

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AS A CORRELATE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL CAREER INTENTION AMONG UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES IN ENUGU STATE

Dr. Anthony Godwin¹, Dr Ejiofor Valentine Oodo², & Chukwu Immaculata Chiamaka¹

¹Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, Faculty of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State.

²Department of Educational Foundations, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Agbani, Enugu State

Corresponding Author: godwin.anthony@funai.edu.ng, 07038926024

This study investigated Motivation as a correlate of entrepreneurial Career intention among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. The study, which was guided by one research hypothesis, was carried out in Enugu State. The population consisted of 585,568 unemployed graduates in Enugu State. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to sample 314 respondents. The data for the study were collected by the use of two questionnaires titled Motivation Questionnaire and Entrepreneurial Career Intention Questionnaire. The questionnaires were validated by three experts from Enugu State University of Science and Technology: two from educational psychology and one from Measurement and Evaluation. The data obtained from the responses during the trial test were used in computing the reliability coefficient using the Cronbach Alpha method. Alpha values were found to be 0.80 and 0.78, respectively, indicating high reliability of the instruments. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis. The study revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between motivation and entrepreneurial career intention among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. The major recommendations were that the government should encourage the need to create and nurture students' entrepreneurship programmes in all public and private institutions in Enugu State aimed at imparting entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through education as a remedy to escalating unemployment challenges among university graduates. For unemployed graduates to actualize their intention to entrepreneurship, enough funds as well as basic infrastructural /social amenities should be released to that effect. This is because the provision of adequate infrastructural facilities will greatly enhance the development of entrepreneurial culture among unemployed graduates.

Keywords: Motivation, Intrinsic Motivation, Entrepreneurial Career Intention and Unemployment

Introduction

Motivation seems to be a very important psychological attribute which, when associated with entrepreneurial career intention, may produce an individual who will venture into entrepreneurship and exploit. Following increasing interest in empirical research and academic theories in the field of motivation, various definitions and concepts are found in the literature. Sani (2017) affirms that motivation, from a historical perspective, comes from the Latin word *Moveer* which means "to move." In its literal meaning, motivation is the process of arousing movement in the organism; this movement is produced and regulated through the release of energy within the tissue. Udor (2018) acknowledges motivation as the driving force behind all the actions of an individual. An individual's needs and desires both have a strong influence on the direction of their behavior. According to Noel (2019), motivation refers to the dynamics of our behavior, which include our needs and goals in life. To Williams (2019), the concept of motivation helps to understand and

explain fascinating facts about learning; a student who is interested in a subject tends to pay attention to it; as a result, a student enjoys dealing with that subject either for what it can lead to or for its own sake, and his attention level is high, his work output is sustained, and his satisfaction is high. Sani (2017) opined that motivation is an important factor in everyday life. This is because our basic behaviors and feelings are affected by our inner drive to succeed over life's challenges while we set goals for ourselves. It is in view of the above that our motivation promotes our feelings of competence and self-worth as we achieve our goals. It provides us with means to compete with others to better ourselves and to seek out new information, to learn and absorb. Motivation explains why one person avoids work, another works normally and satisfactorily enough to reach the pinnacle, and yet another resorts to illegal and unconventional methods of gaining social, academic, economic, and political recognition. Vans (2019), explains that motivation should be carefully manipulated, whether at work or in school, so that our youths are neither under- nor over-motivated, but appropriately motivated to be useful to themselves, their society, and the world at large.

According to Shank (2019), two motives are directly involved in the prediction of behavior: implicit and explicit. Implicit motives are spontaneous impulses to act, also known as task performance, and are elicited by intrinsic task incentives. Explicit motives are manifested through deliberate choices and are frequently triggered by extrinsic reasons. Individuals with strong implicit goals set higher internal standards, whereas others tend to follow societal norms. Utomi (2019), believes that these two motives frequently work together to determine an individual's behavior in a particular direction, so explicit motives are built around a person's self-image. However, Shanks (2019) concludes that motivation shapes a person's behavior based on their own self-view and can influence their choice and responses to outside cues. Psychologists agree that many aspects of behaviour are determined by motivation. This is why they conceive motivation as those factors which energize and give directions to behaviour. In the view of Williams (2019), usually, a motivated person engages in an activity more vigorously and more efficiently than an unmotivated one. Apart from activating a person or other organisms, motivation tends to direct behaviour, and that is why people behave as they do at a particular point in time. Noel (2019), in his own view, looks at motivation as adequate balancing of the needs and aspirations of the worker with the organizational objectives to enable the worker to attain desirable results, the process that influences the arousal strength or direction of behaviour.

