

Stakeholders' Assessment of Edupreneurship as Catalyst for Employment Generation among Prospective Teachers in University of Ilorin

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Abstract

Concerns about unemployment in Nigeria extend to the teaching profession, where an emphasis on entrepreneurship skills often overshadows the need for comprehensive educational training. There is a pressing need to cultivate self-employed teachers who can generate jobs within the educational sector and promote teaching and learning. This study evaluates stakeholder perceptions regarding edupreneurship's role in creating job opportunities for prospective teachers at a Nigerian university. Utilizing a descriptive survey design, the research sampled 399 stakeholders, including students and lecturers, using a validated questionnaire consisting of 20 items. Findings indicate that edupreneurship initiatives improve educational quality, enhance employability, and foster innovation among prospective teachers. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of university support, gender disparities, and cultural norms hinder progress. The study also highlights that edupreneurship education can effectively address the shortage of qualified teachers while helping prospective educators develop essential entrepreneurial skills beyond traditional teaching methods. Significant differences in perceptions among prospective teachers were observed based on status and gender. Conclusively, edupreneurship education holds significant promise for enhancing education at the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. Stakeholders are urged to prioritize edupreneurship initiatives to tackle the challenges faced by prospective teachers in today's labor market. By doing so, they can contribute to a more robust educational framework that benefits both educators and students alike.

Keywords: Edupreneurship; prospective-teachers; stakeholders; challenges; prospect; initiative

Introduction

Edupreneurship is a portmanteau of "education" and "entrepreneurship," which refers to the entrepreneurial activities and initiatives within the educational sector. It embodies the innovative and business-oriented mindset applied to educational endeavors, aimed at improving educational outcomes, addressing challenges, and creating value in the field of education.

Edupreneurship is a sub-sect of entrepreneurship; while entrepreneurship education focuses on teaching students skills and mindset to start and run their own businesses or ventures, serving as a career path or a way to create innovative solutions and covers areas such as business planning, financing, marketing, and product development (Oluwadare & Salau, 2018; Brune & Lutz, 2019), edupreneurship specifically focuses on applying those entrepreneurial principles and innovative skills or thinking, to improve education by developing as well as implementing innovative solutions within educational institution or educational technology startups with the aim of enhancing learning outcomes, teaching methods and educational access.

Edupreneurship encompasses a wide range of activities, such as establishment of educational institutions, development of educational technologies, creation of educational content, provision of educational services, and implementation of educational programs (Mitra, 2015; Banks, 2019).

In Nigeria, like many other countries, unemployment poses a significant challenge, particularly among young graduates entering the job market. The education sector, while essential for addressing this issue, also faces its own set of challenges, including limited job opportunities for prospective teachers, despite an increasing demand for quality education (Ajayi & Oluwagbohunmi, 2017). The concept of edupreneurship has emerged as a potential solution to address unemployment within the education sector by leveraging entrepreneurial principles to create innovative educational initiatives and employment opportunities (Oluwadare & Salau, 2018). Edupreneurship encompasses various activities, including the establishment of educational institutions, development of educational technologies, and provision of educational services, all aimed at improving educational outcomes and creating employment (Adawehe & Etim, 2018; Banks 2019).

Scholarly literature in Africa has focused on exploring entrepreneurial opportunities as a solution to youth unemployment on the continent (Uleanya & Gamede, 2017; Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis, 2017; Adom, Chiri, Quaye, & Awuah-Werekoh, 2018; Olaniran & Mncube, 2018; Dzomonda & Fatoki, 2019). The goal of an edupreneurship education is to equip the participants with relevant knowledge and skills to become entrepreneurs and solve some of the societal pressing problems. Sub-Saharan Africa is faced with the challenges of how to provide employment opportunities for her teeming young population (World Bank, 2019; Uleanya, Rugbeer & Olaniran, 2019). The reason is simple, as illustrated in Figure 1, Africa is the only continent in the world where the youth population is rising exponentially (Sow, 2019).

However, while there is growing interest in edupreneurship, particularly in Nigeria, there is limited research specifically examining its role in creating employment opportunities for prospective teachers within higher education institutions such as the University of Ilorin. Understanding the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of stakeholders regarding edupreneurship and its impact on teacher employment is essential for informing policy decisions, shaping educational practices, and fostering collaboration between academia and industry (Salau & Olaleye, 2016). The concept of edupreneurship has gained traction in response to the changing landscape of education, characterized by increasing demands for quality education, advancements in technology, globalization, and the need for lifelong learning (Koirala, 2016; Dhawan, 2018). Edupreneurs are individuals or organizations that identify opportunities within the education sector and leverage entrepreneurial principles to bring about positive change and innovation.

