

## Students' Perception of Entrepreneurship Education and interest in self-reliance: Evidence from Polytechnics in Yobe State, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship Education emerged few decades ago as instrument through which poverty could be alleviated from amongst the Nigerian youth; by providing opportunities and ways of occupational alternatives and choices to which graduates of Polytechnic Institutions are a part. This work intends to explore the sensitivity of the Polytechnic students in the polytechnics in Yobe State, Nigeria towards entrepreneurship education in inducing venture creation after their tertiary education. The investigator collected data through questionnaire in ended opened-ended format. Random sampling was used to select respondents for the study. Data were analyzed using partial least square method and the hypotheses were tested using the structural equation model (SEM). Application soft wire applied in this study is the SmartPLS version 3.0. The study findings highlighted among other things the lower level of practical activities, inadequate curriculum content, lack of depth treatment of the subjects, less time allocated for the subject and otherwise lecturers who teach the course are very qualified but not in entrepreneurship as a discipline as some of the factors that halt students' interest in venture creation. This study recommends that EED curriculum be enriched and students be given lot of practical for them to appreciate very well the venture creation formula. Furthermore, expert from different field of endeavors are recommended to be hired or recruited to teach entrepreneurship education particularly the practical aspects in Nigerian Polytechnics. This will help in no small measure to blend theory of entrepreneurship with practice.

**Key words:** - *Polytechnic Institutions, Self-reliance, Entrepreneurship Education Development, Students' perception and Curriculum*

### **1.1 Introduction**

Encouraging entrepreneurship in the recent years has become an issue of uppermost priority in public policy around the globe (Mohammed, 2020; Luthje and Franke, 2003). Entrepreneurship has therefore become an engine of economic change and development in developed and developing countries alike. Recently, Nigeria is experiencing a high unemployment rate pegging at a very high rate. This has become worrisome to both government and policy makers in country. Thus, there is need to energized robust actions to strengthen the efforts of individual learners in our higher institutions and awaken the spirit of entrepreneurship in their mind. There is need for more emphasis in creating awareness of the option of self-employment especially among the young graduates that are annually coming out of our Tertiary Institutions for which there exist no hope for their absorption in either the government or the private sector organizations.

Successive governments in Nigeria put several efforts in reforming policies to ginger up self-reliance through the benefits of entrepreneurship education programs. The populous opinion amidst entrepreneurship researchers to date stands that entrepreneurship is the very befitting and most appropriate intervention required to soften the threat of joblessness particularly among the youth (Kaigama, 2018). Mudavanhu et al. (2011) agrees that many countries consider entrepreneurship as a solution to unemployment and other socio-economic challenges like poverty, hunger, social vices etc. Entrepreneurship is an instrumental factor driving the emergence and growth of new business and increasing emphasis is now being placed on entrepreneurship for promoting economic growth (Bygrave and Zacharakis,

2007). Globally, there is a growing recognition of entrepreneurship as a driving force to economic development and job creation. Beside the area of policy formulation on entrepreneurship, academic institutions such as the universities have also been singled out to contribute by offering appropriate entrepreneurship education courses and training (Umo 2019; Laukkanen 2000). Given that the majority of the population mostly affected is the youth, an engagement of entrepreneurship among the youth may lessen the economic challenges this nation has faced over the past years. Considering the role played by entrepreneurship education in support of the venture system, evidence abounds on substantial amount of studies carried out to investigate the effect entrepreneurial education has on entrepreneurship (Mohammed, 2023).

However, there has been lack of research on the perception of entrepreneurship education by polytechnic students and its impact in creating new venture support systems. Additionally, this line of enquiry is persuasively significant as the application of mere entrepreneurship education alone to explicate the entrepreneurship phenomena might not be sufficient. There is every reason to study and understand students perceive entrepreneurship since they are the target group that are being prepared to join the world of work. For this reason, it is important to understand the perception of polytechnic students on entrepreneurship as the students are undertaking lectures in Entrepreneurship Education Development (EED). The study would examine whether students in Federal Polytechnic Damaturu and Mai Idris Aloma Polytechnics Gaidam have positive perceptions to Entrepreneurship Skills/Education Development.