A person's needs precipitate drives, and drives are action tendencies resulting from the existing needs. The drive levels decrease as the need is satisfied. Shan (2017) describes motivation as the desire to do something. When one wants to do something and the interest to do that thing is there, one says that the person is motivated to do that thing. If, on the other hand, the person is discouraged within himself (perhaps due to some internal or external forces) to do that thing, one says that the individual is not motivated to do it. To motivate simply means to move someone to action. It is concerned with making people work efficiently without force. It is important to recognize that motivation depends on the goals to be achieved and the conditions for achieving them; where the two are satisfactory and attractive, it is likely that the individual will be motivated.

Udor (2018) believes that the various theories of motivation recognize the fact that the desired goals and attractiveness of the means for achieving them direct the behaviours of individual workers. Generally, workers come to organizations with expectations to give their best without being compelled, which is also referred to as intrinsic motivation.

To Fadi (2018), intrinsic motivation is the act of acting without expecting any immediate external rewards. Instead of being motivated or under pressure from outside sources, like a prize or deadline, people engage in things because they find them to be fun and intriguing. Reading a book because you enjoy it and are interested in the plot or subject, as opposed to reading it because you need to write a report on it to pass a class, is an example of intrinsic motivation. The foundation for intrinsic motivation used to be people's wants and drives. They are compelled to fulfill their sex, hunger, and thirst demands to survive and be healthy. People have psychological requirements that must be met for them to grow and thrive, just as the biological needs, the requirements for proficiency, independence, and relatedness. Intrinsic motivation entails seeking out and participating in activities that we find hard, intriguing, and internally rewarding without the expectation of any external reward. It also requires satiating the fundamental psychological demands. According to Dickson (2018), intrinsic drive originates from inside, but extrinsic motivation results from external factors. Intrinsic motivation is when internal forces like personal growth or a desire to succeed feed the drive to accomplish a task. When someone is intrinsically driven, they engage in an activity because they enjoy it and gain personal gratification from it. For activities that must be carried out over an extended period of time, intrinsic motivation is often seen as a more potent reward.

Dickson (2018) says a person can practice stronger intrinsic motivation by doing the following things: Find meaning by focusing on your values, the purpose of a task, and how it helps others, or find ways to make tasks entertaining for yourself. Look for the enjoyment in work and other activities. Continue to push yourself by establishing realistic objectives that center on skill mastery rather than material gains. Make a list of activities you truly love to do or have always wanted to do, and pick one to do anytime you have time or opportunity to help someone in need, whether it's a buddy who needs help around the house or volunteering at a soup kitchen. Participate in a competition and place more emphasis on teamwork and performance than on winning. Before beginning a task, think about a time when you felt proud and successful. As you work to complete the assignment, keep your mind on those emotions. Danjuma (2019) lists a few examples of intrinsic motivation, including playing a sport for fun and enjoyment rather than to win an award, learning a new language for personal growth rather than because it's necessary for your job, and spending time with someone because you enjoy their company rather than to advance your social standing. Rather than cleaning to appease your husband, you clean because you like having a nice home; instead of playing cards to win money, you're playing because it's a task you enjoy. Instead of training to be in shape for particular clothing or to lose weight, exercise should be done because it challenges your body physically. Volunteering because you feel happy and fulfilled rather than because you have to do it to fulfill a school or work need. Taking on more responsibility at work because you enjoy being challenged and feeling accomplished, rather than to get a raise or promotion; going for a run because you find it relaxing or because you're trying to beat a personal record, instead of entering a competition; painting a picture because you feel calm and happy when you do it, rather than selling your art to make money.

According to Hassan (2016), entrepreneurs are likely to be intrinsically motivated if they attribute their entrepreneurial success to factors within their control, also known as autonomy or internal locus of control; believe they have the skills to be effective agents in achieving their desired entrepreneurial goals (also known as self-efficacy beliefs); are interested in mastering a business rather than just getting good grades. Marris (2016) acknowledges that the advantages of intrinsic

motivation can be long-lasting and self-sustaining and can help increase entrepreneurial career intention of unemployed youths. Efforts to build this kind of motivation are also typically efforts at promoting business ideas. Such efforts often focus on the business rather than rewards or punishments

