ENTREPRENEURSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT IN OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT (OTM) STUDENTS' STANDARD OF LIVING

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Abstract
The study examined the role of entrepreneurship engagement on the improvement of OTM students' standard of living. It was guided by three research questions. A descriptive survey research design was used. The population comprised all Business education postgraduate students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria. A total of 75 Business education postgraduate students were selected as sample size of the study. Purposive and stratified sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the sample size. Researcher instrument tagged; Entrepreneurship Engagement and Living Standard Questionnaire (EELSQ) with 0.83 reliability coefficient was used for data collection. reported. Descriptive statistics were used for answering research questions 1 and 2. Research question 3 was answered using PPMC. The findings of the study revealed that lack of access to funding, poor infrastructure, corruption, limited access to markets and poor infrastructural development were among issues facing entrepreneurship engagement. Improvement in income, improvement in work engagement, enhance job creation, reduces unemployment and increases economic productivity were among the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of OTM living standard. There was relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (standard of living) in the order of ($r = 0.390$, $p < .05$). The study recommends among other things that stakeholders of institutions should provide adequate funds, easy access to markets and develop infrastructural facilities of institutions in other to improve the entrepreneurship engagement of students' together with their living standard.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship Engagement, Standard of Living, Business Education, OTM*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship plays a critical role in economic development by creating jobs, increasing income levels, and improving access to goods and services within a society (World Bank, 2020). Through innovation and enterprise creation, entrepreneurship contributes significantly to improving the economic conditions of individuals and communities. These improvements are often reflected in the standard of living of a population.

Standard of living refers to the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and basic necessities available to individuals within a particular socioeconomic class or geographic area (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013). It is commonly measured using objective indicators such as income, access to essential goods and services, and the availability of necessities and luxury items within a population.

In contrast, quality of life is a subjective concept that reflects individuals' overall well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction. While it is influenced by the standard of living, it extends beyond material conditions to include psychological and social well-being (World Health Organization, 2012). The standard of living is a term used to describe the level of income, necessities, luxury, and other goods and services that are generally readily available to a designated population. It is basically a metric that evaluates the amount of material goods that are produced and sold within a specified geographic area – such as a community, province, state, or country. Two of the most commonly used indicators of standard of living in a country. However, in its evaluation of the standard of living, the

World Bank uses Gross National Income (GNI) per capita – the average per-person income that a country's total population receives each year. The concept of standard of living is closely related to, but considered distinct from, an evaluation of the quality of life in an area (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013). The standard of living and quality of life are frequently evaluated using several factors considered common to both metrics.

There have evidences that standard of living of majority people in Nigeria are falling and these set of people seems not frequently engage in entrepreneurship. According to Adeyanju, et al. (2023), entrepreneurship has evolved into a valuable tool for facilitating job creation in response to Nigeria's youth bulge and declining job opportunities in the formal sector. The drive behind entrepreneurship is based on its impacts on job creation and poverty reduction in developed countries (Asogwa & Dim, 2016). The benefits embedded in creating job providers against job seekers. In this context, unemployment is considered as a push factor which could motivate young people to join entrepreneurship. Martínez-Caias (2023) describes necessity-driven entrepreneurship as a negative factor that creates entrepreneurs out of compulsion rather than choice and may not reflect an individual's true willingness to start a business enterprise. In such situations, young people may have little or no option but to create their own jobs due to declining formal employment opportunities and limited alternative career paths. However, some youths may choose entrepreneurship over formal employment out of personal desire to become a business owner. Martínez-Caias further described this as a pull motivational factor that could have positive impact on entrepreneurial success. Regardless of the driving factors, the concept of entrepreneurship revolves around self-sustenance, creating wealth, and reducing unemployment, thereby increasing economic growth in the country. Also, it involves identifying business or investment opportunities, mobilizing resources, and exploiting the opportunities through persistence. In recent years, entrepreneurship has gained some more importance as a means of endorsing employment opportunities and stimulating local, regional, and all-around development in Nigeria (Sitoula, 2015).