There are several key aspects of edupreneurship (Salau, & Olaleye 2016; Koirala, 2016): innovation which emphasizes ability of edupreneurs to innovate by introducing new ideas, methods, technologies, or approaches to address existing challenges or cater to unmet needs in education. This could involve developing new educational platforms, implementing alternative teaching methods, or creating personalized learning solutions; value creation which allows edupreneurs to focus on creating value for learners, educators, educational institutions, and society as a whole (Adebayo & Olojede, 2019). They aim to improve learning outcomes, enhance teaching effectiveness, increase access to education, and contribute to socio-economic development through their educational initiatives; entrepreneurial mindset; edupreneurship involves applying entrepreneurial principles such as creativity, risk-taking, adaptability, and resilience to educational endeavors.

Edupreneurs identify opportunities, take calculated risks, navigate challenges, and pursue opportunities for growth and impact in the education sector; social impact which sees that edupreneurship must have a social impact component, with edupreneurs striving to address educational inequalities, promote inclusivity, and empower individuals through education. They may focus on underserved communities, marginalized groups, or regions with limited access to quality education; the last aspect of eduprebneurship under discourse here is collaboration and partnerships; this avails edupreneurs opportunity to collaborate with various stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, investors, technology developers, and community organizations, to harness collective expertise, resources, and networks in advancing educational

innovation and reform (Adawehi & Etim, 2018; Banks, 2019). This study is particularly concerned about all these aspects as teaching and learning or education in general is broad.

Consequently, the researchers are of the opinion that, this study will provide insights into the challenges of unemployment in Nigeria, the potential of edupreneurship in addressing this issue, and the need for research to explore the specific dynamics of edupreneurship in creating employment opportunities for prospective teachers in Nigerian universities, especially the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria today, there is growing concern about job availability and accessibility in all sectors, the educational is no exception. Graduates struggle to gain jobs upon graduation with little or no success; many thus resort to taking teaching as a stepping stone. This is making educational graduates or prospective teachers too to start looking for jobs, which they would ordinarily have gotten easily, should they have edupreneurship skills, and owing to their profession. Many prospective teachers lack edupreneurship skills to flourish in the modern day labour market, even in their own profession. Many of these graduates from educational faculties (prospective teachers) have android phone and can create different contents on YouTube, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter, TikTok, SnapChat, Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, and several other channels but they are doing it for business purpose, neglecting or forgetting they can apply same skills for teaching and learning effectiveness.

Despite the growing emphasis on edupreneurship as a means to address unemployment and promote innovation in education, there is limited understanding of its effectiveness in generating employment opportunities specifically for prospective teachers in Nigerian universities, especially the University of Ilorin. While there is anecdotal evidence suggesting that edupreneurship initiatives may contribute to the creation of teaching positions, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining the (Oladejo & Ajayi, 2019) perceptions and experiences of stakeholders, including university administrators, faculty members, education policymakers, edupreneurs, and prospective teachers themselves, regarding the role of edupreneurship in teacher employment within the University of Ilorin context. Understanding stakeholders' perspectives is essential for informed policy decisions, shaping educational practices, and facilitating collaboration between academia and industry to promote teacher employment and professional development (Ajayi & Oluwagbohunmi, 2017).

Accordingly, this study "Stakeholders' Assessment of Edupreneurship as Catalyst for Employment among Prospective Teachers in University of Ilorin" focuses on identifying and evaluating the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of various stakeholders regarding the role of edupreneurship in creating employment opportunities for prospective teachers in the context of the University of Ilorin, exploring stakeholders' perceptions, evaluating existing edupreneurship initiatives (if any), identify challenges and opportunities, and provide practical recommendations for enhancing the role of edupreneurship in creating employment opportunities for prospective teachers in a Nigerian University.