These are the only polytechnics in the state. In the polytechnics the subject is titled Entrepreneurship Education Development (EED). Prior research suggests that entrepreneurial education based on solid learning theory will develop entrepreneurs by increasing business knowledge, and promoting psychological attributes associated with entrepreneurs such as self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Umo, 2019; Kourilsky&Walstad, 1998; European Commission, 2004; Walstad&Kourilsky, 1999).

Inclusion of courses in Entrepreneurship and other relevant programs in the polytechnic curriculum are considered necessary to create awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option to motivate students to consider a venturing career, and also to provide students with the knowledge and skills to venture (Menziez 2011). However, in spite the realization of the essentials of entrepreneurship education, the struggle to make polytechnic students in Nigeria fully entrepreneurial is still far reach. There are little or no studies so far available on attitude of our youth towards entrepreneurship and their future plans, and consequently more information is required for the development of suitable interventions to improve the employability of learners after exiting school. To this effect, there is the need for his research to establish the perception of the students about the EED and venture creation in the Polytechnics.

The purpose of this study is to explore the perception polytechnic students have on entrepreneurship education and the influence it has on students to pursue venture creation after their tertiary education.

### **1.2. Objectives of the study**

- i. To find out if the students believe that the current EED structure is an important factor that influences their intention to create new businesses.

### **1.3 Research questions**

- i. Does the current EED structure constitute important factors that contributes to students' interest in venture creation?

### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

- i. Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant influence between students' perception of current EED structure and students' interest in new business creation.

## **Entrepreneurship Education**

### **2.1Introduction**

In the recent times, Entrepreneurship has become the engine for economic growth and social development throughout the world” (Audretch 2003:5). According to Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (2005) the entrepreneurship education aims at preparing individuals, principally youth, to be responsible, enterprising individuals who develop entrepreneurship or become entrepreneurial thinkers and who will contribute to economic growth and development for sustainable communities. Alberti, Sciascia and Poli (2004) view entrepreneurship education as the planned and prescribed delivery of entrepreneurial competencies, which includes: concepts, skills, attitude and mental responsiveness used by individuals when starting and developing their growth oriented ventures. This position is adopted and supported fully because this type of education aims at developing the necessary entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, competences and personalities that will affect the individual in managing a business venture (Agu, 2006).

### **2.2 The Nature of Entrepreneurship Education Development (EED) in Polytechnics**

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Some of the entrepreneurship courses offered in polytechnic are EED 216, Entrepreneurship Development Program EDP, and Business Start-up etc. The courses are taken by both those undergoing the ND and HND programs in the Polytechnic. It is taken just once in the entire during of the study. They are expected to have practical sessions, but due to lack of enough materials and machines, the practical sessions are not conducted as expected. In most cases, certain number of students may be required to go for the practical training but not all the students attend the practical sessions in the past, but now the trend has changed. All the students are engaged in in a trade training at least before their graduate. Most of the lecturers taking these courses are from the School of Management Studies and particularly those from the department of Business Admin and Management and lecturers from the Banking and Finance Department.

Actually, of all the lecturers handling these courses in Federal Polytechnic Damaturu, only one of them is majoring in the field of entrepreneurship possessing M. Sc. in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. So can we say that these courses are properly handled or there is the need for better hands to be involved in the teaching of the courses? In the past, almost all schools allowed those with Business Administration and Management background to undertake the teaching of the entrepreneurship, but in the recent times, professional entrepreneurs and those specialized in the core field handle most of the entrepreneurship courses. Bako, Mohammed and Maisamari (2010) are of the view that the use of adjunct lecturers in educating students on entrepreneurship could be helpful in booting venture interest.

