



An Open Access Journal Available Online

# Path Modelling of Interest in Entrepreneurship Programme, Intention to Start New Business and Employability skills among University Students

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**Abstract:** The problem that was addressed in this study was how the NUC entrepreneurship curriculum impacted student knowledge to become successful entrepreneurs after graduation to enhance economic growth in Nigeria. Cross-sectional research design was used for this study, and undergraduate students were the unit of analysis. Students that had participated in entrepreneurship programme organized by the university constituted the target population. This study was designed to assess whether entrepreneurship education enhances graduate employability. In other to test the hypotheses raised, the study used a sample of 145 undergraduates students drawn from fourteen (14) departments in three faculties of Samuel Adegboyega University, Nigeria. Data obtained was analyzed using path modelling to test the hypothesized model. Findings from the structural model assessment indicate that Students interest in entrepreneurship positively and directly affects their intention to start new business. Thus, a positive and significant relationship between interest in entrepreneurship programme and intention to start a new business among the sampled students. This implies that every time a student show interest in entrepreneurship training, it increases the students' intention of starting a new business by 29%. Furthermore, the structural assessment further revealed that showing interest in entrepreneurship programme by the students enhances their employability skills. Consequently, the two hypotheses tested in this study were accepted.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship education, Students intention, Poverty, Unemployment, Economic growth

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is vital to the development of any economy. The activities of entrepreneurship have resulted to the emergence of many businesses and the growth of several economies, both in developed and developing countries (2021). The introduction of entrepreneurial activities has led to the establishment of self-employment initiatives among science and technology students in all universities in the country (Njoroge and Gathungu, 2013). Entrepreneurial education has equipped students with adequate skills and training that is useful in identifying noble business opportunities (Fayolle, 2004; Bhandari, 2006 and Nwangwu, 2007). It has influenced the attitudes and behavior of students towards imbibing entrepreneurial spirit (Linan et al. 2005;

Ona, 2006; Soutaris, Zerbinati and Al-Lahan, 2006; Agu and Chiaha, 2013 and Okoro, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education can stimulate students to start business venture without much or less stress. This is an indication that entrepreneurship education has potential to empower young graduates in order for them to be self-employed after graduation (Yahya, 2011). Entrepreneurship education empowers students to think creatively, to seek problems, to solve opportunity, to empathize with others, to take risks, to accept failure as part of the growth process, and to appreciate the correlation between hard work and success. (Olaniyan and Okemakinde 2008). Entrepreneurs also helps drive change with innovation, where new and improved products enable new market to develop. The essence of entrepreneurship education is to build in students,

entrepreneurship spirit and culture (Akpomi 2009; Adejimola and Olufumilayo, 2009).

Entrepreneurship education recognize as one of the vital determinants that could influence students career decisions (Kolvereid and Moen, 1997; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003).

Government effort to ensure that there is entrepreneurship development in the country played a very significant role in developing entrepreneurial activities. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) noted that in the recent years, the governments of Nigeria have initiated programmes to support youth entrepreneurship and self-employment. Providing jobs for a growing youth population is unarguably one of the most pressing challenges confronting many developing nations. In Nigeria, job creation has been inadequate to keep pace with the expanding working age population. This therefore contributed to the increasing rates of unemployment in Nigeria and young Nigerians are finding it difficult to secure a gainful employment (World Bank, 2013). The rate of youth vandalism, rape incidence, arm robbery cases, hooliganism, political huffer, cybercrime and other social vices have increased in recent times (Oni, 2021).

The Nigerian government like several other governments of different countries of the world is saddled with the responsibility of creating jobs to better the lots of her citizenry. In an event where this is not visible; it encourages her citizenry to engage in small and medium scale enterprises and unveils several programs to ensure these small and medium scale enterprises succeed. In an effort to create jobs for the youth, various measures addressing the demand and supply sides of labor have been created and implemented. Promotion of entrepreneurship programmes and overall self-employment through targeted youth empowerment schemes are increasingly considered as viable options (Culkim and Smith, 2000). Certainly, some research shows that in addition to job creation, entrepreneurship has the potential to improve livelihood and economic independence of young people (Chigunta, 2002).

