

Social Science Pre-Service Teachers' Awareness of Entrepreneurship Opportunities in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated social science pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria. The study sought to investigate pre-service teachers' awareness of, sources of awareness, skills possessed by the pre-service teachers to explore and factors inhibiting exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria. Two hundred pre-service teachers were sampled using simple random sampling technique method. The researcher-designed questionnaire was used as an instrument. content validity of the instrument was determined. Reliability coefficient of 0.78 through test-retest method. Data collected were analysed. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. The findings of this study revealed that the forms of entrepreneurship opportunities that pre-service teachers were aware of were building one career, the sources of pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities include computer assisted learning materials, advertisement among others, it also indicated that the skills possessed by the pre-service teachers to explore the entrepreneurship opportunities identified were resource management skills. The finding also showed the factors inhibiting pre-service teacher's exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities which included lack of access to adequate resources to enable them start their own business and ineffective mandatory internship for trainee teachers. Based on the findings of this study it was recommended among others that university education should give adequate opportunities to students to explore entrepreneurial skills and experiences gained through technical and vocational education. The institutions should improve on partnership with industries to meet the labour market demand. The institutional exhibition and exchange programmes and experiences should be promoted among tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Social Science pre-service teachers, Awareness, Exploration, Entrepreneurship opportunities

Introduction

Social science is one of branch of science that focuses on the study of human interaction and interrelation among individuals and groups within the society. Social Science subjects study the relationships between and among groups in the society, the way they live as groups and as individuals. As an academic discipline, they are concerned with society and the relationship

between individuals within a society. The subjects deal with the study of the social life of people or groups of individuals. They are a broad field of study that has many teaching subjects and disciplines. These include subjects like Geography, Economics, Social Studies, Government in secondary schools while Psychology, Political science, Sociology, Anthropology, Archeology, among others in tertiary institutions Olokooba, et al (2017).

Social science pre-service teachers are students who pursue a bachelor's degree in education or a specific social science subject area combined with a teaching credential program purposely to examine society and human behaviour. The pre-service teachers often engage in interdisciplinary studies, combining insights from various fields to understand complex social phenomena. Social science pre-service teachers are students of Faculty of Education, Institute of Education and other educational institutions that award degree in social science education programmes. These programmes include but not limited to Social Studies, Political Science, Geography, Economics, Psychology, Sociology among others in Education. These disciplines develop in pre-service teachers strong critical thinking skills that enable them to analyze and interpret social patterns, behaviours, and institutions. They learn to address social issues and propose evidence-based solutions to social problems. Among the experiences of social science pre-service teachers is to examine cultural practices, beliefs, and institutions through anthropology and history. Social science pre-service teachers are prepared to address and analyze the multifaceted issues facing societies today, equipped with a diverse skill set and a broad understanding of human behaviour and social systems that drive entrepreneurship opportunities in the society.

The concept of awareness in the study refers to having knowledge about entrepreneurship opportunities. Awareness plays a crucial role in personal growth, social harmony, environmental sustainability, and informed decision-making across various aspects of life. Cultivating awareness involves continuous learning, empathy, and a willingness to understand and adapt to diverse perspectives and challenges especially on entrepreneurship. Self-awareness connotes understanding one's own thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and motivations about entrepreneurship while social awareness recognises the emotions, needs, and perspectives of others on entrepreneurship. Environmental awareness reflects being conscious of the impact of human activities on the entrepreneurship, environment and natural resources. Social awareness of entrepreneurship enhances empathy, communication skills, and the ability to build positive

relationships among different social network. Environmental awareness promotes responsible behaviors and sustainable practices.

Pre-service teachers in Nigeria are increasingly becoming aware of entrepreneurship opportunities through Government Initiatives Programs like the Youth Entrepreneurship Support (YES) by the Nigerian government aim to empower young entrepreneurs through funding, training, and mentorship. University Programmes have introduced entrepreneurship courses and centers that provide students with practical knowledge and skills in starting and managing businesses. The proliferation of digital media and the internet has made information on entrepreneurship more accessible to pre-service teachers, inspiring them with success stories and providing resources for business ideas. Partnerships between universities and industries often include entrepreneurship initiatives, internships, and incubation programs, exposing pre-service teachers to real-world business environments also help in creating more awareness. Entrepreneurship fairs, workshops, and networking events connect students with successful entrepreneurs, investors, and mentors who share insights and opportunities make pre-service teachers aware. Many pre-service teachers are viewing entrepreneurship as a viable career option, driven by the potential for independence, creativity, and financial success. Universities are focusing on equipping students with entrepreneurial skills such as business planning, financial management, marketing, and problem-solving for them to be self-reliant (Asabe & Rabi, 2018). **The concept of entrepreneur has been described by many authors such as Asabe and Rabi (2018); Olokundun (2017) and Hougaard (2014) in which it was equally viewed from the roles they played in our economic, political or social lives. It is the process of innovative and creativity with value and devoting the necessary time and effort assuming the accompanying of systematic stages which result to self-reliance and economic development. The process of bringing together creativity or innovative ideas and combining them with management and organizational skills in order to control people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth essentially describes entrepreneurship.**