### **2.3 Factors inducing students' intention be self-reliant**

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Certain factors were found very important in influencing venture creation by students. Firstly, gender is very important factor in the entrepreneurial inclination. Lots of researches have shown that males were found more susceptible to venture into business as against females (Dunn, 2014; Sandhu, et al. 2011 and Veciana, et al. 2005). Secondly, birth order is equally found important in entrepreneurial drive. Research by Robinson and Hunt (1992) found that being first-born in the family is significantly related to entrepreneurial inclination. Their studies were corroborated by Koh's (1996) study on business students in Hong Kong (Othman et al, 2005). Thirdly, entrepreneurs past experience were found to play vital role in individual venture creation. Research by Lena and Wong (2003); Mukhtar, et al. (1999) indicated that individuals' past working experiences positively or negatively influences entrepreneurial performance. Other factors include: knowledge of business management, access to capital, possession of technical know-how of the proposed business activity and many others.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this section, the researchers intend to discuss the procedures and the material used in collection data for the study. Hence, the design of the research, where the research is to be conducted among others were explain here.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study is carried out using a survey design. This is to ascertain facts on students' opinion and beliefs pertaining to issues and rating of Entrepreneurship education viz-a-viz venture creation in Federal Polytechnic Damaturu and Mai Idris Aloma, Gaidamall in Yobe State. Population of the study consists of the entire 1200 National Diploma (ND) and 600 Higher National Diploma (HND) students that have taken course in Entrepreneurship Education

Development (EED) in the two institutions. The population also comprises of 400 students from MIA and 1400 from Federal Polytechnic Damaturu. The samples for the study were randomly selected using the simple random technique.

### 3.3 study population, Sample and sampling method

Hence, a total number of 250 students were served with the questionnaire. The total sample respondents were allotted to the two institutions based on proportionate population of each institution. Thus, Federal Polytechnic Damaturu has 195 samples selected and the MIA has 55 sample selected. This selection method accorded all members of the population equal chance of being selected. In order to gather the needed data successfully, research assistants and services of experts may be employed to ease the process of gathering data and valuable information needed for the research to be successful conducted. This process will guarantee high response rate and high quality of research process and conduct. The respondents were selected using the simple random selection criterion. Every member of the population was given equal chance of being selected.

### 3.4 Instrument for data collection

The instrument involves structured questionnaire which was developed by the researchers based on the variables or factors that strictly relates to entrepreneurship education, self-reliance, research questions and the hypotheses of the study. The questionnaires

were administered to the randomly selected student participants from all the two polytechnics (Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu and the Mai Idris Aloma polytechnic Geidam). There were 21 set of questions in the questionnaire and the respondents are to respond either strongly agree (SA) agreed (A) disagreed (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with the statements. The responses are weighted SA, four (4) agreed three (3), Disagreed is weighted two (2) and strongly disagree one (1). The questionnaires items were test for validity through the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Normality test was also conducted. The factor analysis generated strong alpha value which shows that the items are reliable and therefore valid.

### 4.1 Analysis of Data

The responses gathered in this research were analyzed using SPSS to determine the mean responses, missing values, outliers and its management, Common factor variable and normality tests. The research hypotheses  $H_{01}$  and  $H_{02}$  were tested using the SEM-PLS at 5% level of significance. The tests involves the measurement model and the structural equation model.

#### 4.1.1 Statistics

The statistics presented in the table below show that there were no missing values and so every items was duly captured in the analysis.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	180	72
Female	70	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age:</b>		
17 – 21	43	17
22 – 26	195	78

**Table 1. Demography of Respondents**

27 – 31	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Education:</b>		
ND	92	37
HND	<u>158</u>	<u>63</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research work (2023)