In addition, entrepreneurship education was introduced into Nigeria educational system to provide the necessary skills, and competences, as well as preparing the Nigerian graduates for self-reliance with a view to contributing to the nation's building. In its effort to ensure the entire graduates are self-employed, the National University Commission (NUC) through the federal ministry of education also introduced entrepreneurship education into the curricular of the tertiary institutions. This became expedient to offer a realistic approach to solving the problem of unemployment facing the nation and most especially the youth. Thus, entrepreneurship development has since been made a compulsory course for all students in the three levels of tertiary education irrespective of student's areas of knowledge (Yahya, 2011).

Entrepreneurship education has been revealed as an effective tool in building up entrepreneurship intention and innovation, thereby increasing the number of entrepreneurs and reducing the rate of unemployment. Entrepreneurship education was set

up in Nigeria as an instrument that will impact students with the knowledge, skills and motivation required to realize an opportunity for social change in the community by creating jobs and adding economic and social value as well as stimulating responsibility and self-reliance among the youth of the 21st century. This study, therefore seek to know if entrepreneurship programme has been of help to the graduates in the country and to know how the undergraduates are following the NUC rules in tertiary institutions.

Poverty is the outcome of unemployment and it affects all aspects of human living. It is a major problem of Nigeria. This could only be fully understood by assessing everything that revolves around the living conditions of the working class and the people. The increasing rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria has enable all levels of government to resolved to entrepreneurship and small enterprise initiatives as an alternative means of employment generations and possible way out of endemic poverty and unemployment problems in the country. Unemployment is considered as the proportion of those in the labor force who were actively looking for work but could not find work for at least 20hours during the reference period to the total currently active (labor force) population (NBS, 2015). It has been realized that the type of education offered in most tertiary institutions produce graduates for whom there is no market demands. Graduates are produced for wage employment in the formal sector. The unemployment of graduates from Nigeria tertiary institution has been a major problem. The period between graduation and employment dates has continued to lengthen and this has become a source of frustration for most graduates.

Several problems identified in the nation are yet to be solved despite the efforts of the Nigerian Government. For example, entrepreneurial education was designed to solve the problem of the unemployment in the country, however many graduates are still hunting for job in other to get themselves a capital to start up a business. In 2006, the NUC created a policy for all university students to enroll in entrepreneurial education courses as a part of the general education curriculum in order to address the problem of unemployment (Okojie, 2009). The goal of the NUC in designing this policy was to increase the number of graduates (regardless of the specific program of study) that are equipped with entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, and competencies to be a job creator. And not just job hunters as many are tagged unemployable by employers due to the lack of basic skills required to be effective in the work force (Kazeem, 2016). The problem that was addressed in this study was how the NUC general education entrepreneurship curriculum impacted student knowledge, skills, and intentions to become successful entrepreneurs after graduation to enhance economic growth in Nigeria.

From the findings from various studies related to student's entrepreneurship, especially concerning transformation and changes expected to occur after the entrepreneurship program, therefore, this study aimed to assess students' level of interest in becoming entrepreneurs after the training. The specific objectives of the study are to:

i) To examine whether students have the intention to start a business after participation in entrepreneurship programme; and ii) To investigate whether students' participation in entrepreneurship programme would enhance their employability skills.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical review

This study is anchored on the theory of Entrepreneurship education as stipulated by Hussain and Norashidah (2015). The authors see entrepreneurship education as a learning process which focus on enhancement of knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal character in relation to entrepreneurship. It is a fact that entrepreneurship education gives students opportunity to be exposed to entrepreneurial activities and tasks involving identification of ideas and transforming the identified ideas into tangible product and intangible services. Wardana et al (2020) also mentioned that analyzing business feasibility, writing of business plan are peculiar entrepreneurship tasks that are introduced to students undertaken entrepreneurship education.