Entrepreneurship is now seen as an important component within contemporary economic development of a nation. Experts in the field were of the opinion that entrepreneurship is regarded as a catalyst for economic growth, employment and wealth creation. The European Commission (2023) shared the same view and also suggests that entrepreneurship is a major driver of innovation, competitiveness and economic strength of

a modern nation, they further emphasize the important role which business education has in the development of entrepreneurial mindsets and talents especially in enhancing entrepreneur competencies. Entrepreneurship is defined as an activity for the socio-economic stabilization and effective utilization of resources by stimulating socio-economics progress, creating new value, and providing employment opportunities (Carolina, 2017).

However, Ciputra (2011) observed that an entrepreneur is someone who dared to take risks, able to create opportunities and able to innovate through products and processes. This is very important because the main point after the ideation process is how someone can realize a chance and can analyze that chance. There are many Entrepreneurs experience failure because they unable to see the chance (Hougaard, 2014). Business opportunity is a meeting between the needs and desires of consumer with the offering of products or services. These opportunities are the most important in business so that business people can analyze unpredictable condition so that the survival of the company remains supported. This is a key factor because without a good sensitivity to the opportunities then the business tendency will fail.

Awareness opportunity is one of the factors that drive entrepreneurship interest. Opportunity Awareness can be learned through the mechanism of demand and supply that occur in the market (Ebrahim, 2014). Measurement of opportunity awareness according to Hougaard (2014) can be interpreted from the inventory window of opportunities grouped into five things: First, Market and Technology which is awareness that arises because the ability to see the market and the utilization of technology. Second, Individual is the consciousness of grasping the opportunities derived from the individual awareness. Third, Creation is the emerging awareness of the opportunities that occur because it was deliberately created by individuals based on the learning and experience experienced by individuals. Fourth, Timing which is the awareness of the emergence of opportunities depends on the time and conditions. Fifth, Intuition, which is the awareness of opportunities based on predictions of the situation at hand (Hougaard, 2014). To make up for the curricula inadequacies in meeting under or unemployment, a workshop on entrepreneurship for Nigerian universities as a way forward was organized by the National Universities Commission (NUC). A draft curriculum on entrepreneurial studies for Nigerian Universities was produced. Consequently, many Universities have initiated entrepreneurship education

programmes in an attempt to reduce problem of employment and giving the needed trainee in entrepreneurial skills to students for setting up their own businesses and to consider self-reliance as a viable career option.

In this study, it was aimed at assessing the entrepreneurship awareness among pre-service teachers and motivating as well as equipping students with the right attitude, experiences and skills necessary for individual survival and advancement in the face of technology, education and manufacturing opportunities and a retarding economic situation.

It has been previously realized that the type of education offered in most tertiary institutions produce graduates for whom there is no market demands especially in Nigeria. Graduates are produced for wage employment in the formal sector. Many of graduates from tertiary institutions are not employable as results of inadequate experiences and low practical knowledge of their disciplines. In these situations, the only viable option is self-employment and this has made most universities introduce entrepreneurship education programmes in different disciplines with the hope that it will equip pre-service teachers with skills necessary to start their own businesses, to be job creators rather than job seekers. This is sequel to the directives by Federal Government of Nigeria to all tertiary institutions to offer entrepreneurship education courses to enhance the skills acquisition of tertiary education graduates for self-employment. The courses on entrepreneurship in the universities are made compulsory for all students. Several studies have been carried out by different authors regarding the pre-service teacher teacher's trainee awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria using numerous subjects and diverse locations.

Joseph, Sylvanus and Joseph (2013) discovered that family knowledge and natural ability did not determine students' entrepreneurship involvement but the need for money, desire to become self-dependence and the desire to be employers of labour determine their entrepreneurship involvement. University entrepreneurship internship programme and parental occupation as main sources of entrepreneurship awareness is accruable to university students. It was suggested that the universities should add more valves to their graduates by incorporating into their curriculum components that enhance and facilitate the development of entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and self-efficacy.