The table above contains analysis of the respondents. The respondents' gender were sought in the questionnaire. This is to let the research observe if there will be significant variable across gender in their responses. 180 that is 72% of the respondent are male while 70 which is 28% are female. In terms of age, the majority of the respondents 78% are in the category of 22 to 26. This indicate the student are mostly in their mid-twenties. At this age, individuals are just with their

adolescent period. This period is known for its psychological and social effects on human

development. The individuals at this stage feel there are the kings. Few of them do pay attention or concentrate on the best issues that will make their life better. The implication on this result is that individual respondent in this category may be serious in answering these questions. Even if their want to answer the question genuinely, they may lack the appropriate answer as most of them might have paid attention what happens in the Entrepreneurship Centre. For the education, HND students are 63%, while ND are 37%. This indicate that the HND students are the majority and this means that most of the students are of higher status. They are expected also to be able to identify that which is good for themselves.

**Table 2 Reliability Test Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SVC1	35.8880	197.570	.924	.986
SVC2	35.7760	198.166	.914	.987
SVC3	35.8280	196.625	.931	.986
SVC4	35.8080	198.332	.921	.986
SVC5	35.8640	195.074	.938	.986
SVC6	35.8200	196.759	.930	.986
SVC7	35.7880	197.581	.933	.986
SVC8	35.8240	196.266	.937	.986
SVC9	35.8400	195.806	.941	.986
SVC10	35.7960	195.368	.940	.986
SVC11	35.8480	198.033	.922	.986

Source: Research work (2023)

This table describes the reliability of the questionnaire items. This is noticeable in the Cronbach's Alpha in the last column that very item has more the required rule of thumb of 0.7. By this result on this table, each item is measuring what it was intended to measure thereby making the result reliable.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df.	Sig.	Statistic	Df.	Sig.
SVC1	.308	250	.000	.798	250	.000
SVC2	.295	250	.000	.789	250	.000
SVC3	.303	250	.000	.786	250	.000
SVC4	.297	250	.000	.800	250	.000
SVC5	.312	250	.000	.770	250	.000
SVC6	.285	250	.000	.793	250	.000
SVC7	.291	250	.000	.794	250	.000
SVC8	.301	250	.000	.784	250	.000
SVC9	.304	250	.000	.782	250	.000
SVC10	.296	250	.000	.771	250	.000
SVC11	.311	250	.000	.796	250	.000

**Table 3. Test of Normal Distribution**

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

**Source:** Research work (2023)

In this table 3 above, the content explains the nature of the distribution of the data. We apply the Shapiro-Wilk statistics which state that any statistics closer to one 1 is a positive result indicating that the data are normally distributed. Taking a look at the Shapiro-wilk's result of statistics, all the items score more than .07. This is a great score that clearly indicates that the data are not normally distributed. Also, the statistics is significant given the p-value of 0.000. Thus, we conclude that the data are not normally distributed and the implication of which is that we can't use parametric statistics tool only the

non-parametric can be applied in this study for this reason.

#### 4.2 Initial measurement Model Analysis

This is a model that was first analyzed and which no optimum result was obtained. Some of the factor loadings did not reach their threshold of 0.7. One of the AVE too is less than 0.5. Some questionnaire items were then deleted and modified model analysis was conducted. Find below the result of the analysis in various tables and figure.

**Table 4.R Square values**

variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
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<b>Students' Venture Creation</b>	0.288	0.285
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Source: Research work (2023)

This table gives the effect size. The r square measures how well the model predicts the outcomes of the dependent variable. It ranges

from 0 to 1. In this result, there is only 28% degree predicts of the outcomes by the model in the initial model.

**Table 5. Construct reliability and Validity**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<b>Students' Venture Creation</b>	<b>0.987</b>	<b>0.988</b>	<b>0.989</b>	<b>0.888</b>
<b>Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education</b>	<b>0.853</b>	<b>0.891</b>	<b>0.834</b>	<b>0.396</b>

Source: Research work (2023)

Table 5 contains information about the constructs reliability and validity. Only one of AVE items did not reach its minimum threshold of 0.5. Hence, all the other values are okay; for this reason, the modified model was run after

deleting some items whose factor loading did not reach their threshold of 0.6 and above. The result of the modified model is presented in this research.