### Conceptual review

Entrepreneurship is a continuous process that needs to be followed by an entrepreneur to plan and launch new ventures efficiently. The process starts with identifying a need and providing solution and generates a way to meet that need (Antonakis and Autio 2013). Entrepreneurship begins as a result to varied needs posed by the environments. Joseph Schumpeter, who pointed out that change in societies comes as a result of innovation created by entrepreneurs viewed.

Entrepreneurship Education has secured huge attention of researchers in the recent time, especially scholars in entrepreneurial related field including social sciences and humanities. Entrepreneurship education is the study of enterprise saddled with several activities that enables students develop entrepreneurial skills. Entrepreneurship education improves student entrepreneurial intention and the higher chance of self-efficacy of entrepreneurial decision-making student possessed (Mei, Lee & Xiang 2020).

Entrepreneurship education was seen by Boldureanu, Ionescu and Bercu (2020) as method by which economic growth are promoted as well as creativity and innovation. Such that any countries aspiring to become competitive in a complex changing environment. Entrepreneurship education has contributed to its development of people know-how skills leading to the enhancement of entrepreneurship attitude and intention (Barba-Sanchez & sAtienza-Sahuquillo 2016).

The introduction of entrepreneurship education into higher education makes 21st century institutions become drivers of technological development and economic growth (Barba-Sanchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018)

## Empirical review

Akingbade (2021) assessed entrepreneurship skills development on employment generation strategy in tertiary institutions. The study adopted descriptive survey research method to generate information from 370 out of 5000 student's population using Yaro-Yamane formula. Regression and ANOVA statistical techniques were used and the results revealed that employability skill had significant impact on job orientation; vocational skill enhanced job creation and life skill positively influenced self-employment.

Afolabi et al. (2017) investigated the effect of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among Nigeria science and technology students. Their study adopted both descriptive and inferential statistical method to analyze data gathered for the study using simple sample percentage ranking, and correlation and regression statistical techniques. The result revealed that entrepreneurship education is a good policy and has positive effect on self-employment initiatives.

Raimi and Sofoluwe (2013) examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on employment generation in Nigeria. They employed an econometric analysis using secondary quantitative data for their study. The study discovered that entrepreneurial is well-developed and would be an effective tool for poverty reduction, employment generation, fast-track the realization of universal primary education and promoting gender equality.

Okoro (2014) investigated the impact of entrepreneurship education on the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduate in South-Eastern universities using the descriptive survey design. The study therefore, examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in south-eastern universities. Descriptive survey design was later deployed into the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to analyze the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study concluded that entrepreneurship education curriculum has significant impact on entrepreneurial skills in undergraduate.

Isaac et al. (2021) also adopted the imperative of paradigm shift in the teaching and learning process of entrepreneurship education using Zing College of education, Taraba state, Nigeria as a case study. In the population of 600 students of the vocational and technical education 2019/2020 academic session, 200 students and 7 lecturers were sampled also purposively sampled, making a total of 207 respondent. Using primary data, structured questionnaire was used to source data, 2 research questions guided the study and 2 null hypotheses were suggested and tested at 0.05 level of significance. It was concluded that it is the right time in the right direction for the shift in the pattern of teaching and learning and it was recommended that greater funding, construction and furnishing of classrooms, workshops, laboratories, entrepreneurship center, more staff, stronger links with

business enterprises and application of dynamic pedagogical strategies should be given adequate attention.

Oyebola et al. (2015) evaluated entrepreneurship education in selected Nigerian universities. Primary data were collected through the use of questionnaire and oral interview methods. One hundred and twenty science and engineering students and one hundred and twenty science and engineering graduates from twelve universities (four federal universities, four Osun state universities and four private universities) in Nigeria were purposively selected as respondents for the study. There is no significant relationship between venture creation and content of entrepreneurship lectures given. The researcher found that ventures creation requires some other factors besides entrepreneurship education. The study concludes that the Nigerian government still needs to do more.

