three research assistants. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that at: ($f = 0.184, p < 0.832$), ($f = 0.170, p < 0.844$), ($f = 0.043, p < 0.958$) and ($f = 1.471, p < 0.233$), there was no significant relationship between parental income, family type, family size and parental education on the entrepreneurial interest of students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. It was recommended based on the findings of the study that an all-inclusive entrepreneurial curriculum should be developed and implemented for students in these schools.

Keywords: Family Structure, Students Entrepreneurial Interest, Tertiary Institutions, Rivers State

Introduction

The need for students to become more entrepreneurially inclined in the face of rising graduate unemployment cannot be ignored. Given the unexpected interruption occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, several businesses were forced to shut down and some employees were eventually laid-off. In the new normal, it is those who possess business ideas and those who are able to create new business in the new normal that will be able to overcome the challenges brought about by the issue of unemployment ravaging Nigeria and several other countries.

There is no individual who can succeed in business in isolation. Students who wish to go entrepreneurial need to be supported across all fronts if they must succeed in business. The family has been identified as an important factor that can contribute to the interest of students in entrepreneurship. It has been revealed that factors related to the family setting such as the educational level of parents, values and expectations play an important role in a child's life skills and educational outcome (Harju-Luukkainen, *et al.*, 2020). This implies that either directly or indirectly, the family influences the educational pattern and interest of a child and must ensure that the child is assisted to achieve his or her educational interest or aspiration effortlessly.

It was pointed out by Jagannathan, *et al.*, (2017) that the social capital possessed by the family greatly enhances the chances of *entrepreneurial interest* in students by nearly 14% and this further establishes the fact that the social climate in a family such as the level of education, family size and family type can determine the interest of a child to become an entrepreneur and this is in addition to economic factors such as the income level of parents and the family as a whole. Families must therefore ensure that the social and economic condition under which a child is raised is supportive and not counterproductive to their educational development as well as entrepreneurial interest in the face of rising youth unemployment in the country.

Statement of the Problem

The upbringing vis-a-vis educational development of a child is not a responsibility that should be left for the school alone. In fact, scholars have reiterated severally that the family is the first social environment that a child is exposed to and as such the formal and informal training given to the child in this first social environment can make or mar their interest in education as well as entrepreneurship. However, most times, parents and guardians are either ignorant or negligent about how the family setting where the child is raised determines their educational prospects and interest in entrepreneurship. Given the socio- economic peculiarities of Rivers State, one still wonders if the family supports or militates against the entrepreneurship interest of students in this environment.

Given the difficulty in securing a job in today's covid-19 pandemic ravished society, families need to be more concerned and proactive in ensuring that the child is given priority so as to realize their life goals including developing the right entrepreneurial interest and it is on this note that this study intends to investigate students' family variables and entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the contribution of family structure to students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. determine if parental income influences students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
2. ascertain if family type influences students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
3. examine if family size influences students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
4. find out if parental educational level influences students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between parental and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
2. There is no significant relationship between family type and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
3. There is no significant relationship between family size and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
4. There is no significant relationship between parental educational level and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship has been identified as one of the major drivers of the 21st century industrial revolution. This is due to the fact that entrepreneurs contribute both socially and economically to the growth and development of their immediate environment not only as gainfully employed citizens but employers of labour through the promotion of viable business ventures. The secret behind this feat is the ability to transform existing or non-existent business ideas into wealth creation opportunities.

In their words, Nandamuri and Gowthami (2013:2) stated that "entrepreneurship is the process of identifying opportunities and creating organizations to exploit these opportunities". The main goal of an entrepreneur is to take advantage of an

idea which is capable of generating economic benefits and nurturing such idea until its benefits are appropriated. Entrepreneurship is also seen as the process of taking risk to create an object of value for the purpose of economic gains. This chain of activities demand that the entrepreneur must possess some level of entrepreneurial interest which is the zeal, passion and capability to carry any business venture successfully.