**Table 6. Fornell- Larcker Criteria**

Variable	Students' Venture Creation	Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education
<b>Students' Venture Creation</b>	<b>0.942</b>	
<b>Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education</b>	0.537	<b>0.629</b>

Source: Research work (2023)

To establish discriminant validity, Fornell-Larcker criterion is used in this study. According to this criterion, the upper diagonal values of the entries in each column must be

higher than all the value of the obtained in the table below show that the diagonal values exceed all other values in the column their belong.

**Table 7. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)**

Variable	Students' Venture	Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education

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	Creation	
Students' Venture Creation		
Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education	0.428	

Source: Research work (2023)

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio is also used in establishing discriminant validity. Where the ratio is less than 0.90, the discriminant validity is established between two reflectively measured constructs. In this study, the ratio is far below the 0.90, hence the validity is established.

The initial analysis didn't yield any optimum outcome as some factor loading fall below 0.7 and one of the AVE falls below 0.50, hence the idea to rerun the analyse for a modified model excluding those items who loaded less than 0.50. However, on the second time, the modified method produced a more strong effect size. Of 0.54 which is moderately okay to move to the re-structural equation model.

### 4.3 Modified measurement Model Analysis

Table 8. Total Effect

Variables	Students' Venture Creation	Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education
Students' Venture Creation		
Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education	0.540	

Source:

Research work (2023)

The table 8 above presents the total effect size of the students' perception of the Entrepreneurship Education on the Students' venture creation interest. The r square measures how well the

model predicts the outcomes of the dependent variable. It ranges from 0 to 1. In this result, there is up to 54% degree of predictions of the results by the model in the modified model.

Table 9. R Square Value

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Students' Venture Creation	0.491	0.488

Source: Research work (2023)

The above table is of R-square modified model which explains that the changes in the students' venture creation interest is 49% influenced by the student' perception of the entrepreneurship education taught to them.

**Table 10. Construct Reliability and Validity**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho <sub>A</sub>	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Students' Venture Creation	0.987	0.988	0.989	0.888
Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education	0.888	0.887	0.913	0.639

Source: Research work (2023)

Table above explain the reliability and the validity of the construct being analyzed. After the second run of the measurement model, both

the constructs reached their minimum threshold of 0.50 for the AVE which was less in the initial model.

**Table 11. Fornell-Larcker Criteria**

	Students' Venture Creation	Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education
Students' Venture Creation	0.942	
Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education	0.540	0.799

Source: Research work (2023)

The study established discriminant validity through the use of the Fornell-Larcker criterion after the modified model was run. This criterion is interpreted by the upper diagonal values of the entries in each column which must be higher

than all the value of the obtained in the diagonals. Thus, the value diagonally exceeds all the remaining values and so the discriminant validity is established.

**Table 12. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)**

	Students' Venture Creation	Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education
Students' Venture Creation		
Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education	0.551	

Source: Research work (2023)

The HTMT obtained after the modified model analysis indicates that the variables have established discriminant validity moderately since anything less than 0.90 is acceptable.