Jiddah (2016) examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on graduate's business start-up in north central Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was employed; and graduates were sampled using Yaro Yamane sampling formula. The researcher adopted a structured questionnaire which included the general entrepreneurship education and business start-up test in gathering information. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and logistic regression was used in testing two hypotheses. The study recommended amongst other recommendations, that tertiary institutions government need to play more proactive role by devising a strategy to assist the students that indicate their intention to start enterprise while in school or after graduation through incubator program. Chinonye et al. (2015) examined the impact of entrepreneurship education in alleviating poverty among the graduate of Covenant University from 2006 to 2013. Regression analysis was used to validate the hypotheses raised in the study. Their results show that entrepreneurship culture among entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship education should be integrated into the education should be integrated into the education curriculum and be made effective at all levels of education. The study recommends that National Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory agencies for tertiary institutions in Nigeria should ensure that practical vocations are incorporated side by side into the entrepreneurship education curriculum for institutions of higher learning.

### Methodology

Cross-sectional research design was used for this study, and undergraduates' students were the unit of analysis. Student that had participated in entrepreneurship programme organized by the university constituted the target population. This study was designed to assess the impact of entrepreneurship training on students' intention to own a business; and further observe whether entrepreneurship education enhances graduate employability. In other to test the hypotheses raised, our study used a sample of 145 undergraduates students drawn from fourteen (14) departments in three faculties of Samuel Adegboyega University, Edo state, Nigeria. Following the recommendation of Barclay, Thompson and Higgins (1995), that a construct

with the highest number of indicators in a study should be used to determine the minimum sample size. Accordingly, the highest indicators must be ten times itself to determine the minimum sample size for the study. Thus, for our study, entrepreneurship construct has 9 items/indicators (i.e.,  $9 \times 10 = 90$ ), and the expected minimum sample size is 90. Therefore, the data of 145 participants was sufficient to test our hypothesized model.

### Instrument and Measurement

A modified survey instrument (questionnaire) comprising of scales used in previous studies was adopted to generate data. For the entrepreneurship interest, intention and knowledge, Portuguese and Marcela (2021); Gabriela et al (2020); Asghar et al (2019) scales were adapted and modified to measure students' entrepreneurship interest and intention to start new business. On a scale of 1-5 (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree), students were asked to select option that best describe their interest in entrepreneurship after the training. While a total of 9-item indicators were used to measure entrepreneurship interest, 6-item indicators were used to measure students' intention to start own business in the nearest future. This was measured through a five-point Likert scale ranged from 1=no intention to 5=high intention. In the same vein, the employability skills of the students after the training were measured using four sub-constructs recommended by Al-Alawneh (2014); Jonck and Minner (2015); Suarta et al. (2017). Each sub-construct measures students' fundamental skills (6 items), analytical and critical thinking skills (6 items), interpersonal skill (6 items), and adaptability skill (4 items). Using a five-point Likert scale, students were asked to rate their skills with options ranged from 1=very low skill to 5=very high skill. More importantly, the reliability and validity of the instruments were established (see Tables 2 and 3). The identity of the respondents was protected as none of the items in the survey instrument required their name or any identifier. The students' participation in the study was voluntary.

### Data Analysis

Data obtained was analyzed using path modelling to test our hypothesized model. It may be difficult if not impossible to measure or observe the variables in the study directly because of their latent nature. Thus, the constructs were measured indirectly through indicators based on the response from the questionnaire. In this context, and according to Hensler, Ringle and Sinkovics (2009); Kock (2013), partial least square (PLS) structural equation modelling was used to analyze the data since the focus of the study was to predict and maximize explained variance of dependent latent variable; thus, modelling is the appropriate technique. Consequently, we used the SmartPLS software version 3.3.3.

### Result and Findings

To establish the basic and fundamental statistical properties (i.e, mean, median, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, excess kurtosis, skewness and coefficient of variation) of the

data, Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of all the indicators used in the partial least square structural equation modelling. Isaac et al. (2021) also adopted the imperative of paradigm shift in the teaching and learning process of entrepreneurship education using Zing College of education, Taraba state, Nigeria as a case study. In the population of 600 students of the vocational and technical education 2019/2020 academic session, 200 students and 7 lecturers were sampled also purposively sampled, making a total of 207 respondent. Using primary data, structured questionnaire was used to source data, 2 research questions guided the study and 2 null hypotheses were suggested and tested at 0.05 level of significance. It was concluded that it is the right time in the right direction for the shift in the pattern of teaching and learning and it was recommended that greater funding, construction and furnishing of classrooms, workshops, laboratories, entrepreneurship center, more staff, stronger links with business enterprises and application of dynamic pedagogical strategies should be given adequate attention.

