

## **Influence of Family Occupations on Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduate Social Studies Students of Ahmadu Bello University-Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study is specifically aimed at determining the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations. The population of the study consists of all the 114 final year students of Social Studies in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria as at 2015/2016 academic session. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire instrument. Descriptive statistics measures are used in answering the question posed by the study while One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in validating the null hypothesis postulated by the study. The study found that there is a significant difference in the mean of entrepreneurial intentions scores among undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations. The study among other things offers some recommendations for policy makers and educators while formulating policies and pedagogical interventions.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurial Intention, Family Occupation, Social Studies, Undergraduate*

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### **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship refers to one's own business and involves broad concepts such as work attitude that emphasizes self-reliance, initiative, innovativeness and risk-taking. According to Salihu (2014) entrepreneurship is the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. He further asserts that entrepreneurship focuses on recognizing a business opportunity, starting a business based on the recognized opportunity and operating and maintains that business. In addition, Ubah (2011) stressed that entrepreneurship is creating new enterprises to meet new challenges and opportunities presented in the situation. An entrepreneur is someone who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise. Entrepreneurship according to Mustapha and Selvaraju (2015) is a vital cog in the economic performance of nations around the globe as it has the capacity to create adequate jobs opportunities that reduce unemployment rates. Entrepreneurship also leads to the enhancement of skills to serve consumers and is viewed as a process of innovation, which creates new ventures (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004).

Decisions to be entrepreneurs are determined by certain factors and it is a planned behaviour

instead of engaging in it accidentally. Thus, underlying factors that influence students' intention towards entrepreneurial career are vital. Entrepreneurial intention is defined as a state of mind leading an individual's attention and action toward the endorsement of entrepreneurial behaviour, building new business concept and undertaking in entrepreneurial career. It is also defined as the growing conscious state of mind that a person desires to start a new enterprise or create new core value in existing organization (Khuong & An, 2016; Remeikiene & Startiene, 2013). According to Khuong and An (2016), the influences of both personal traits and environment can define entrepreneurship intention. Students' entrepreneurial intention may be affected by different factors. One of such factors is the family/parents' occupation. Family is defined as the group of people who are related by blood, marriage and/or adoption. Due to parents' role as knowledge transferors to their children, the existence of role models in the close family is determinant in the choice of the future professional career of young adults. This transference of knowledge and experience can take place either by exposure, in which the self-employed parents act as role models for their children, or by closure, providing financial or social capitals for the foundation of a new

venture (Mungai & Velamuri, 2011). The family, and especially father and mother, exercises great power over the desirability and feasibility for the process of the creation of a new company (Lerchundi, Alonso & Vargas 2014). Different literatures indicate that individuals raised in entrepreneurial family impacts the intention for entrepreneurship thereby considerably raising the desire of starting their own business (Singh & Prasad, 2016). It is said that such role models provide the vital impetus to the desire of starting a business. Such role models may act as mentors and guides to the children in the family for starting a business (Lerchundi, Alonso, & Vargas, 2014).

Entrepreneurship is considered as the main driver of economic growth in most countries (Muhammad, Akhbar, & Dalzied, 2011) and is a permanent concern in most countries (Nigeria inclusive) since new and small firms are the major contributors to new jobs in the country (Mazura & Norasmah, 2011). Thus, a study on the inclination of Social Studies students' intention to be entrepreneurs is very important to promote entrepreneurship at the national level, especially to encourage fresh graduates of Social Studies to get involved in this field and make it their career.

Social studies education assert Salihu (2014) has been viewed as both a course of study and a way of life. It is aimed at producing effective citizenry who are fully equipped with skills, values and attitudes to enable them to relate in a non-conflictual way in the society. The development of socio-economic skills for entrepreneurship and self-reliance development is at the heart of social studies education as it tries to assist Nigeria through its teachings to attain its national philosophical goals. The socio-economic skills enable them to function effectively and benefit maximally in any kind of environment they find themselves.