Research Objectives

The major purpose of the study is "Stakeholders' Assessment of Edupreneurship as a Catalyst for Employment among Prospective Teachers in a Nigerian University" is designed to address the research problem and provide a clear direction for the investigation. Here are the specific objectives:

- a) to assess stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of edupreneurship in creating employment opportunities for prospective teachers in University of Ilorin;
- b) to evaluate the existing edupreneurship initiatives within the University of Ilorin, and among prospective teachers in University of Ilorin;
- c) to examine the challenges of edupreneurship education among prospective teachers in University of Ilorin; and
- d) to explore the prospects associated with edupreneurship as a catalyst for employment among prospective teachers in University of Ilorin.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in alignment with the objectives of the study:

- a) what are the perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders, regarding the role of edupreneurship in creating employment opportunities for prospective teachers at the University of Ilorin?
- b) are there existing edupreneurship initiatives in Nigerian Universities among prospective teachers at the university of Ilorin?
- c) what are the challenges associated with edupreneurship education among prospective teachers in University of Ilorin?

- d) what is the prospect of edupreneurship education among prospective graduates at the university of Ilorin?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between edupreneurship education and employment among prospective teachers on the basis of department

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between edupreneurship education and employment among prospective teachers on the basis of gender

Methodology

The study adopts descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the prospective teachers (undergraduate students of faculty of education), University of Ilorin, Nigeria, lecturers, as well as school administrators, at the faculty of education, University of Ilorin. There were 48 lecturers, 10 administrators and 341 students sampled from the university. Accordingly, 399 stakeholders (including students, lecturers and administrators) were sampled for the study using multistage sampling technique of purposive and simple random sampling. At the first stage, purposive sampling was used to select all faculties of education students, school administrators and lecturers while simple random sampling was used to randomly sample the 399 respondents. Researcher designed questionnaire was used for both respondents in the study, and 20 items were used for the study. The instrument was validated via experts from measurement and evaluation in the department of social sciences education, university of Ilorin and all corrections were made and final copy taken to the field for garnering the data.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percent
Male	176	44.1	44.1
Female	223	55.9	55.9
Total	399	100.0	100.0
Departments	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percent
Social Sciences Education	40	10.0	10.0
Health Education	39	9.8	9.8
Adult Education	66	16.5	16.5

Science Education	44	11.0	11.0
Management Education	28	7.0	7.0
H/Kinetic Education	64	16.0	16.0
Arts Education	37	9.3	9.3
Counselling Education	19	4.8	4.8
Educational Technology	36	9.0	9.0
Health Education	26	6.5	6.5
Total	399	100.0	100.0
Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percent
Students	341	85.5	85.5
Lecturers	48	12.0	12.0
Administrators	10	2.5	2.5
Total	399	100.0	100.0

Table showed that, majority of the respondents in this study were female with 223(55.9%) while their male counterparts have 176(44.1%). This implies that majority of the education students who took part in the study are female. The table further revealed that, the responses from across the departments that formed the faculty showed that, 40(10%) were social sciences education department, 39(9.8%) from Health Education 66(16.5%), were from adult education 44(11%) from Science Education, 28(7%) from Management Education, 64(16%) from Human Kinetics Education, 37(9.3%), 19(4.8%) from counselling education 36(9%) Educational technology, and 26(6.5%) are from Health Education respectively. This means that, all the students from the faculties of education across the departments were sampled to air their opinions. The table further described the status of the respondents as it was evident that there were more students (prospective teachers) than lecturers and administrators as represented by 341 (85.5%), 48(12.0%) and 10(2.5%) respectively.

Answering of Research Questions

To answer research questions 1 and 2, responses obtained from respondents were coded and subjected to descriptive statistics of mean, while decisions was based on the benchmark of 2.50. Thus, average of the numerical points for the response options were obtained as $(4+3+2+1)/4$, where 4, 3, 2, and 1 represents Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree respectively. Items with mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded considered while those items with mean score below 2.50 were disregarded in considering the results. This is presented in Tables 2 and 4 below in that order whereas research question 2 was answered using frequency counts.

Table 2: Rank ordering of stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of edupreneurship

Item/Statement	Mean	Rank
Edupreneurship initiatives within the University of Ilorin have improved the quality of education	2.97	1 st *
Edupreneurship initiatives have helped prospective teachers develop valuable entrepreneurial skills	2.07	5 th
Edupreneurship initiatives can enhance the employability of prospective teachers	2.94	2 nd *
Prospective teachers need entrepreneurial skills to succeed in their edupreneurship initiatives	2.64	4 th *
The existing entrepreneurial skills in the university are enough to carter for edupreneurship skills of prospective teachers	2.68	3 rd *