The contribution of the family to the development of entrepreneurship interest in students cannot be ignored. Adesehinwa (2013:153) asserted that "the family, being a powerful influence on the child and its importance as a primary agent of socialization could in no doubt enhance or hinder the academic achievement of the child depending on the social climate in the family". Therefore, families need to make deliberate effort in ensuring that the child does not only develop educationally but is able to develop the needed entrepreneurial interest that will help mitigate the graduate unemployment crises ravaging the country.

The social and economic condition of the family has some level of influence on the educational chances and choices of any child. For example, since no student can comfortably go to school without the basic resources needed for learning, education scholars believe that the financial position of the family can determine whether or not the child will even be in school. Supporting this assertion, Gujrati *et al.*, (2019) mentioned that having access to financial resources can assist an individual to easily take up self-employment as a career after school. This implies that the financial condition of the family precisely that of the parent can influence the interest of a learner in becoming an entrepreneur and this is more so when the conditions for doing business is capital intensive and the student will require some financial assistance to enter into and succeed in business. This means that the income level of the parents of a child as well as the entire family income can determine whether or not a child will show entrepreneurial interest.

In another manner, the type of family in which a child is born can also determine whether or not the child will have interest in entrepreneurship. Scholars such as Adesehinwa (2013) have have asserted that the type of family a child is born into; single parent family, monogamous or polygamy increases or reduces the educational achievement of the child. It is generally expected that the fewer the number of people in a family, the easier it is for a child to pursue his or her educational aspiration. Supporting this assertion, Adesehinwa (2013) mentioned that when a learner is from a polygamous family, there are chances that the child is more likely to experience several problems educationally than students from monogamous families. This assertion has continued to draw attention of researchers as this sometimes is not the case.

Relatedly, some scholars have also made assertions as to whether the size of a family and precisely the position of a child in a family can determine the educational and entrepreneurial interest of a child. However, Azumah *et al.*,

(2017:4) stated that “many policy makers see restricting family size as a good strategy for increasing average human capital investment”. This means that whether or not the number of people in a family can influence the educational decision of a child in and outside the family is still an unresolved issue. Therefore, whether the family is large, moderate or small may not have a direct impact on the entrepreneurial interest of a learner except where there are other intervening variables.

Further to this, the educational level of the parent of a child is also a family characteristic that is under investigation by researchers to see its effect of a child’s education. Some researchers believe that when the parent of a child is an entrepreneur, it increases the chances of the child being an entrepreneur and this is also juxtaposed with the assumption that children with more educated parents are likely to develop higher entrepreneurial interest but this assumption remains doubtful without a scientific proof. Onyedikachim and Ezekiel-Hart (2021:58) mentioned that “parental educational level which refers to the highest educational attainment of parents may range from the high school to professional level”. The extent to which these family variables increase or decrease the entrepreneurial interest of a learner demands critical investigation among researchers. In their assertion, Lamar University (2021) mentioned that one argument given by researchers is that parents who have passed through school especially at the higher level tend to place higher premium on educational attainment. However, this does not really determine the entrepreneurial path that the child is likely to take all things being equal.

Empirical Studies

Several empirical studies have been carried out in the past to investigate how the family setting influences the educational choices and opportunities of learners and one of such studies was carried out by Siregar and Marwan (2020) on the effect of parents’ socioeconomic status, adversity quotient, and self-efficacy, on students’ entrepreneurship interest. The study was driven by five objectives, and the participants were students from Padang City, with 263 being sampled. The data was collected via a questionnaire, which was then analyzed using Smart PLS 3 and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). According to the study's findings, parents' socioeconomic level had a substantial impact on their children's entrepreneurial ambition. Similarly, another study carried out by Radianto *et al.*, (2019) on the impact of family’s socio-economic context on financial literacy of young entrepreneurs which was carried out using three objectives. Young entrepreneurs were employed in the study as a sample, as were students who were involved in college while still managing a firm. According to the study's findings, young entrepreneurs have a moderate level of financial literacy. The study also

found that parental education and income have a significant impact on financial literacy, whereas parental work has no impact on financial literacy.