Olokundun (2017) also affirmed that practical activities are mainly based on vocational skill acquisition and university support systems do not involve students across all levels. Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that apart from vocational skill activities, the

curriculum should contain an extensive coverage of critical thinking and idea generation activities as graded components of the programme.

In addition, Alphin and Suresh (2018) investigated the students' awareness towards entrepreneurship: a study based on Central Kerala. The descriptive analysis of data shows that the students are aware about the term 'entrepreneurship' irrespective of gender difference where commerce students seemed to be more aware than students in another stream. the respondents are unaware about the legal formalities for starts ups and entrepreneurial supporting schemes of government.

Meanwhile, on a local content Asabe and Rabi (2018) carried out an investigation of entrepreneurship awareness and skills among library information science students at Bauchi metropolitan Universities. This study uses primary data where questionnaire was employed as the tool of data collection. The study recommended that relevant stakeholders including government and corporate world should continue to support and promote entrepreneurship skills and awareness among all students of universities in order to brace them up with the challenges in the labour market after graduation. Priorities should also be given to students to undertake practical training courses in entrepreneurship areas and students should be encourage carrying out practical assignments and projects based on real life problems pertaining entrepreneurship skills.

However, this entrepreneurship education is still at its infancy and little research is available to assess its impact and to confirm if a relationship exists between students taking courses in entrepreneurship and their intention of becoming entrepreneurs. In this context, it is of primary importance to understand whether pre-service teachers are aware of different entrepreneurship opportunities to help boost their career intentions and also assist them in becoming an entrepreneur. This study therefore explored the pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to assess the social science pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria. Other specific purposes of this study were to investigate:

1. Social science pre-service teachers' awareness of different forms entrepreneurship opportunities.

2. Sources of social science pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities.
3. Skills possessed by the social science pre-service teachers to explore the entrepreneurship opportunities identified.
4. Factors inhibiting social science pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities.

Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following questions:

1. What are the forms of entrepreneurship opportunities that social science pre-service teachers are aware of?
2. What are the sources of social science pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities?
3. What are the skills possessed by social science pre-service teachers to explore entrepreneurship opportunities identified?
4. What factors hinder the social science pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities?

Methodology

Descriptive research design was used for this study. Daramola (2012) viewed descriptive survey as a systematic attempt to describe the characteristics of a given population or areas of interest factually. Therefore, using this approach allowed the researcher to collect data on various situations relating to the social science pre-service teacher teacher's trainee awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria to describe and analyze in order to provide a far fetching solution to the research problem. The population of the study was all social science pre-service teachers in universities in Kwara State while target population comprised all 300 and 400 level education students in public universities in the state. Prior investigation of the research showed that 400 level students had been exposed to entrepreneurship courses while they were in 200 and 300 levels and there are 2 public universities in the State. The sample of the study consisted 250

social science pre-service teachers selected out of 702 students of 300 and 400 level pre-service teachers in 2022/2023 academic session using simple random sampling technique method.

An instrument titled Social Science Pre-service Teachers' Awareness of Entrepreneurship Opportunities Questionnaire (SSPTAEOQ). The questionnaire contained closed ended questions regarding trainee teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunity in all sectors of the economy. It was divided into two sections; section A was used to collect biodata of the respondents while section B was on awareness of, sources of awareness, skills possessed by the social science pre-service teachers to explore and factors inhibiting exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities using a Likert scale format which means that the respondents were asked to tick the options of their choice on a 4-point scale from Extremely Aware (EA), Moderately Aware (MA), Sometimes Aware (SA) and Not Aware (NA) for sub-section on awareness and a 4-point scale from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) for other sub-sections under section B.

Content validity of the instrument was determined by presenting it to two experts in the Measurement and Test Construction in the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin. The corrections and suggestions were incorporated in the construction of the final copy of the instrument. With regards to reliability, the researcher adopted the test-retest procedure to achieve the reliability of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to smaller sample of thirty (30) respondents who were not part of the selected sample for the study. The results obtained were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics and reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed personally by the researchers to the respondents; the advantage of administering by the researcher was to ensure high return of the questionnaire as well as to give explanation to the items to the respondents who may not understand. The respondents were informed that they are free to decide on whatever information that they wish to share with the researchers and that they are under no pressure or obligation to discuss matter that they do not wish to discuss. The researcher collected back immediately after completion to avoid the loss of the instrument and was subjected to analysis. The data were subjected to analysis Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for data analysis. Descriptive statistics like frequency were used for respondents' information and research questions were answered using Mean Ranking.

Results

four research questions were raised and answered using mean and standard deviation.

Research Question 1: What are the forms of entrepreneurship opportunities awareness of the social science pre-service teachers in Nigeria?