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are incorporated side by side into the entrepreneurship education curriculum for institutions of higher learning.

Figure 1 presents the proposed measurement model as implemented using SmartPLS. On the other hand, the structural model meant to establish the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous constructs is presented in the figure 2. The exogenous variable is interest in entrepreneurship programme (IEP) with eleven items with all arrows pointing from the construct to the indicators; and endogenous variables are intention to start business (ISB), and employability skills (ES) after entrepreneurship training. In the measurement model analysis, employability constructs are measured with four sub-constructs, namely: fundamental skill (ES\_FS), analytical and critical thinking skill (ES\_ACS), interpersonal skill (ES\_IS), and adaptability skill (ES\_AS). All constructs are measured reflectively.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (N=145)**

Indicators	M	Mean	$\kappa$	Mi	Ma	$\alpha$	K	S
IEP1	0	3.276	4	1	5	1.129	-0.599	-0.504
IEP2	0	3.703	4	1	5	1.038	-0.199	-0.649
IEP3	0	3.283	3	1	5	1.285	-0.924	-0.307
IEP4	0	2.752	2	1	5	1.331	-0.998	0.448
IEP5	0	4.338	5	1	5	0.948	1.962	-1.51
IEP6	0	4.124	4	1	5	1.023	0.845	-1.151
IEP7	0	3.069	3	1	5	1.502	-1.509	-0.082
IEP8	0	4.234	5	1	5	0.983	1.575	-1.413
IEP9	0	3.683	4	1	5	1.149	-0.604	-0.539
ISB1	0	2.703	3	1	4	1.133	-1.307	-0.314
ISB2	0	2.91	3	1	4	0.946	-0.742	-0.46
ISB3	0	2.979	3	1	4	0.972	-0.584	-0.642
ISB4	0	2.91	3	1	4	1.114	-1.107	-0.548
ISB5	0	2.145	2	1	5	1.168	-1.048	0.527
ISB6	0	3.324	3	1	5	0.96	-0.205	0.063
ES_FS1	0	3.359	3	1	5	0.93	-0.201	0.056
ES_FS2	0	3.593	4	1	5	0.906	0.726	-0.618
ES_FS3	0	3.834	4	2	5	0.788	-0.444	-0.209
ES_FS4	0	3.903	4	1	5	0.841	0.007	-0.446
ES_FS5	0	4.097	4	1	5	0.889	0.183	-0.786
ES_FS6	0	3.897	4	1	5	0.892	-0.226	-0.324
ES_ACS1	0	3.648	4	1	5	0.883	-0.521	0.026
ES_ACS2	0	3.966	4	1	5	0.874	-0.047	-0.558
ES_ACS3	0	3.662	4	1	5	0.926	-0.238	-0.326
ES_ACS4	0	3.779	4	2	5	0.809	-0.686	-0.047
ES_ACS5	0	3.986	4	2	5	0.814	-0.928	-0.207
ES_ACS6	0	3.69	4	1	5	0.929	-0.011	-0.333
ES_IS1	0	3.883	4	1	5	0.929	-0.266	-0.547
ES_IS2	0	3.917	4	1	5	0.843	-0.115	-0.4
ES_IS3	0	3.786	4	1	5	0.911	-0.355	-0.39

ES_IS4	0	3.979	4	1	5	0.843	0.04	-0.52
ES_IS5	0	3.959	4	1	5	0.953	0.132	-0.641
ES_IS6	0	3.421	3	1	5	1.008	-0.308	-0.107
ES_AS1	0	3.4	3	1	5	0.942	-0.114	-0.132
ES_AS2	0	3.572	4	1	5	0.877	-0.399	-0.038
ES_AS3	0	3.641	4	1	5	0.98	-0.319	-0.336
ES_AS4	0	3.524	3	1	5	0.918	-0.073	-0.153