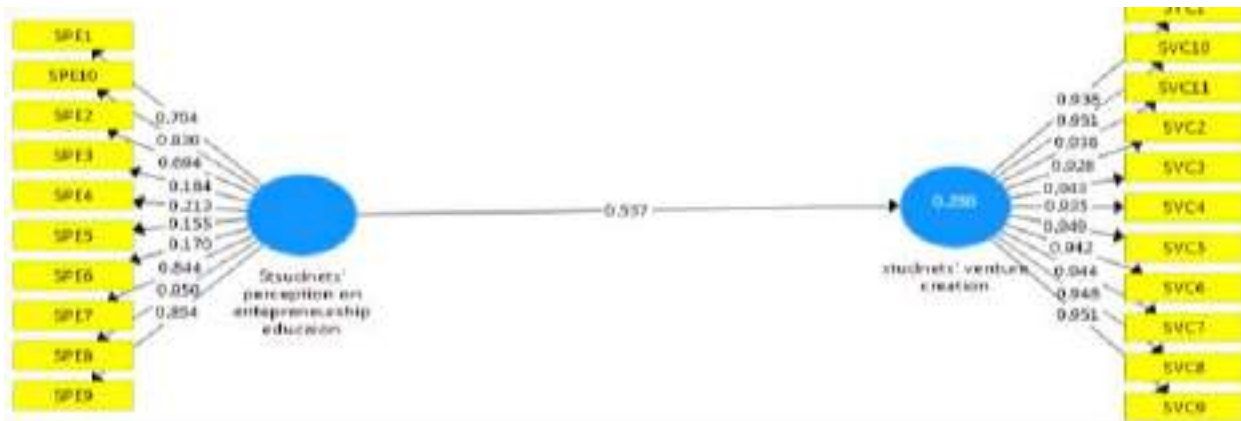


Fig 1. Initial measurement model

The above figure shows the effect size and the outer loadings of the indicators. Four (4) of the indicators from the side of the predictor variable did not reach their minimum threshold and were

deleted. The items deleted are items 3, 4, 5 and 6. Having deleted them. The model was rerun and all the items factor loadings reached the minimum threshold.

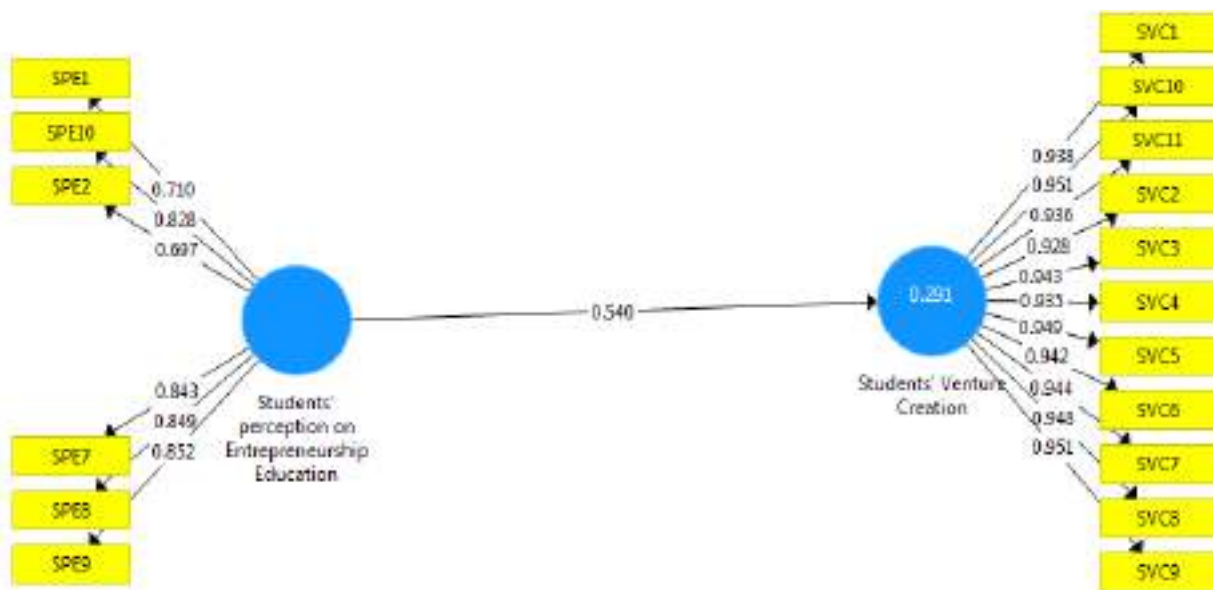


Fig. 2 Modified Model Algorithm of Students' perception on Entrepreneurship Education and Students' Venture creation.

#### 4.4 Structural Equation Model

The measurement model was over, the next is the structural equation model where the hypotheses of the study is being tested. Table 13 and fig.3 contains the result of the bootstrapping.