Table 1: Participants' Response on forms of entrepreneurship opportunities awareness of the pre-service teachers in Nigeria

Items	EA	MA	SA	NA	Mean	Rank
Support and loans from commercial banks are easily available for pre-service teachers	146	89	7	8	3.49	1 st
Tony Elumelu Foundation support for pre-service teachers	91	131	24	4	3.24	5 th
Industrial supports for pre-service teachers on entrepreneurship	105	112	26	7	3.26	4 th
Support of Network for African Student Entrepreneurs	139	91	7	13	3.42	2 nd
Supports and loans from government on entrepreneurship	100	125	20	5	3.28	3 rd

Table 1 indicates that 250 trainee teachers participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information on forms of entrepreneurship opportunities awareness of by pre-service teachers were Support and loans from commercial banks are easily available for pre-service teachers which has a mean score of 3.49 (1st), while Support of Network for African Student Entrepreneurs with a mean score of 3.42 comes 2nd. Supports and loans from government on entrepreneurship with mean score of 3.28 was the 3rd, also Industrial supports for pre-service teachers on entrepreneurship which has a mean score of 3.26 was 4th respectively, while Tony Elumelu Foundation support for pre-service teachers with mean score of 3.24 was 5th. Therefore, Social Sciences pre-service teachers were aware of different forms of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What are the sources of social science pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria?

Table 2: Participants' Response on sources of pre-service teacher's awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Rank
Computed assisted Learning materials are a good source of awareness for entrepreneurship opportunities	103	105	26	16	3.18	2 nd
Government entrepreneurship centre advertisement	76	122	40	12	3.05	5 th

Youth empowerment and development schemes.	90	121	24	15	3.14	3 rd
Exhibitions, Trade Shows and Expos	79	138	18	15	3.12	4 th
Entrepreneurship information on newspaper	101	106	32	11	3.19	1 st

Table 2 indicates that 200 trainee teachers participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information on forms of entrepreneurship opportunities awareness of the pre-service teachers in Nigeria was Entrepreneurship information on newspaper which has a mean score of 3.19 (1st), while Computed assisted Learning materials are a good with a mean score of 3.18 comes 2nd, Youth empowerment and development schemes with mean score of 3.14 was the 3rd, also Exhibitions, Trade Shows and Expos which has a mean score of 3.12 was 4th respectively, Government entrepreneurship centre advertisement with mean score of 3.05 was 5th. This implies that there are different sources of social science pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities.

Research Question 3: What are the skills possessed by the social science pre-service teacher have to explore the entrepreneurship opportunities identified in Nigeria?

Table 3: Participants' Response on skills possessed by the pre-service teacher have to explore the entrepreneurship opportunities identified in Nigeria

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Rank
An entrepreneur must have strong resource management skills	164	70	16	-	3.59	1 st
An entrepreneur must have the ability to convert vision in concrete reality	130	89	24	7	3.37	3 rd
An entrepreneur must have clear vision, generation of progressive ideals, drive and passion for success	130	78	34	8	3.32	5 th
An entrepreneur must have ability to assume reasonable risk	120	99	24	7	3.33	4 th
An entrepreneur must have the willingness to learn and develop	140	95	15	-	3.50	2 nd

Table 3 indicates that 200 trainee teachers participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information skills possessed by the pre-service teacher have to explore the entrepreneurship opportunities identified in Nigeria was given with items which include An entrepreneur must have a strong resource management skills which has a mean score of 3.59 (1st), while An entrepreneur must have the willingness to learn and develop with a mean score of 3.50

comes 2nd, An entrepreneur must have the ability to convert vision in concrete reality with mean score of 3.37 was the 3rd, also An entrepreneur must have ability to assume reasonable risk which has a mean score of 3.33 was 4th, An entrepreneur must have clear vision, generation of progressive ideals, drive and passion for success with mean score of 3.05 was 5th respectively. This indicates that social science pre-service teachers possess certain seek that facilitate their awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities.

Research Question 4: What factors inhibit social science pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria?