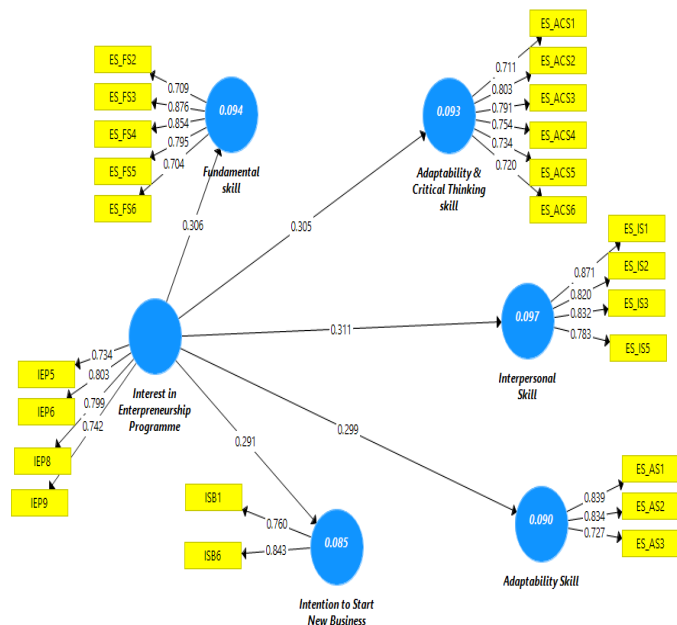
**Internal Consistency**

In this study, composite reliability measures were used to assess the internal consistency of all constructs. Hair et al (2016; 2017b) concluded that a composite reliability ought to have a value of 0.70 and higher to be adjudged consistent. As shown in Table 2, the composite reliability coefficient for all constructs in this study were above 0.70 cutoffs.

**Note:** IEP= Interest in entrepreneurship programme; ISB= Intention to start new business ES\_FS= Fundamental skill; ES\_ACS= Analytical & critical thinking skill; ES\_IS= Interpersonal skill; EM\_RM= ES\_AS= Adaptability skill.  
**KEY:** M = Missing,  $\alpha$  = Standard Deviation, K = Excess Kurtosis, Mi. Minimum, Ma. = Maximum, S = Skewness,  $\kappa$  = Median

**Table 2: Reliability and Convergent Validity of Measurement**

Constructs	Indicators	IR	CA	CR	AVE
Interest in Entrepreneurship Programme	IEP5	0.734			
	IEP6	0.803	0.773	0.854	0.595
	IEP8	0.799			
Intention to Start New Business	IEP9	0.742			
	ISB1	0.76			
Fundamental Skill	ISB6	0.843	0.710	0.783	0.644
	ES_FS2	0.709			
	ES_FS3	0.876			
	ES_FS4	0.854	0.849	0.892	0.625
	ES_FS5	0.795			
	ES_FS6	0.704			
Analytical & Critical Thinking Skill	ES_ACS1	0.711			
	ES_ACS2	0.803			
	ES_ACS3	0.791	0.854	0.887	0.567
	ES_ACS4	0.754			
	ES_ACS5	0.734			
	ES_ACS6	0.72			
Interpersonal Skill	ES_IS1	0.871			
	ES_IS2	0.82			
	ES_IS3	0.832	0.722	0.843	0.643
	ES_IS5	0.783			
	ES_IS4	0.843			
Adaptability Skill	ES_AS1	0.839			
	ES_AS2	0.834	0.848	0.896	0.684
	ES_AS3	0.727			



**Figure 1: Measurement Model**

**Indicator Reliability**

Assessing the robustness and fitness of an instrument before hypothesis testing depends on the outer loading values constituting a construct. According to Hair et al. (2011), an outer loading greater than 0.70 are deemed to be fit for testing hypothesis. Studies have concluded that outer loading less than 0.70 are considered unfit, therefore, should be expunged from the proposed model (Hair et al. 2017b; Kock, 2013). Subsequently, outer loading for each construct used in this study were 0.70 and above. Although, items such as IEP1, IEP2, IEP3, IEP4, IEP7, IEP10, IEP 11, ES\_FS1, ES\_IS4, ES\_IS6, ES\_AS4, ISB2, ISB3, ISB4 and ISB5 with outer loading less than 0.70 expunged and not reliable to measure the construct they are reflecting. This study therefore met the benchmark for indicator reliability.