Nevertheless, socio-economic skills are vital ingredient in an effort towards effective entrepreneurship and self-reliance development. This is because these skills enable man to relate effectively with other stakeholders for optimum success in an enterprise. Social studies education through its teachings and advocacies promote the development of those skills that ensures success in a business environment and self-reliance development (Salihu, 2014). In this sense, determining the

influence of the family occupation on the entrepreneurial intention and the transfer of business knowledge in undergraduate students of Social Studies is the main objective of this study. Specifically, the study examines the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations. Thus, the study tend to ask the question that: what is the difference in the mean of entrepreneurial intentions scores of undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations?

### **Literature Review**

A lot of empirical studies were conducted to ascertain predictors/factors that influences entrepreneurial drives among different categories of individuals. Some of these studies are discussed below:

Mustapha and Selvaraju (2015) investigates the factors associated with entrepreneurial inclination among undergraduate students in Malaysian universities. Among others, the influences of personal attributes, family and peer, and entrepreneurship education on the students' inclination towards entrepreneurship are examined. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to accounting students at three public universities in Klang Valley. About 178 questionnaires were completed and were found to be usable for the purpose of the study. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis and t-tests were employed to analyse the data. Generally, the results of the study indicate that the respondents have a positive inclination towards entrepreneurship. The hierarchical regression results show that personal characteristics, family influence, entrepreneurial education have positive and significant influence on the students' intention to be entrepreneurs when the variables are added into the equation. However, gender is not an important factor in influencing the students to choose entrepreneurship as their future career pathway.

In another vein, Basu and Virick (2008), evaluated entrepreneurial intentions and their antecedents. Their findings highlight that education and prior experience does have a positive and significant impact on entrepreneurial behaviour. Also, Drennan,

Kennedy, and Renfrow (2005), study investigates the influence of various childhood-experience factors on the perceived feasibility and desirability of starting a business. A structured questionnaire was completed by over 1,000 university students and analysed using regression analysis. Results indicated that perceptions of entrepreneurship were influenced not only by parental ownership of a business, but also by a difficult childhood and frequent relocation.

Similarly, Lee, Lim, Lim, Ng and Wong (2012), study examines how attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control, entrepreneurship education and personality traits affect entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates. The primary data of this study was gathered by distributing 200 survey questionnaires to respondents at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Perak Campus. The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability test which can ensure high reliability result was conducted on every variable. Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis were conducted in this study to observe independent variables (i.e. attitude toward the behavior, entrepreneurship education and personality traits). All the variables have significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention. Independent Sample T-test is used to test on personal details (i.e. gender differences and family background) of respondents in opposition to dependent variable (i.e. entrepreneurial intention).

Lerchundi, Alonso, & Vargas (2014) study the parental influence on the entrepreneurial intention of technical degrees students in Spain. The proposed approach is the statistical analysis of a survey conducted on 1004 students in five different technical degrees at Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM), the biggest technical university in Spain. The survey explored the students' entrepreneurial intention and their perception of the support provided by their closer environment (family and friends) in case they decided to found a new company. Special attention is paid to the parents' current occupation as entrepreneur or civil servant, as this is believed to be relevant for the success of entrepreneurial knowledge and attitude transfer from one generation to the next. Empirical evidence provided that, while self-employed parents grow children with higher entrepreneurial intentions, civil servants tend to

have children who do not feel the entrepreneurial professional perspective so intriguing.

In the light of the foregoing, it is evident that various studies were conducted to ascertain the entrepreneurial intentions/drive of various categories of individuals including university undergraduates. This study is one of its kind in the area of Social Studies to determine the entrepreneurial intentions of university undergraduates of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

### **Null Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean entrepreneurial intentions scores of undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations.