Marris (2016), defines entrepreneurial career intention as the frequency or amount with which entrepreneurial events occur, and the degree or extent to which events are innovative, risky, and proactive. Marris argues that each of the three dimensions innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness can vary independently and simultaneously in both frequency and degree. Marris further identified education and collective personal life experiences in society as critical in supporting or undermining entrepreneurial intensity. According to Bingham (2019) entrepreneurial career intention refers to the conscious or deliberate intention to engage in entrepreneurial task, it can be defined as an individual's anticipated desire to engage in an entrepreneurial activity. It represents an individual's expectancies about a particular entrepreneurial responsibility; it is the level to which a person has formulated consciously plans to do or not to do some specific future entrepreneurial task. It is an indication of an individual's readiness to perform a given entrepreneurial task, it is assumed to be an immediate antecedent of behavior. It is based on attitude toward the entrepreneurial behavior or planned future behavior (Shanks, 2019). It is important to understand the individual entrepreneurial intention because the intention is parallel with the cognitive that can drive individual attention, experience, and action towards the objective to perform a business. Intention is believed to be a predictor towards the forming of human behavior in various situations and had been recognized as the most effective in predicting human behavior (Bingham, 2019). Furthermore, Udor, (2018) emphasizes that the intention is the most important element which contributed to performing a new organization. Intention also is an active concept which not only showed the intention to perform a business but it include with other intention such as seeking expert opinion and undergone market study. According to Danjuma (2019), intention is information seeking which can be used to assist in achieving the goal of establishing a new business. The entrepreneurial activity is truly a type of planned behavior which formed an intention model (Vans, 2019). If the intention model is proven to be useful in the understanding of forming new business intention, this model will present the idea, understanding and predicting in identifying the entrepreneurial behavior. Utomi (2019) observes entrepreneurial intention as individual commitment to start a new business. According to Shanks (2019), the level of cognitive awareness that motivates someone to launch a new firm is considered entrepreneurial intention. Anthony (2020), sees intention as a state in the mind that consists of concentration, experience, and personal action toward a specific goal or behaviour. It's critical to comprehend the entire entrepreneurial process because purpose is frequently linked to starting a new firm (Noel, 2019).

Bakare (2019), opines that entrepreneurial Career intentions is a commitment to starting a new business. Since starting a venture is essential to the definition of entrepreneurship, this is regarded as a broader idea than simply owning a business. Beginning a new firm or endeavor is frequently characterized as a deliberate and purposeful career choice, with the importance of entrepreneurial self-efficacy being highlighted as a major antecedent. Understanding the causes of intentions helps individuals better comprehend what they aim to do. Attitudes influence behavior by their impact on intentions. Intentions and attitudes depend on the situation and person. Bakare (2019), says that the intention to be an entrepreneur is stronger for those with

more positive attitudes to risk, and unemployed graduates are not exempted.

According to Anthony (2020), graduate unemployment is defined as the number or proportion of degree holders (graduate and postgraduate) in a given economy who are capable and willing to work, but unable to find jobs. This definition establishes graduate unemployment as a specific type of unemployment among people with academic degrees from higher institutions working zero hours and earning zero income. Viewed almost in the same context, Bingham (2019) describes graduate unemployment to encompass graduates of universities and polytechnics who are fit and ready to work, but could not find a job or were discriminated against by experience. In these categories of people are fresh and young tertiary institution graduates, retrenched graduates seeking re-engagement, and those who are underemployed or on disguised employment. Within this perspective, graduate unemployment has been construed in this study to mean the condition of involuntary idleness for higher education graduates who are actively seeking remunerative employment, but cannot find any, under the prevailing economic circumstances.

Graduate unemployment in Nigeria has become one of the most discussed and misunderstood issues in the country. Every year, hundreds of thousands of graduates leave universities and polytechnics with high hopes, only to face rejection after rejection in the job market. This has led to a popular narrative that Nigerian graduates are “unemployable”. But the truth is more complex. Nigerian graduates are not inherently unemployable. The real problem lies in a broken system, outdated education models, weak industry linkage, and a fast-changing global economy that now rewards skills over certificates (Anthony, 2020).