Furthermore, a related study conducted by Bamgbade and Saloviita (2014) on school performance of children from monogamous and polygamous families in Nigeria which was carried out using a sample of 206 students indicated no difference between the two groups were observed across background variables of demographics, parental education and occupation, or family support for schooling. The results of the study also revealed that there was no difference in the scores on the Junior Secondary School Entrance Exam between the two groups. Children from polygamous families, on the other hand, reported having more difficulties with mathematics and English than their monogamous counterparts. Onongha (2015) also investigated family type (monogamy and polygamy) and academic performance of students using the case of students in Cross River, Nigeria. The study used a comparative approach, with 300 students selected as a sample using a stratified sampling method. The data was obtained using a validated questionnaire, and the results were analyzed using a t-test with a significance level of 0.05. According to the findings, there is no substantial difference in academic achievement between students from monogamous and polygamous families. The study's findings also revealed that there was no significant gender difference in academic achievement between students from both families. This suggests that both types of families had a similar impact on students' academic success.

Isaac (2018) also conducted a study on the extent to which polygamy influences the pupils in their academic achievement in Kumi District. The study used a descriptive survey approach, with a questionnaire used to collect data from students and teachers, as well as interviews with school heads from five secondary schools in Kumi district. This group had 30 students and 25 teachers who were chosen using a snowballing and random sampling method. Polygamy has an impact on students' academic achievement, according to the conclusions of the study. In addition, the study found that the negative effects of polygamy outweighed the good effects. Family relationships, financial situation of the family, availability and non-availability of school resources, academic level of parents, and family size were among the factors that influenced the academic accomplishment of children from polygamous homes according to the study.

Furthermore, Siyanbola *et al.*, (2012) investigated the determinants of entrepreneurial propensity of Nigerian undergraduates using an empirical assessment. There were 7,560 students who were sampled for the study using 25 tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that entrepreneurship interest in the students was high but parents' educational qualification, family entrepreneurship history, family socio-demographics, students experience and condition were main drivers. It was pointed out that

necessary factors that drive this interest were gender, number of children, position among mother's children, father's monthly income and entrepreneurial education were all necessary but not sufficient.

Olugbenga (2020) conducted a research on the impact of parent's entrepreneurial success on entrepreneurship intentions of undergraduate students in Nigeria. Survey design was adopted for the study and students were sampled across private and state-owned universities in Oyo State. Purposive sampling method was used in sampling the 90 selected students which was also the population of the study. Questionnaire was used for the collection of data and the reliability of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The finding of the study showed no correlation between parents' entrepreneurial success and entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates in the study area.

Gooding (2001) investigated the relationship between parental educational level and academic success of college freshmen. The study in its findings showed that parent's educational level, family structure/marital status, and income range have a positive influence on student's academic potential and achievement. It was revealed that students whose parents had higher educational levels performed higher on standardized tests than parents with lower educational levels. This implied that socioeconomic factors have a high level of influence on the potential and academic achievement of first-time freshmen at Iowa State University.

Methodology

The design used for the study was correlation survey. The population of the study comprised all the students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. However, snowballing sampling technique was used to select 150 students who meet the needed criteria of the study as sample. The instruments used for the collection of data were a 20-item questionnaire titled "Family Structure Questionnaire" (FSQ) and a 20-item questionnaire tagged "Students Entrepreneurial Interest Questionnaire" (SEIQ). The instruments had two sections namely; Section A for the collection of demographic data on the respondents and Section B which contained the questionnaire items. The instrument was designed on a four point modified Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with weighted scores of 4, 3, 2 and 1. The questionnaires were validated by two experts; one in Educational management and the other in Measurement and Evaluation both from the Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt. The reliability of the instruments were estimated using Cronbach alpha statistics with co-efficients of 0.87 and 0.89 respectively. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher and three research assistants and were retrieved on the spot. The information collected about families was based on that of the household head of the family. Low income referred to those earning below

government approved wages, medium was for those earning within government approved wages while high was for those earning above government implemented wage. Single parent refers to a single parent, monogamy referred to one man and one wife while polygamy refer to a man with more than one wife. The family of two and below referred to a small family, 3-5 for moderate and above 5 was considered a large family. Parents who have never been to school were classified as 'no education', those with primary and secondary are classified as those with 'basic education' while those with higher degree were classified as 'higher education'. The hypotheses were tested using one-way analysis of variance at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between parental income and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Table 1: One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the significant relationship between parental income and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