### **Methodology**

The design of the study used is survey. Specifically, cross-sectional survey is used. The population of the study consisted of all the final year students of Social Studies as at 2015/2016 academic session numbering. A total number of 200 students of Social Studies are purposively used out of which 114 were retrieved. The study adapted Entrepreneurship Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) after extensive literature review and developed a modified one titled "Social Studies Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (SOSEIQ). The questionnaire is designed based on 5-point Likert scale rating such as Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (U) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The instrument is duly validated and 0.896 reliability coefficient is realized using Cronbach alpha. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation are used in answering the question posed by the study while One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is used in validating the null hypothesis postulated by the study at 0.05 level of significance.

### **Presentation of Results**

Table 1 presents the consolidated result of the analysis comparing the mean entrepreneurial intentions of students in relation to their family occupations (public civil servants, private sector employees, traditional occupations; farming, blacksmith, goldsmith and businesses). The established decision mean is 3.00 which is compared against the individual mean of the items in the table to determine the

pattern of responses made by the students. Although the use of arithmetic means suggests treating Likert Scale based data as an interval

level of measurement, the mean scores is used in this study to establish rank order of agreement/disagreement for the items.

**Table 1: Mean entrepreneurial intentions of students in relation to their family occupations**

Item Statements	Public Servants		Organised Private Sector Employees		Traditional Occupations		Businesses	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Starting my own business sounds attractive to me	2.98	1.43	4.19	1.050	3.95	1.09	4.73	0.59
2. If I came up with a good business concept I know precisely where to turn for the counselling and aid	3.48	1.28	2.65	0.851	2.64	0.85	3.93	1.22
3. Even if I came up with a good business concept I do not think I would dare to take the risk of founding my own firm	3.08	0.38	2.97	0.797	3.27	1.01	3.07	0.63
4. I am confident that I would succeed if I started my own business	3.18	0.59	2.68	0.944	2.82	1.26	2.53	0.52
5. My parents are positively oriented towards my future career as an entrepreneur.	2.45	1.26	2.89	1.125	3.18	1.01	3.33	1.35
6. If I became an entrepreneur, my family would consider it to be	2.90	0.44	2.70	1.077	2.61	1.00	3.00	0.38
7. It would be easy for me to start my own business	2.93	0.73	2.65	0.949	2.77	0.87	2.58	0.73
8. I have a very serious thought in starting my own firm.	2.93	0.42	2.59	0.956	2.41	0.80	3.33	1.05
9. I prefer to be an entrepreneur rather than to be an employee in a company	2.70	0.65	2.41	0.798	3.05	0.90	3.40	1.30
10. If I came up with a good business concept I know precisely how to get the funds needed to get started	2.48	0.72	2.76	1.065	2.77	0.75	3.40	0.83
11. To start my own company would be the best way for me to take advantage of my education	2.20	0.52	3.19	0.616	2.91	1.07	2.80	0.41
12. To run my own firm would probably be the best way for me to improve my financial position	2.85	0.95	2.89	0.843	2.32	0.57	2.60	1.12

SD = Standard Deviation

Decision Mean=3.00

Looking at the Table 1 above it shows the standard deviation (SD) of the responses, and it measures the variability or dispersal of the responses. It demonstrates how clustered the responses value are around the means for each

item. Higher SD is often interpreted as higher disparity. In general, the result shown in Table 1 indicates low values for the SDs, which indicates high degree of consistencies in the students' opinions.

**Table 2: One-way Descriptive on the mean intentions of students in relation to their family occupation**

Occupations	N	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Public Servants	40	91.93	9.31	88.95	94.91	78.00	115.00
Organised Private Sect.	37	100.08	8.72	97.18	102.99	88.00	120.00
Traditional Occupations	22	97.41	7.93	93.89	100.93	82.00	109.00
Businesses	15	103.53	6.93	99.70	107.37	89.00	112.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>97.16</b>	<b>9.47</b>	<b>95.40</b>	<b>98.82</b>	<b>78.00</b>	<b>120.00</b>

**Table 3: Summary of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Hypothesis One**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2022.58	3	674.19	9.15	.000
Within Groups	8104.58	110	73.68		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10127.16</b>	<b>113</b>			

The results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics in Tables 2 and 3 revealed significant difference in the mean entrepreneurial intentions scores of undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations. This is due to reason being that the calculated P values of 0.00 is less than the 0.05 alpha level of significance, while the calculated F value of 9.15 is greater than the F critical of 2.60. Their mean scores are; 91.93, 100.08, 97.48 and 103.53 for public civil servants, private sector employees, traditional occupations and businesses respectively. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean entrepreneurial intentions scores of undergraduate Social Studies students in relation to their respective family occupations is rejected.