The continuous emphasis on entrepreneurship as a livelihood strategy is closely linked to the declining job opportunities in the formal sector and the inability of the sector to absorb the growing youth population. This is supported by Olorundare and Kayode (2021) who strongly opined that entrepreneurship brings about social changes through income and wealth generation. To this end, the Nigerian government has shown its commitment to youth entrepreneurship development in the country. Entrepreneurship is considered a major contributing factor to sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation in developing countries, including Nigeria. Entrepreneurship can be defined as an art of being an entrepreneur or one who undertakes innovations or introducing new things, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods. Entrepreneurship is the ability to perceive and undertake business opportunities, taking advantage of scares resources utilization (Ikechukwu, D., Onyi, A. J. & Edeh, F. O. 2017). It is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effect assuming the accompanying finance psychic and social risk and reserving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence.

Thus, entrepreneurship engagement aims to uncover possibilities, improve goods and services for rational consumers, and profit as a return for taking investment risk (Atayi, A. V., Danladi, J. Bosede, A, & Atayi, J. A. 2021). Entrepreneurship engagement is the act of business ownership by private individuals. This comes handy in the atmosphere of acute unemployment across the globe. It has proven to be a strong indispensable factor of economic development for improvement in standard of living (Brownhilder 2019). It is so essential that no area of development can afford to ignore it. Atayi stressed that entrepreneurship engagement is about transfer of capital from someone with lower productivity to another with higher productivity to create benefit and value. Entrepreneurial

engagement facilitates the emergence, identification, and shaping of business opportunities. It involves the cognitive and strategic processes through which opportunities are recognized, evaluated, and developed. It also requires access to and effective utilization of resources needed to explore and exploit such opportunities, ultimately leading to decisive entrepreneurial action. One of the challenges of explanation of entrepreneurship engagement is that it necessitates the interface of lucrative opportunities and private entrepreneurs' involvement. (The strike to take advantage of opportunities heralds the entrepreneurial process. Entrepreneurship as a means of finding opportunities to make profit and are highly competitive.

Entrepreneurship engagement according to Atayi et al. (2021), is the willingness of a person to bring abstract into actionable reality while through imagination, ingenuity, risk-taking, and the ability to accomplish the desired goals. This term refers to a wide range of state-level policies shaped by factors such as education, culture, and climate, as well as government intervention through policies. Entrepreneurs' managerial and self-control attributes have emerged as two new major dimensions of their personality, in addition to the common notion that they are risk-takers who are daring and imaginative. The primary step in the entrepreneurial engagement is to recognize and evaluate market opportunities. Individual potential entrepreneur identifies or develops market opportunities, which he exploits through small and medium-sized businesses, either by obtaining capital or simply selling the business concept. Their power grows as they gain the ability to plan actions, gain access to or manipulate information, and pose a major replacement cost for the company if they quit. An entrepreneur is innovative, identifying and creating new business opportunities; operates under unpredictable circumstances, bringing new products to market, deciding on location and resource use methods; and manages his own operation and competes with others for a market quota. Inborn abilities or skills are less important than the simple implementation of clear concepts of practice in achieving a high standard of performance.

Uncertainty is unavoidable but successful entrepreneurs go to great lengths to mitigate it through transfer of risks to others wherever possible. Entrepreneurship engagement is the result of a combination of three factors: the context in which the opportunity exists or is created, a set of personal abilities needed to identify and exploit the opportunity, and the ability to materialize the opportunity through its transformation into success. Entrepreneurs have the ability to recognize and seize potential opportunities as well as create new ones. Because of their choices, previously unattainable resources become accessible. Entrepreneurs act, evaluate the effects of their actions, make appropriate adjustments, and then act again. Entrepreneurs oftentimes, create opportunities rather than just recognize them because their decisions will eventually be the ones that produce them that has tendency to improve living standard.

Intention-based theory of entrepreneurial intention which suggest that individuals consider the possibility of failure and also how this action is consistent with prevailing social norms and practices. For example, in Nigeria, the failure of a business is most of the time negatively perceived. Given the high levels of risks and uncertainties involved in entrepreneurship activities, individuals who embark on these activities may not know what the outcome will be. Although fear of business failure is quite common with prospective entrepreneurs, there are some who cannot tolerate it. This may deter many potential entrepreneurs especially graduates from even thinking about starting a new venture. Though, they may have seen opportunities and believe that they have the capabilities to pursue them, but their fear of failure may be strong enough to act as a barrier to action. However, in any given environment, people will differ because fear of failure would deter them. Perceived behavioural control can be seen as the person’s belief related to how easy (or difficult) the enactment of the behavior is likely to be (Okoye, 2016). The theoretical framework for this study rest on Intention-based theory of entrepreneurial intention. The theory assets that people who think that they have the knowledge, skill and experience required to start a new business are more frequently involved in start-up attempts with the aim to improve standard of living. Hence, this study therefore, examined the role of

entrepreneurship engagement on the improvement of office technology and management students' standard of living.