**KEY: IR = Indicators Reliability CA = Cronbach Alpha, CR = Composite Reliability, AVE = Average Variance Extracted**

**Convergent Validity**

As a rule of thumb, the average variance extracted (AVE) must accounted for at least 50% variation in the reflective indicators of the construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 2, the AVE values for all the constructs achieved the least benchmark of 0.50, thus, the convergent validity of the constructs established.



**Discriminant Validity**

Establishing the discriminant validity of a reflective construct requires that the square root of the AVE of each variable should be greater than its correlation with other items (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). However, Hensler et al. (2015), and Voorhees et al. (2016) reported that Hetero Trait- Mono Trait (HTMT) technique has become a validly accepted criterion for assessing discriminant validity of construct. In a reflective model, a discriminant validity is established when the HTMT value is less than 0.90 (Hensler et al. 2016). In this study, the HTMT values were less than 0.90 cutoffs as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Hetero Trait-Mono Trait (HTMT) Ratio for Discriminant Validity

Construct I	1	II	III	IV	V	VI
ES_FS	0.791					
ES_ACS	0.576	0.753				
ES_AS	0.475	0.507	0.827			
ES_IS	0.259	0.364	0.506	0.802		
IEP	0.395	0.316	0.309	0.221	0.803	
ISB	0.306	0.305	0.311	0.299	0.291	0.77

**Figure 2: Structural Model**

**Structural Model**

The focus of this study was to predict the relationship between students' interest in entrepreneurship programme and intention to start new business after entrepreneurship training. On the other hand, the study also sought to explore whether entrepreneurship training can enhance the employability skills of the participating students. Three hypotheses were proposed, and structural equation path modelling analysis was carried out on the data. The study used bootstrapping technique to check for structural path, implemented in SmartPLS software. As suggested by Henler et al (2009), the significance of a path coefficient is measured using the 95% bias-corrected and accelerated bootstrapping confidence interval. This study used 5000 bootstrap sample and 145 cases to establish the significance of the path coefficient for the direct effect. The comprehensive estimate of the structural model with the statistics relating to the relationships of the constructs are presented in Table 4 and Figure 2

**Table 4: Path Coefficient in the Structural Model**

H	CR	OS	SM	SD	B	TS	S
Ho1	IEP -> ITSNB	0.29	0.319	0.078	0.00	3.859	0.00
Ho2	IEP -> ES	0.39	0.429	0.064	0.00	6.096	0.00

**Keys:** ITSNB= Intention to Start New Business, ES= Employability Skills, H= Hypothesis, CR= Constructs Relationship, CR= OS= Original Sample SM= Sample Mean, SD= Standard Deviation B= Bias TS= T Statistics S= Sig