According to Fadi (2018), Nigeria produces over half a million graduates every year from universities and polytechnics. At the same time, job creation has not kept pace with population growth, economic instability, and technological change. As a result, competition for limited jobs is extremely high; employers raise entry requirements unrealistically, and graduates without practical skills are filtered out quickly. Most Nigerian institutions still teach largely theoretical content that does not reflect real workplace demands; many courses do not emphasize hands-on training. SIWES and industrial training are often poorly supervised or treated as a formality. This pressure has created the false impression that graduates themselves are the problem, when in reality they are operating in a system that no longer prepares them for modern work (Bakare, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

The Enugu State landscape is awash with discomfiting news of graduates’ unemployment, which has caused a lot of psychological trauma in the lives of graduate youths. Universities in Enugu State churn thousands of graduates annually who have no job and have no means of livelihood. The researcher’s interaction with some of the unemployed graduates in Enugu State seems to suggest that most of them are not into entrepreneurship due to fear of failure, lack of confidence, and they have action mentality problems; they do not believe they can make themselves successful; most of them are not willing to take risks; they are also idle and the most vulnerable in society. The unemployed graduates in Enugu State seem not to be motivated by either the government or private individuals. Some of the financial institutions discourage the aspiring entrepreneurs (unemployed graduates) with some of their unrealistic interest rates and ridiculous requirements. This practice by banks has led a lot of brilliant business ideas to have been washed down the drain due to financial constraints. The above factors may have led unemployed graduates into hunger, prostitution, child trafficking, assassination, kidnapping, malicious damage

of public and private property, frustration, anxiety, depression, abuse of substances, dangerous behaviours including suicide and violence towards members of society, and financial strain such as not being able to meet one's immediate financial obligations. It may also account for why the unemployed graduates have lower life satisfaction, less marital or family satisfaction, poor self-esteem, and reduced life expectancy. These unemployed graduates seem to be worn out psychologically, mentally depleted, physically traumatized, and this has put society in danger, thereby killing the zeal and means for entrepreneurship development among the unemployed graduates in Enugu State.

However, little is known about the relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial career intention among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. This study, therefore, sought to address the gaps by investigating the relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial career intention among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. By doing so, the study will offer empirical evidence to support such investigation

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate motivation as a correlate of entrepreneurial career intention among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to; Determine the relationship between intrinsic motivation and entrepreneurial career intentions among unemployed graduates in Enugu State.

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis guided this study;

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and entrepreneurial career intentions among unemployed graduates in Enugu State

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed correlational survey design in investigating the relationship between the variables. A correlational survey method is designed to examine the degree to which two or more variables are correlated to one another without manipulating the variables. The target population for the study was made up of 585,568 unemployed graduates in Enugu State. According to Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Enugu State has the total of 585, 568 unemployed graduates. Sample size for the study comprised (314) respondents. A multistage sampling procedure was used in composing the sample, at the first stage the researchers used simple random techniques, then the second stage the researchers used purposive sampling technique Two instruments were used for this study, namely: Entrepreneurial Career Intention Questionnaire and Motivation Questionnaire. The motivation instrument by was an adapted questionnaire by Davis (2020) the instrument has original reliability of 0.84. A four point scale was used to assign values to the items to be rated by the respondents as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 Points, Disagree (D) 2 Points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. Also the entrepreneurial career question was structured by the researchers on the same four point scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 Points, Disagree (D) 2 Points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. The adapted questionnaire and the structured questionnaire developed by the researcher were subjected to face and content validation by three research experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations (Educational Psychology Unit) and one from Measurement and Evaluation. All the validators were from Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, (ESUT). To ensure the reliability of the instruments, the validated instruments were administered on 50 males and 50 females' unemployed graduates in Ebonyi State which is

outside the area of the present study. This was used because the respondents in Ebonyi State shared similar characteristics with their counterparts in Enugu State. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instruments, Cronbach Alpha method was used to compute the internal consistency reliability estimate of the items. Cronbach Alpha was used because it has no right or wrong answer. At the end of this, reliability indices 0.78, was gotten for Entrepreneurial Career Intention Questionnaire and 0.80 for Motivation Questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

RESULTS

Hypothesis one

H₀₁ There is no significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and entrepreneurial career intentions among unemployed graduates in Enugu state

Table1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation test for Relationship between Unemployed Graduate's Intrinsic Motivation and Their Entrepreneurial Career Intention.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Corre- index r	Df	P	Decision
Intrinsic motivation	314	38.975	5.315	.789	312	0.001	Strong Positive Correlation
Entrepreneurial career intentions		42.693	4.997				

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 shows the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between unemployed graduate's intrinsic motivation and entrepreneurial career intentions. The calculated (p) value of 0.001 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance at a correlation index r level of 0.789 at df of 312. This indicates a strong positive correlation between unemployed graduate's intrinsic motivation and their entrepreneurial career intentions. Thus, the more intrinsically motivated the unemployed graduates are the more their intention to take entrepreneurship as a career increases.