From the bootstrapping result, the Beta value of 540 is a good effect size and beside that, the t-statistics has exceeded it threshold of 1.96 at confidence interval of 95%. The p-value is 0.000, this indicates a good probability as the

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rule of thumb is to accept a null hypothesis as significant where the p-value is less than 0.05

and with a t-statistics of more than 1.96.

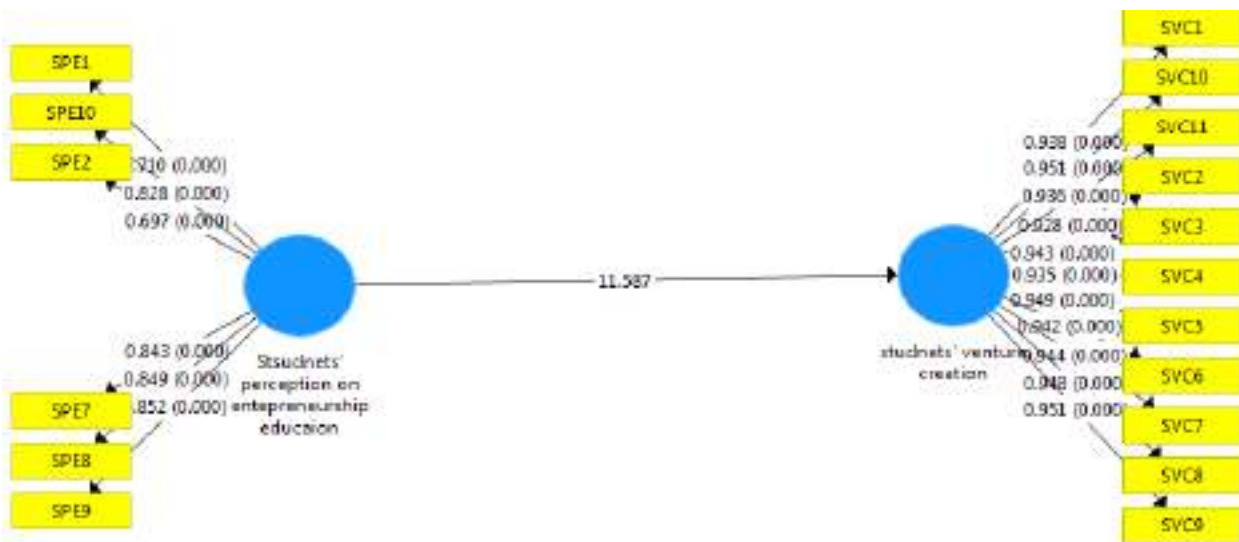
**Table 13. Total effect size**

Variables	Beta Value	T-Statistics	P-value
students' perception > Students' venture creation	<b>0.540</b>	<b>11.587</b>	<b>0.000</b>

Source: Research work (2023)

Table 13 present the total effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. This therefore means that there is a 54% probability that the students' interest in venture