ANOVA						
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	7.601	2	3.800	.184	.832	Ho was not rejected
Within Groups	3028.293	147	20.601			
Total	3035.893	149				

In table 1, it was revealed that the f-crit. was more than the f-cal. value of 0.184 while the p-value of 0.05 was less than the 0.832 ($f = 0.184$, $p < 0.832$) and as such, the null hypothesis was not rejected indicating that there was no significant relationship between parental income and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between family type and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Table 2: One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the significant relationship between family type and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	6.987	2	3.493	.170	.844	Ho was not rejected
Within Groups	3028.906	147	20.605			
Total	3035.893	149				

Table 2b indicated that the f-crit. was more than the f-cal. value of 0.170 while the p-value of 0.05 was less than the 0.844 ($f = 0.170$, $p < 0.844$) and as such, the null hypothesis was not rejected implying that there was no significant relationship between family type and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between family size and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Table 3: One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the significant relationship between family size and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	1.774	2	.887	.043	.958	Ho was not rejected
Within Groups	3034.119	147	20.640			
Total	3035.893	149				

Table 3b suggested that the f-crit. was more than the f-cal. value of 0.043 while the p-value of 0.05 was less than the 0.958 ($f = 0.043$, $p < 0.958$) and as such, the null hypothesis was not rejected meaning that there was no significant relationship between family size and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

HO₄: There is no significant relationship between parental educational level and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Table 4: One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the significant relationship between parental educational level and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

ANOVA						
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	59.554	2	29.777	1.471	.233	Ho was not rejected
Within Groups	2976.340	147	20.247			
Total	3035.893	149				

Furthermore, table 4 indicated that the f-crit. was more than the f-cal. value of 1.471 while the p-value of 0.05 was less than the 0.233 ($f = 1.471$, $p < 0.233$) and as such, the null hypothesis was not rejected meaning that there was no significant relationship between parental educational level and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

It was revealed as part of the findings of the study that there was no significant relationship between parental income and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. This implies that irrespective of the level of income earned by the parents of the students, it does not make any impact on the students' entrepreneurial interest. However, this finding negates the position of the outcome of the study carried out by Siregar and Marwan (2020) on the effect of parents' socioeconomic status, adversity quotient, and self-efficacy on students' entrepreneurship interest and it was indicated that parents' socioeconomic level had a substantial impact on their children's entrepreneurial ambition. This is based on the assumption that parents with high income have the capacity to support the entrepreneurial intention of their children. However, this may not always be the case as the availability of funds for entrepreneurship may not necessitate the ability to develop a business idea that will be successful.

Parental income can create a platform for students to develop an idea that has already being nursed or assist the student who intends to be an entrepreneur and has some business ideas to be successful but may not be able to develop the required interest in the student. Supporting this assertion, Radianto *et al.*, (2019) in the study on the impact of family's socio-economic context on financial literacy of young entrepreneurs indicated that young entrepreneurs have a moderate level of financial literacy and that parental education and income have a significant impact on financial literacy. This indicates that income level of parents may assist the child to be a more successful entrepreneur as no entrepreneurship

can succeed without the needed fund but developing the right entrepreneurial interest is a responsibility for the intending entrepreneur.

The responses from the students also showed that there was no significant relationship between family type and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. This result means that whether students are from single parent homes, monogamous homes or polygamous homes, it does not in any way determine their entrepreneurship interest. This result totally agrees with the outcome of the study conducted by Bamgbade and Saloviita (2014) on school performance of children from monogamous and polygamous families in Nigeria which showed that there was no special effect on the scores of the Junior Secondary School Entrance Exam students in the study. This does not imply that such children may not encounter some challenges in the process of building their interest but they have some chances to succeed like other children.