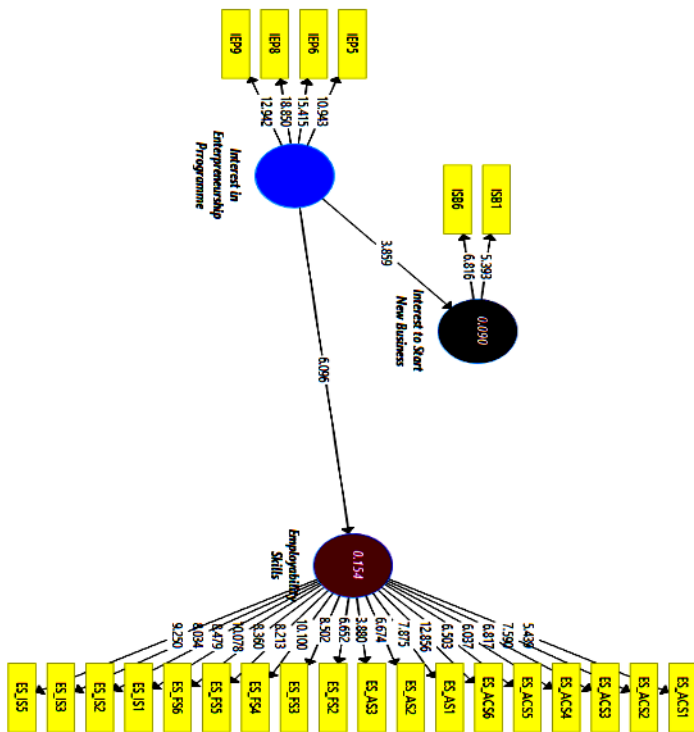


Table 4 presents the extent of the models' relationship (i.e., direct relationships). Findings from the structural model indicates that students' interest in entrepreneurship positively and directly affects their intention to start new business ( $\beta=0.29, t=3.859, p < 0.05$ ). Thus, there is exist a positive and significant relationship between interest in entrepreneurship programme and intention to start a new business among the sampled students. This implies that every time a student show interest in entrepreneurship training, it increases the students' intention of starting a new business by 29%. Furthermore, the structural model further revealed that showing interest in entrepreneurship programme by the students enhances their employability skills. Specifically, a unit increase in interest in entrepreneurship programme will lead to about 39% increase in students' employability skills ( $\beta=0.392, t=6.096, p < 0.05$ ). Consequently, the two hypotheses (H1 and H2) proposed and tested in this study were accepted.

**Discussion**

Our analysis as presented in the measurement model showed a good fit between the observable variables and their respective unobservable variable. All the parameters used in assessing model fit were in accordance with recommended minimum threshold when using SQM. In addition, our structural model

analysis showed that the unobservable latent variables in the study adequately fit our hypothesized model of students' interest in entrepreneurship programme and intention to start a new business as well as their employability skills. Our multivariate regression analysis supports the fact that the entrepreneurship programme introduced by the Government of Nigeria to students at the nation's tertiary institutions played a crucial role in stimulating students' interest in starting a new business after graduation. This includes skills for identifying potential business opportunities in their environment, and more importantly, entrepreneurial spirit for running a business successfully. Thus, the impact of the entrepreneurship programme among undergraduates in Nigeria shows a positive signal of undergraduates' intention to start new businesses thereby creating more jobs in the country. This result supports the findings of Agu and Chiahah (2013) and Okoro (2014) that entrepreneurship education has the likelihood of influencing students' behavioral attitudes toward positive entrepreneurial spirit. Apart from supporting students' intention to start a new business, entrepreneurship education is also a major component for building students' employability skills. Thus, introducing students to entrepreneurship education while in school help to prepare them for the world of work after graduation. There is no doubt that the purpose of the government policy which introduced entrepreneurship education into tertiary institution curriculum has started yielding positive results by building basic skills that employers are looking for in a potential employee in order to be effective in the workforce (Kazeem, 2016).

### Conclusion and Recommendation

In this paper, we applied SEM to study university students' interest in entrepreneurship programme on their intention to starting a new business and employability skills. The results of our study support the first and the second hypotheses by showing that students' participation in entrepreneurship programme increases their intention to start a new business as well as students' participation in entrepreneurship programme enhances their employability skills. We therefore conclude that the policy on the introduction of entrepreneurship programme into the Nigeria tertiary institutions' curriculum to a large extent has been successful. We therefore recommend compulsory enrolment of all students in the Nigeria tertiary institutions irrespective of their course of study in entrepreneurship programme with a view to enhancing their employability skills in readiness for labour market or to be successful entrepreneurs.

### Limitation and Suggestion for further Study

Though not covered in the present study, and this may have somehow limited the result of our study; knowing the actual contribution(s) of each entrepreneurship subjects to the overall programme could help in achieving its optimum success. Thus, this area can be considered in future study.

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