Statement of the Problem

Every year massive thousands of graduates are produced from different kind of tertiary institution in Nigeria. The type of education provided in those institution produces graduates for whom there exists little or no job market demands. On annual basis, graduates are produced to be gainfully employed by the formal sector of the Nigeria economy with little focus on graduate entrepreneurship. There is the observation from the public, especially industry players (employers and human resource managers), that most graduates from those institutions in Nigeria lack certain qualities that enhances their performance on the job soon after their graduation. Therefore, this study examined the role of entrepreneurship engagement and improvement in Office Technology and Management students' standard of living.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the role of entrepreneurship engagement on the improvement of standard of living. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the problems facing entrepreneurship engagement.
2. Ascertain the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of OTM students' living standard.
3. Examine the relationship between entrepreneurship engagement and OTM students' standard of living.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the issues facing entrepreneurship engagement?
2. What are the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of OTM students' living standard?
3. Is there any relationship between entrepreneurship engagement and OTM students' standard of living?

Methodology

The research design for this study was descriptive survey research design. The reason for adopting this research design is that the design helped the study to investigate the extent to which independent variables related or influence dependent variable. The population of this study comprised all Business education postgraduate students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria. A total of 75 Business education postgraduate students of Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria was selected as sample size of the study. Purposive and stratified sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the sample size. Researcher instrument was used in this study and its tagged: Entrepreneurship Engagement and Living Standard Questionnaire (EELSQ). EELSQ is a self-structured instrument geared towards eliciting information from PG Business Education students regarding the role of entrepreneurship engagement on the improvement of standard of living. The responses rating scales are as follows: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). To ensure validation of the study instrument, EELSQ, copy was available to the 3 experts in related field. In order to ensure reliability of the instrument (EELSQ), 10 copies of the instruments were administered among PG Business Education from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye in Ogun state. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach alpha and reliability coefficients of the instruments of 0.83 reported. Descriptive statistics were used for answering research questions 1 and 2 and 3 was answered using PPMC.

Results

This chapter present result of the study which comprised answering of research questions, testing of hypotheses and discussion of findings. Descriptive statistics were used for answering research questions 1 and 2 while hypotheses using tested using t-test.

Research Question 1: What are the issues facing entrepreneurship engagement?
Table 1: *Descriptive statistics on the issues facing entrepreneurship engagement*

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
Lack of access to funding.	3.05	0.900	Agreed
Poor infrastructure.	3.18	0.961	Agreed
Corruption	3.11	0.901	Agreed
Limited access to markets	2.97	0.893	Agreed
Poor infrastructural development	2.89	0.893	Agreed
Cluster Mean	3.04		

Source: Field Survey, 2025
Table 4.1 revealed that cluster mean was 3.04 which greater than and bench mark mean value of 2.50. This implied that lack of access to funding, poor infrastructure, corruption, limited access to markets and poor infrastructural development were among issues facing entrepreneurship engagement

Research Question 2: What are the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of living standard?
Table 2: *Descriptive statistics on the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of living standard*

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
Improvement in income.	2.84	0.900	Agreed
Improvement in work engagement.	2.90	0.961	Agreed
Enhance job creation	2.95	0.901	Agreed
Reduces unemployment	2.82	0.893	Agreed
Increases economic productivity	2.77	0.893	Agreed
Cluster Mean	2.86		

Source: Field Survey, 2025
Table 2 revealed that cluster mean value was 2.86 which greater than bench mark of 2.50. This further implied that improvement in income, improvement in work engagement, enhance job creation, reduces unemployment and increases economic productivity were among the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of living standard.

Research Question 3: Is there any relationship between entrepreneurship engagement and standard of living?
Table 3: *Relationship between entrepreneurship engagement and standard of living*

Variables	Mean	SD	r-value	df	p-value	Remark
standard of living	28.4764	2.54961				
entrepreneurship engagement	19.7425	2.64620	.390	231	.0000	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2025
From Table 3, it was observed that there was relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (standard of living) in the order of ($r = 0.390$, $P<.05$). The implication of this result was that about 39% increases in standard of living could be accounted for entrepreneurship engagement.