### Discussions of Results

The study discovered that family/parental occupations influence the entrepreneurial intentions and inclination of Social Studies

students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria. In the same vein, Social Studies students whose parents' occupations are business inclined show more interest, confidence and motivation to become entrepreneurs after graduation. Corroborating these findings, Mustapha and Selvaraju (2015) in their study discovered that personal characteristics, family influence, entrepreneurial education have positive and significant influence on students' intention to be entrepreneurs. In the same vein, the presence of self-employed father was found to be related to positive attitude towards entrepreneurship (Basu & Virick, 2008). In a related development, the study of Drennan, Kennedy, and Renfrow (2005) found that positive view of family business experience in respondents enhanced perception of desirability and feasibility of starting a business. Prabhu & Thomas (2014) in their study concludes that B school students' entrepreneurial intentions are influenced by the Parental factors such as parental role modelling, access to Business network of parents, entrepreneurial family

culture, educational qualification of parents and family standard of living.

Moreover, Robson and Bennet (2000) posit that families and friends act as the preferred source of advice for small-medium enterprise owners. Basically, new graduate entrepreneurs rely on informal sources such as family members, colleagues and social networks as well as universities (Greene & Saridakis, 2007) for support and guidance in business. In a related study, Robson and Bennet (2000) posit that families and friends act as the preferred source of advice for small-medium enterprise owners. Basically, new graduate entrepreneurs rely on informal sources such as family members, colleagues and social networks as well as universities (Greene & Saridakis, 2007) for support and guidance in business. Similarly, Lee, Lim, Lim, Ng and Wong (2012) in their study discovered significant difference between family backgrounds in their intention to be entrepreneur. Also, Ahmed et al. (2010), stress that support of family and a perception that entrepreneurship would be a gratifying and attractive career option is related to stronger entrepreneurial intentions. Lerchundi, Alonso, & Vargas (2014) also concurred that students who have parents with their own business have a significantly higher entrepreneurial intention than students whose parents are not self-employed ( $t=-3.54$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Similarly, students with civil servants parents have a lower entrepreneurial intention than those whose parents are not employed in public services ( $t=3.49$ ;  $p<.001$ ). They, therefore conclude that the professional background of parents influences the entrepreneurial intention of their descendants.

Contrary to the findings of this study, Singh and Prasad (2016) in their study found that there was no difference in entrepreneurial intentions of management students hailing from family business background or from salaried class background. The findings of this study are also at parallel to that of Fatoki (2010) where statistically significant difference was not found between students whose parents own and run a business and those whose parents do not own and run a business.

### Conclusions

In the light of the findings made by this study, it is concluded that:

1. Family/parental occupations have significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions and inclination of Social Studies students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria;
2. Social Studies students whose parents' occupations are business/privately inclined show more interest, confidence and motivation to become entrepreneurs after graduation.

### Recommendations

The study in the light of the findings and conclusions drawn, made the following recommendations:

1. The entrepreneurship and other allied courses offered for all undergraduates of Ahmadu Bello University can be an appropriate avenue to expose and develop the students' intention to be entrepreneurs. This is where the university should play its role to motivate the students by providing the necessary training and courses to instill more positive attitude of the students towards entrepreneurship;
2. Parents/family members who have no business orientation and inclination should as a matter of national importance motivate their children through all lawful means possible to develop the mindset for owning their personal businesses after graduation. This will help in reducing the number of job-seekers in the labour market.

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