The type of family a child comes from may provide some convenience and chances to show some level of entrepreneurial prowess but succeeding in any chosen business is solely the responsibility of the intending entrepreneur. This is the case with a related study conducted by Onongha (2015) on family type (monogamy and polygamy) and academic performance of student which indicated that there is no substantial diversity in the academic achievement between students from monogamous and polygamous families. The study revealed that there was no significant gender difference in academic achievement between students from both families. It therefore means that these students must exercise some level of personal assessment and development in order to develop the required interest and succeed as an entrepreneur.

Furthermore, there was no significant relationship between family size and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. This means irrespective of the number of people in the family, everyone has an equal chance of becoming an entrepreneur eventually. However, the study by Isaac (2018) on the extent to which polygamy influences the pupils in their academic achievement in Kumi District family relationships, financial situation of the family, availability and non-availability of school resources, academic level of parents, and family size were among the factors that influenced the academic accomplishment of polygamous children. This implies that when the family is large, the children in the family may not have the right environment to conceive and develop their entrepreneurship interest and this is more so if they do not get the needed support. Supporting this assertion, Siyanbola *et al.*, (2012) in their study on the determinants of entrepreneurial propensity of Nigerian undergraduates indicated that entrepreneurship interest in students sampled was high but parents' educational qualification, family entrepreneurship history, family socio-demographics, students experience and condition were main drivers. It was also indicated that the necessary factors that drive this interest were gender,

number of children, position among mother's children, father's monthly income and entrepreneurial education were all necessary but not sufficient. This means that the size of the family can to some reasonable extent contribute or hinder the development of an entrepreneurial idea which can affect the entrepreneurial future of the learner.

The study also showed that there was no significant relationship between parental educational level and students' entrepreneurial interest in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. It means that whether or not the parent of a student is educated, those who are willing to become entrepreneurs still have the chance of becoming one if the necessary conditions are satisfied.

Negating this finding, Gooding (2001) who investigated the relationship between parental educational level and academic success of college freshmen found out that parent educational level, family structure/marital status, and income range have a positive influence on student's academic potential and achievement. This means that if the parents of these students can be a little more educated, there will be a better chance of developing the right entrepreneurial interest but this may not always be the case in every scenario.

Supporting the position of the finding of this study, Olugbenga (2020) in the study on the impact of parent's entrepreneurial success on entrepreneurship intentions of undergraduate students in Nigeria found out that there was no correlation between parents' entrepreneurial success and entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates. This implies simply that a lot is expected from students who really want to become entrepreneurs irrespective of the structure of the family they are from as their personal characteristics and aspirations play major roles in the development of the right entrepreneurial interest.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the study was that: there was no significant relationship in parental income, family type, family size and parental education and the entrepreneurial interest of students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. This implies that irrespective of the family structure that students come from, the development of the required entrepreneurial interest rest more with the students than with the family where the students are from and this places a huge responsibility on the shoulder of students who wish to become entrepreneurs.

Recommendations

Recommendations made in line with the findings of the study included the following:

1. The government needs to improve on the creation and implementation of more entrepreneurial scheme for students who wish to become entrepreneurs. This will provide opportunity for all those with such

interest to develop their entrepreneurial ambition whether or not they are receiving any form of assistance from the family.

2. The entrepreneurship programme in most of the tertiary institutions in the country should be made more inclusive by the government and school administrators and provide a level playing ground for students of all social and cultural orientation to showcase their interest and abilities to become successful entrepreneurs based on the provisions of such programmes.
3. The media should engage in constant sensitization to enable students under the opportunities and threats to their entrepreneurial ambition as this will limit the practice of trying to tackle family based challenges that are not the major inhibitors of the entrepreneurial development of these students.
4. There is need for students to also collaborate in the development of their entrepreneurial ideas as this will enable them assemble all the required ideas, resources and assistance that is needed to become a successful entrepreneur rather than trying alone to deal with all the challenges that are associated with entrepreneurship.

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