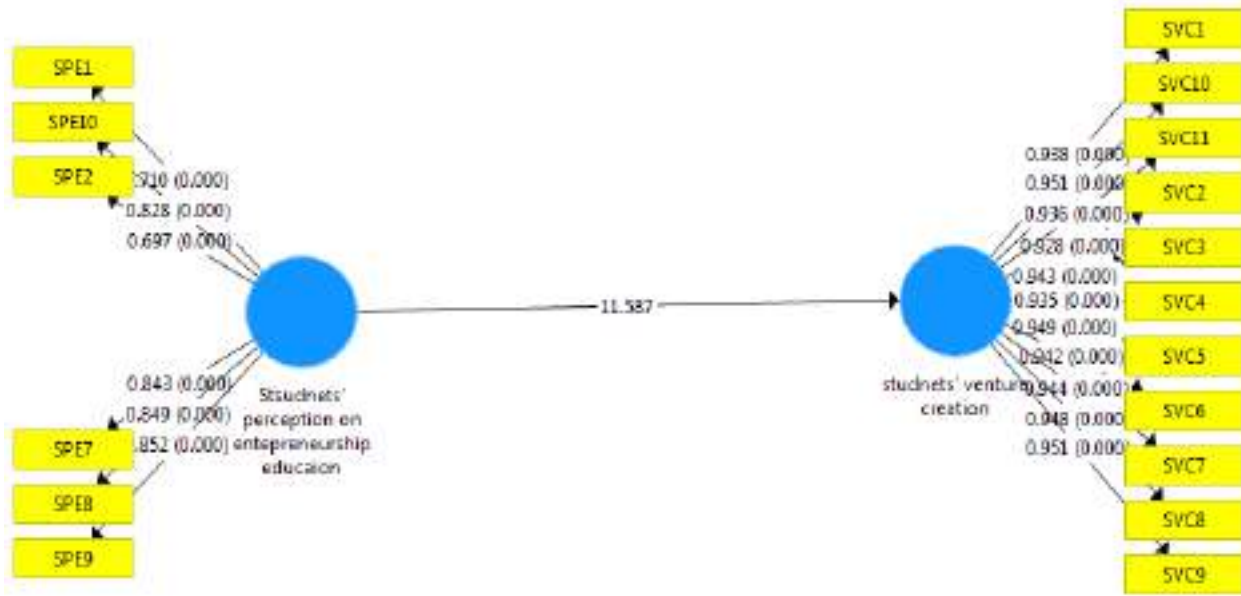
creation is influenced by the students' perception about the current entrepreneurship education.



**Fig.3 Bootstrapping result of the structural model analysis**

The result obtained from the measurement model was analyzed in the structural equation model to test the hypothesis. Above is the model results of the analysis of the hypothesis. The t-

value of 11.587 is greater than normal threshold of acceptance. Also, all the item outer loadings have reached their threshold with their p-value all measured at 0.000.



### Discussions of findings

The overall findings of this study is that the students' interest in venture creation was influenced by their perception of the entrepreneurship education. The study stated null hypothesis that the students' perception of current EED structure have no significant influence on the students' interest in new business creation. The result of the study showed that the null hypothesis is to be rejected because t-statistics of 11.587 meets its threshold and the p-value of 0.000 is less 0.05. With this result, the implication is that students' perception on entrepreneurship education they took as course and the practical they do have had serious impact in their interest for a venture creation for self-reliance. However, the relationship is weak one though it's a positive relationship. That is why the total effect is just 0.587 while the maximum is 0.90. All the same, the implication is great, because prior to this study nobody could say authoritatively that the students' conception of what entrepreneurship education being taught to them can offer them in terms of boosting their morale and inculcating in the students mind set

to vigorously pursue and own a vibrant business after their study.

### Conclusion

Conclusively, inclusion of courses in Entrepreneurship and other relevant programs in the polytechnic curriculum are considered necessary to create awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option to motivate students to consider a venturing career, and also to provide students with the knowledge and skills to venture (Menzies 2011). However, in spite the realization of the essentials of entrepreneurship education, the struggle to make polytechnic students in Nigeria fully entrepreneurial is still far reach. There are little or no studies so far available on attitude of our youth towards entrepreneurship and their future plans, and consequently more information is required for the development of suitable interventions to improve the employability of learners after exiting school. To this effect, there is the need for his research to establish the perception of the students about the EED and venture creation in the Polytechnics.

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### Recommendation

At the end of the study the researcher makes the following recommendation

- Student's perception on the inclusion of entrepreneurship education is positive.
- The study recommended that institutions should pay more attention to entrepreneurial courses since student perception toward the course is positive
- Government should invest significantly in the field of entrepreneurship education.
- Students should be motivated to put in to practice the knowledge acquired in the school.

### 5.3 Acknowledgment

We would like to acknowledge the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) Nigeria for sponsoring this research work.



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