Table 2 showed clearly that edupreneurship initiatives have improve the quality of education, can enhance employability of prospective teachers, existing entrepreneurial skills in the university are enough to carter for edupreneruship skills of prospective teachers but have not helped prospective teachers to develop necessary entrepreneurial skills

Table 3: Rank ordering on influence of existing edupreneurship initiatives at university of Ilorin

Items/Statement	Mean	Rank
Edupreneurship initiatives within the University of Ilorin have improved the quality of education	2.89	4 th *
I think edupreneurship initiatives have helped prospective teachers develop valuable entrepreneurial skills?	2.79	5 th *
Edupreneurship initiatives are of significant benefits to prospective teachers in their entire career?	2.97	3 rd *
I believe edupreneurship initiatives have enhanced the employability of prospective teachers	3.18	1 st *
Prospective teachers need entrepreneurial skills to succeed in their edupreneurship initiatives	3.01	2 nd *

From the table, it is evident that there are edupreneurship initiatives at the University of Ilorin and they have improved quality of education, helped prospective teachers to gain valuable entrepreneurial skills, and benefitted their career, enhanced employablity of prospective teachers.

Table 4: Rank ordering of challenges associated with edupreneurship as catalyst for employment

Items/statement	Mean	Ranking
Insufficient/poor funding and resources are major obstacle to edupreneurship initiatives among prospective teachers	3.61	1 ^{st*}
Gender disparities and cultural norms are significant challenges to edupreneurship among prospective teachers	2.87	3 ^{rd*}
Quality of curriculum and lack of practical skills are major challenges to edupreneurship among prospective teachers	2.25	5 th
Lack of support from the university administration and regulatory frameworks hinders edupreneurship initiatives among prospective teachers	3.29	2 ^{nd*}
Limited networking and collaboration opportunities among prospective teachers hinder the growth of edupreneurship initiatives	2.81	4 ^{th*}

From table 4, it is clear that Insufficient or poor funding is the major challenge associated with edupreneurship initiative as expressed by prospective teachers, other challenges are lack of support from the university, gender disparity and cultural norms, as well as limited networking and collaboration. Although, respondents did not see curriculum quality as a major challenge to edupreneurship and employment.

Table 5: Analysis of prospects associated with edupreneurship as a catalyst for employment

Items/statement	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD(%)
Edupreneurship initiatives at the University of Ilorin can effectively addressed the shortage of qualified teachers	107 (26.8%)	143 (35.8)	86 (20.8)	66 (16.5)
Prospective teachers at the University of Ilorin are provided with adequate entrepreneurial training and support to pursue edupreneurship	4 (1.0)	168 (42.1)	117 (29.3)	110 (27.6)
Edupreneurship at the University of Ilorin can create new and diverse employment opportunities for prospective teachers	150 (37.6)	119 (29.8)	75 (18.8)	55 (13.8)
University of Ilorin is successfully fostering a culture of innovation and risk-taking among prospective teachers interested in edupreneurship	128 (32.1)	132 (33.1)	80 (20.0)	59 (14.8)
Edupreneurship initiatives at University of Ilorin can help prospective teachers develop valuable	158			

entrepreneurial skills beyond traditional teaching methods	(29.6)	109	75	57
		(27.3)	(18.8)	(14.3)

The above table shows that, edupreneurship education among prospective teachers at university of Ilorin, as responses showed it can effectively address shortage of quality teachers, can create new and diverse employment opportunities, help in fostering the culture of innovation and risk-taking and help would be teachers develop valuable entrepreneurial skills beyond the traditional method of teaching. However, the prospective teachers are not provided with enough entrepreneurial training and support needed to pursue edupreneurship

Testing of Hypotheses

Table 6: t-test Analysis of Perception based on Status

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
DEPT	56.619	398	.000	1.21303	1.1709	1.2552

The results indicate that the sample mean is significantly lower than the hypothesized mean of 399 ($t = -18566.837$, $p < 0.001$). The mean difference of -397.78697 indicates a substantial deviation from the test value, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -397.8291 to -397.7448. This shows that, there is a significant difference in students' perceptions on the basis of ddepartment. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant difference between edupreneurship educations among prospective teachers on the basis of department, so the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 7: t-test Analysis of Perception based on Sex (Gender)

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Sex	-15969.027	398	.000	-397.44110	-397.4900	-397.3922

The above table with mean difference of -397.44110, indicating that the sample mean for "Sex" is approximately 397.44 units less than the test value, with lower Bound -397.4900 and Upper Bound 397.3922. This implies that, there is a significant difference in the perception of undergraduates on the basis of gender. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Firstly, these initiatives have been shown to enhance the quality of education, suggesting that integrating entrepreneurial skills into teacher training can lead to more effective teaching methods and improved learning outcomes. This aligns with the idea that innovative approaches in education foster critical thinking and problem-solving abilities among students.