Table 4: Participants' Response on factors inhibiting pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Rank
Inadequacy of access to adequate resources to pre-service teachers to enable them start their own business	111	113	19	7	3.31	1 st
Inadequacy of proper and mandatory internship for trainee teachers	73	136	27	14	3.07	5 th
Inadequacy of well-equipped trainee centre for entrepreneurship education in all universities in Nigeria	86	125	30	9	3.15	3 rd
Inadequacy of adequate orientation and sensitization of students in our tertiary institutions	96	115	33	6	3.20	2 nd
Deficiency of instructional materials such as textbooks and others	96	106	33	15	3.13	4 th

Table 4 indicates that 200 trainee teachers participated in this study. Responses to items that factors inhibiting pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria was given with items which include: Inadequacy of access to adequate resources to pre-service teachers to enable them start their own business which has a mean score of 3.31 (1st), while Inadequacy of adequate orientation and sensitization of students in our tertiary institutions with a mean score of 3.20 comes 2nd. Inadequacy of well-equipped trainee centre for entrepreneurship education in all universities in Nigeria with mean score of 3.15 was the 3rd, also Deficiency of instructional materials such as textbooks and others which has a mean score of 3.13 was 4th, Inadequacy of proper and mandatory internship for trainee teachers with mean score of 3.07 was 5th respectively. This implies that inhibiting factors that affecting the social science pre-service

teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities include lack of access to adequate resources for them start their own business and inadequacy of adequate orientation and sensitization of students in our tertiary institutions.

Discussion of findings

The finding of the study revealed that the forms of entrepreneurship opportunities aware of by the pre-service teachers include support and loans from commercial banks which are easily available for pre-service teachers, support of Network for African Student Entrepreneurs and Supports and loans from government on entrepreneurship. This finding may be as a result of students' inter-institutional interaction on the basis of the academic activities. This may give pre-service teachers opportunities to explore every advantage come their ways. The finding is similar with the research work of Joseph, Sylvanus and Joseph (2013) whose research finding revealed that family knowledge and natural ability did not determine students' entrepreneurship involvement but the need for money, desire to become self-dependence and the desire to be employers of labour.

The findings revealed that the sources of pre-service teachers' awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities include Computer assisted learning materials and government entrepreneurship center advertisement, among others. These sources of awareness could be as results of students' level of digital literacy and the awareness gained in entrepreneurship classes. This finding is related to finding of Ebrahim (2014) who affirmed that entrepreneur is an opportunity and opportunity and awareness are the factors that drive entrepreneurship interest. Opportunity awareness can be learned through the mechanism of demand and supply that occur in the market.

The finding of the study also revealed that the skills possessed by the pre-service teachers helped to exploring the entrepreneurship opportunities identified. As entrepreneurs, pre-service teachers should have strong resource management skills, ability to convert vision in concrete reality, and clear vision. The skills could be possessed through theories, principles and practices gained in entrepreneurship classes. The finding is in line with the research work of Olokundun (2017) whose research finding revealed that practical activities are mainly based on vocational skill acquisition and university support systems do not involve students across all levels.

In the study, findings revealed that the factors inhibiting pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities include inadequate orientation and sensitization of students, inadequate resources for them to start their own business, inadequate orientation and sensitization of students in tertiary institutions on proper and mandatory internship for pre-service teachers, inadequate orientation and sensitization of students on well-equipped train centers for entrepreneurship education in universities. These challenges could also be as results of ill-willingness of students on internalization of skills and experiences gained from entrepreneurship classes to real life situation. Poor preparation and attitude of pre-service teachers towards learning of entrepreneurial skills and opportunities. This finding is consistent with finding of Garavan and O'Kinneide, (2014) whose findings discovered that the major challenge of entrepreneurship in relation to education is the appropriateness of curriculum and teaching methods in developing students' entrepreneurial competencies and skills.

Conclusion

The increasing awareness of entrepreneurship among Nigerian pre-service teachers is fostering a culture of innovation and economic empowerment. As awareness grows and support structures improve, more young people are expected to pursue entrepreneurial ventures, contributing to economic growth and job creation in Nigeria. From the finding of the study, it can be concluded that the forms of entrepreneurship opportunities awareness of the pre-service teachers in Nigeria include; Building one career, Availability of capital makes entrepreneurs more aware of various available opportunities, Time target and management forms entrepreneurship opportunities awareness for entrepreneurs. The findings showed the factors inhibiting pre-service teachers' exploration of the entrepreneurship opportunities in Nigeria include: inadequate resources (including capital) to enable them start their own business, inadequate of proper and mandatory internship for trainee teachers, inadequate of well-equipped trainee centre for entrepreneurship education in all universities in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

1. Entrepreneurial education should be promoted by encouraging institutional and industrial partnership.

2. Tertiary institutions should give adequate attention to entrepreneurial development and implementation through technical and vocational education.
3. Tertiary institutions offering entrepreneurship education should organize periodic exhibitions and exchange programmes in order to inspire pre-service teacher and learners to imbibe entrepreneurial skills.
4. That adequate provision of sufficient infrastructural facilities should be made by the government for tertiary institutions to cater for population explosion.

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