Summary of Findings

The study sought to investigate Motivation as correlate of entrepreneurial Career intention among Unemployed Graduates in Enugu. From the empirical analysis of data, the following are the major findings of this study. There is a strong positive correlation between unemployed graduate's intrinsic motivation and their entrepreneurial career intentions. Thus, the more intrinsically motivated the unemployed graduates are the more their intention to take entrepreneurship as a career increases.

Discussion of findings

The Relationship between Intrinsic Motivation and Entrepreneurial Career Intention among Unemployed Graduates.

The findings of this study showed that intrinsic motivation has strong positive correlation with entrepreneurial career intentions among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. This indicated that the higher the unemployed graduate's intrinsic motivation, the higher their intention to take entrepreneurship as a career. Unemployed graduates if they have interest, inner force or motivation propelling them to entrepreneurship, it will help to strengthen their intention to entrepreneurship. The findings agree with the findings of Marries (2016), who opines that intrinsic motivation can be long-lasting and self-sustaining and can aid to increase entrepreneurial career

intention of unemployed youths. Marries suggests that unemployed graduates can have long lasting intention to entrepreneurship if they attribute their entrepreneurial success to interest, effort and willingness to take responsibilities despite challenges around them. Davis (2020), opines that entrepreneurs who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to engage in the task willingly as well as work to improve their skills, which will increase their capabilities.

On the contrary, the findings of the study are in disagreement with the findings of Anthony (2020), whose studies confirm that there were no significant correlation between unemployed graduates intrinsic motivation and their entrepreneurial career intention. The study acknowledges that extrinsic motivation alone enhances entrepreneurial intention.

Conclusion

An inference that is drawn from the findings of this study is that intrinsic motivation has strong positive correlation with entrepreneurial career intentions among unemployed graduates in Enugu State. This indicates that the higher the unemployed graduate's intrinsic motivation, the higher their intention to take entrepreneurship as a career.

Recommendations

1. The government should encourage the need to create and nurture students entrepreneurship programmes in all public and private institutions in Enugu State aimed at imparting entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through education as a remedy to escalating unemployment challenges among university graduates. Regular in-school orientation programmes should be organized for tertiary school students aimed at explaining and inculcating in them, strategies for generating and boosting their intention to entrepreneurship through intrinsic motivation.
2. For unemployed graduates to actualize their intention to entrepreneurship through extrinsic motivation, the government should release enough funds, relevant materials, and a conducive environment, as well as basic infrastructural /social amenities. This is because the provision of adequate infrastructural facilities will greatly enhance the development of entrepreneurial culture among unemployed graduates, thereby assisting in the eradication of unemployment and poverty among the graduates.

References

- Anthony, R. (2020). *History of Entrepreneurship Education*, Kaduna, Zima Press.
- Bakare, W.B. (2019). A Longitudinal Study of Cognitive Factors Influencing Start-Up Behaviour and Success at Venture Creation, *Journal of Business Venturing*, 10 (5):371-91.
- Bingham, B. (2019). Entrepreneurship Education: Toward A Model of Contingency-Based Business Planning. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3(3):258-73.
- Danjuma, D. (2019). The Development of an Entrepreneurial Career. *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, 37(1), 43– 74.
- Davis, R. (2020). When The Going Gets Tough; Toward a Psychology of Entrepreneurial Failure and Re-Motivation. *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research*. 30(7): 56- 73.
- Dickson, L. (2018). Entrepreneurial Expectancy, Task Effort, and Performance. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*. 27 (1): 187-207
- Fadi, L. (2018), Prediction of Entrepreneurial Employment Status Choice Intentions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 21(1): 47-57.
- Hassan, R. (2016). Falling Forward: Real Options Reasoning and Entrepreneurial Failure. *Academy of Management Review*, 24 (1): 18-31.

- Marries, G.S. (2016). The Influence of Locus of Control on the Development of Entrepreneurial Intentions and Actions, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 18 (4), 63-79
- National Bureau of Statistic (2021), Labour Force Statistics Vol 5: Unemployment and Underemployment Report (Q-Q3 2021) December 2021
- Noel, B. (2019). Managing Entrepreneurship Education at the University Level in Nigeria: A Panacea for Graduate Self-employment. *African Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 3(2): 49-53.
- Sani, S. (2017), The Role of Entrepreneurship Education on Job Creation among Youths in Nigeria. *International journal of Social and Humanistic Sciences* 15 (4) 87-90
- Shanks O. (2019). Entrepreneurship Development: A Panacea for Unemployment Reduction in Nigeria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences (JETEMS)* 2 (4): 251-256.