Moreover, the research indicates that prospective teachers who participate in edupreneurship initiatives are better positioned for employment opportunities. This highlights the importance of equipping future educators with entrepreneurial skills, which are increasingly valued in today's competitive job market. Additionally, the study suggests that edupreneurship education can help address the shortage of quality teachers by preparing graduates with diverse skill sets. This is crucial for tackling educational disparities and ensuring that schools have access to qualified educators who can adapt to evolving educational needs.

Despite the existing entrepreneurial skills among university students, a notable gap exists in adequate training for developing essential entrepreneurial competencies. This finding points to the need for curriculum enhancements that focus more on practical entrepreneurial training and support systems within educational institutions. Furthermore, the study identifies several challenges, including insufficient funding, lack of university support, gender disparities, and cultural norms that hinder the effectiveness of edupreneurship initiatives. Addressing these challenges will require strategic policy reforms and increased investment in educational resources to fully realize the potential of edupreneurship.

The implications of these findings reflect a global trend towards integrating entrepreneurship into education to better prepare students for real-world challenges. Institutions that adopt this approach can equip students with skills relevant to modern economies. However, cultural resistance may persist due to traditional views on education that prioritize academic knowledge over practical skills. Overcoming these mindsets will require a concerted effort to promote the value of entrepreneurship within educational settings.

Insufficient funding remains a critical barrier, limiting educational institutions' ability to implement comprehensive edupreneurship programs effectively. Increased investment is essential for developing infrastructure, resources, and training opportunities that facilitate entrepreneurial

education. The study also emphasizes the importance of collaboration between educational institutions and industry stakeholders to create relevant programs that meet labor market demands. Establishing partnerships can enhance resource availability and provide students with practical experiences necessary for successful careers.

Further, the focus on fostering innovation through edupreneurship underscores its role in transforming education systems. Encouraging prospective teachers to adopt innovative teaching methods can lead to improved student engagement and learning outcomes, thereby enhancing overall educational quality. This finding aligns with the work of Salau and Olaleye (2016) and Koirala (2016), who emphasize that edupreneurship improves innovation by introducing new ideas and approaches to address existing challenges in education.

Lastly, while edupreneurship initiatives at the University of Ilorin show promise in improving educational quality and employability, addressing identified challenges through strategic reforms, adequate training, and resource allocation is essential for maximizing their impact. These insights resonate with Oladejo and Ajayi (2019), who noted that while evidence supports the potential benefits of edupreneurship initiatives in creating teaching positions, comprehensive research on their success remains limited.

Conclusion

The study on edupreneurship initiatives at the University of Ilorin presents compelling evidence of their positive impact on the quality of education and the employability of prospective teachers. The findings indicate that these initiatives not only enhance teaching effectiveness but also equip future educators with valuable entrepreneurial skills that are increasingly sought after in today's competitive job market. By integrating entrepreneurial training into teacher education, institutions can better prepare graduates to meet the evolving demands of the education sector and address the pressing shortage of qualified teachers.

However, despite the promising outcomes associated with edupreneurship, significant challenges remain. Insufficient funding, lack of university support, gender disparities, and cultural norms pose barriers to the effective implementation and sustainability of these initiatives. Additionally, while existing entrepreneurial skills among students are recognized, there is a critical need for more comprehensive training programs that focus on developing essential entrepreneurial competencies.

The implications of this study resonate with broader trends in education that emphasize innovation and practical skill development. To fully harness the potential of edupreneurship, educational institutions must prioritize strategic reforms, increase resource allocation, and foster collaboration with industry stakeholders. Such efforts will not only enhance the quality of teacher training but also create diverse employment opportunities for graduates.

Recommendations

1. University authority should try as much as possible to address this issue by injecting enough funds needed to train the would-be teachers so as they will not be moving around.
2. Stakeholders like students, school authority, government etc should assist in the constant training and supply the prospective teachers with the needed technological tools or should extend the programme to all levels at the faculty of education.
3. Students should also try to develop skills needed for self-employment regardless what the school curriculum content so as to fit into the evolving world and standout among their foes after graduation

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