Discussion
The findings of the study revealed that inadequate funding, corruption, limited access to markets and poor infrastructural development were among the problems facing entrepreneurship engagement. Improvement in income, improvement in work engagement, enhance job creation, reduces

unemployment and increases economic productivity were among the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of living standard. There was relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (standard of living) in the order of ($r = 0.390$, $P<.05$). These findings correlate with Adeyanju et al. (2023) showed that engagement in entrepreneurship was determined by age, having consistent income source, credit access, number of entrepreneurs in the household, access to entrepreneurship training, household size, and asset ownership. Even though entrepreneurs earned higher monthly income than non-entrepreneurs, their income was just slightly above the Nigerian minimum wage. Furthermore, asset ownership, access to credit, group membership, and access to training, all of which are strong predictors of entrepreneurship, were higher among entrepreneurs compared to non-entrepreneurs. The findings also revealed that entrepreneurs had better livelihood outcomes, as measured by income and self-assessed living condition, than non-entrepreneurs. Even though these outcomes could have resulted from other externalities, the empirical analysis helped to address such endogeneity, thereby attributing the outcome estimates solely to entrepreneurship. These results, therefore, show the relevance of entrepreneurship in alleviating poverty and generating better livelihood outcomes for young Nigerian.

Furthermore, the findings of the study were in consonant with Alatise and Ajani (2023) who revealed that female students were more entrepreneurial than their male counterparts were. Stringent security and movement measures put in place by the university constituted a great impediment to operation of business on campus. Since students are not officially allowed to own shops on campus, they secretly keep their wares. Data ascertained that entrepreneurial activities do not have dire consequences on student academic performance of most of the entrepreneurs. This study also indicated the significance of entrepreneurship at solving the problem of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. Atayi et al. (2021) revealed that a very high level of entrepreneurship practices among farmers will reduce poverty among farmers. Ternenge et al. (2020) examined entrepreneurship education as the way forward to wealth creation and unemployment in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education could help in wealth creation and graduates' employment in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria with effective implementation of the programme could help to overcome the challenge of unemployment. Orugun (2016) findings indicate a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.746$) between entrepreneurship through SMEs and poverty level, and a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.640$) between unemployment and poverty in Nigeria. The study concludes that the increasing entrepreneurial activities and the concomitant increase in the level of the variables (poverty and unemployment) in Nigeria are indicators of abnormalities in entrepreneurial practices which demand a very urgent attention of economic experts.

The findings of the study also corroborate with Ikechukwu et al. (2017) showed a positive significant relationship between the independent variables (Skill Acquisition, Entrepreneurship Training and Youth Creativity) and the dependent variables (Youth Empowerment, Job Creation and Wealth Creation) in Industrial Layout Coal Camp, Enugu State Nigeria. ($r=0.466$, 0.388 & 0.480 respectively). Abdul-kemi (2014) found that aggregate commercial banks financing of SMEs has significant positive impact on the economic growth and development of Nigeria. The study also found that Microfinance banks' financing in the area of transportation and commerce, manufacturing and food processing and other activities have significantly impacted on economic growth and development of Nigeria during the period. The paper concludes that SMEs financing could significantly improve entrepreneurship in Nigeria and the economic development in return. Agwu et al. (2017) results showed significant impact of the constructs of entrepreneurship education and new venture creation of the sampled students. The findings further revealed a plethora of hidden facts on the reasons for both the acceptance and reluctance on student's start-up of businesses after before and after graduation.

Conclusion

Having examined the role of entrepreneurship engagement on the improvement of standard of living, the following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study that:

1. Inadequate funding, corruption, limited access to markets and poor infrastructural development were among issues facing entrepreneurship engagement
2. Improvement in income, improvement in work engagement, enhance job creation, reduces unemployment and increases economic productivity were among the benefits of entrepreneurship engagement for improvement of living standard.
3. There was relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (standard of living) in the order of ($r = 0.390$, $p < .05$).

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The study recommends that stakeholders of institutions should provide adequate funds, easy access to markets and develop infrastructural facilities of institutions in other to improve the entrepreneurship engagement of students' together with their living standard.
2. Entrepreneurial practices of SME owner-managers should be diagnosed and addressed because, many of them are driven by the necessity of entrepreneurship rather than the passion in it; and that the government should support SMEs adequately for jobs creation.
3. Entrepreneurship training and development should be instituted at the Local Government levels and inculcate into the school's curriculum at all level to instil entrepreneurial drive, to promote job creation, wealth creation and human capital development through entrepreneurial skill acquisition and training thus reducing poverty in the society.

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