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EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN THE PERFORMING ARTS: PERCEPTIONS OF NIGERIAN THEATREPRENEURS

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Abstract: This study delves into the emerging field of entrepreneurship education in the performing arts, aiming to investigate current practices and evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurial endeavors within this domain. Focusing on Nigerian graduate and undergraduate prospective entrepreneurs, commonly referred to as theatrepreneurs, who pursue careers in drama, dancing, script writing, and other performing arts disciplines, the research utilizes qualitative methods. Forty purposefully selected respondents were interviewed, employing a mediated interview approach to identify theatrepreneurs' characteristics, motivations, and the significant challenges they encounter in their professional and entrepreneurial journeys. The findings demonstrate that participants opt for the performing arts primarily for personal career development rather than financial incentives. They highlight the benefits of talent development, confidence building, and professional growth. Nevertheless, the study identifies major obstacles such as time management, financial constraints, adaptation to the performing arts environment, unethical practices, and personal style, which significantly affect career development. Despite these challenges, respondents express optimism about the future of the profession. Based on the study's outcomes, it is recommended to introduce entrepreneurship education programs that nurture students' abilities to think creatively, reflectively, strategically, and analytically about their artistic practices. Such initiatives would further enhance professional career development within the performing arts industry.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship education, theatrepreneurs, performing arts, higher educational institutions, entrepreneurship development

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Introduction

Numerous theoretical and empirical studies have emphasized the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in driving sustainable development. Neoclassical theories posit that growth is influenced by fixed capital, financial capital, labor, technology, and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs play a crucial role in stimulating growth through innovative resource management, which leads to organic and dynamic forms of growth (Huang & Cheu, 2021). Entrepreneurship serves as a catalyst for innovation, competition, sustainable economic progress, and job creation (Amreen et al. 2019; Schumpeter, 1934). Governments and policymakers in both developed and developing countries recognize entrepreneurship development as a vital factor for stimulating, supporting, and sustaining economic growth, employment generation, poverty alleviation, and export growth. Creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship to thrive entails implementing favorable government policies for new ventures, supportive taxation and regulations, adequate funding, effective education, infrastructure development, and research and development (Fenton & Barry, 2011).

In recent years, economists have shown a renewed interest in the impact of human capital on economic growth (Wen, 2022). While earlier studies primarily focused on education as a simple indicator of human capital, recent research has explored the effects of higher education levels on economic growth. Scholars argue that higher education is a key driver of economic growth and competitiveness in nations. Primary and secondary education may facilitate the production of goods and services and enable workers to utilize technology, but higher education is more likely to produce graduates capable of engaging in inventions and innovations that can transform economies into knowledge-based ones. Higher education institutions (HEIs) provide technology, foster innovation, and supply highly skilled employees to the labor market, thereby enhancing economic growth. They serve as centers of knowledge and innovation, generating new ideas and knowledge that can be translated into commercial entities. Furthermore, higher education can actively promote and support entrepreneurship development programs through entrepreneurship education (Syeda & Liu, 2021; Fenton & Barry, 2011).

Education plays a vital role in driving social change and development. The acquisition of knowledge empowers individuals within a society, enabling them to contribute effectively to social transformation (Lawal, 2019). Economic, social, and technological advancements are possible through the application of knowledge gained from effective education (Asadullah & Ullah, 2018; Popescu, 2011). In the context of entrepreneurship development, knowledge acquisition, skill development, and experiences are key indicators of human capital that contribute to the success (Fayolle et al. 2006; Zhang et. al.2013). Factors such as public policy, government legislation, taxation, technology, economic conditions, income, age, social status, and education influence entrepreneurship development (Fayolle et al., 2006; Zhang et al., 2013).

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Entrepreneurship education (EE) plays a crucial role in fostering an innovative culture within HEIs. The debate on whether entrepreneurship knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be transferred is becoming obsolete, as researchers increasingly agree that entrepreneurship is a discipline that can be learned, mastered, and therefore taught or encouraged (Anselm, 1993; Drucker, 1993; Dorf & Byers, 2005). While some individuals may possess inherent entrepreneurial skills, the level of entrepreneurial activity is likely to be higher when individuals are exposed to EE (Anselm, 1993).

Entrepreneurship education plays a crucial role in equipping individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to successfully initiate, organize, and manage their own business ventures (Paltasingh, 2012). It fosters the development of qualities and capabilities such as an innovative spirit, creative thinking, a sense of adventure, effective communication, scientific and technological knowledge, and ethical business practices, which are essential for new business ventures (Doan, 2022). The growing significance of EE stems from the recognition that the success of entrepreneurship relies on the disposition, skills, and competencies of the entrepreneur, all of which can be cultivated through EE (Maresch, 2016).

EE is instrumental in providing individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary for entrepreneurship. It instills an innovative mindset that encourages individuals to think creatively and seek opportunities for new business ventures (Paltasingh, 2012). Through EE, individuals gain a deep understanding of business concepts, such as marketing, finance, operations, and management, enabling them to make informed decisions in their entrepreneurial endeavors (Doan, 2022). Moreover, entrepreneurship education imparts knowledge of science and technology, which is increasingly vital in today's business landscape, allowing entrepreneurs to leverage technological advancements for competitive advantage (Doan, 2022).

EE also cultivates attitudes and behaviors that contribute to entrepreneurial success. It nurtures an adventurous spirit that encourages individuals to take calculated risks and embrace uncertainty (Paltasingh, 2012). Effective communication skills are emphasized, enabling entrepreneurs to effectively articulate their ideas, negotiate with stakeholders, and build strong relationships with customers, suppliers, and partners (Doan, 2022). Furthermore, EE places great importance on business ethics, instilling a sense of responsibility, integrity, and social consciousness in entrepreneurs (Doan, 2022). Ethical practices not only enhance the reputation and credibility of entrepreneurs but also contribute to sustainable and socially responsible business ventures.

More recently, EE has been one of the building blocks for advancing innovation and entrepreneurship (GEM, 2015). This development has transformed EE into a prominent field in diverse disciplines, including economics, management, education, and technical studies (Davidson, 2008). EE started at Harvard University in 1947 (Augustine et al. 2018). In the 1970s, EE became popular in business schools. Subsequently, the social, economic, and educational effects of EE resulted in HEIs developing programs and courses on

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entrepreneurship. (Doan, 2022; Păunescu & Molnar, 2020).Traditionally, entrepreneurship as a discipline transformed from a subject housed in business schools to a subject taught across multiple fields, ranging from music to science and nearly every discipline in between. (Toscher,2019)

The increasing interest in EE, particularly among business students in high HEIs, has sparked numerous research studies on entrepreneurial intentions and the success of business students (Lawal & Ojodu, 2020; Ogunbenkun & Lawal, 2022; Katongole et al., 2014; Gonozatez-Lopez et al., 2019). However, the field of EE in the Performing Arts (PA) is relatively new and has garnered attention for its potential to enhance graduate employability (Dianne, 2014). As an emerging field, further research is needed to clarify the concept of PA entrepreneurship, explore current practices, and evaluate the effectiveness of EE in the PA domain. Assessing the effectiveness of EE in PA involves examining prospective entrepreneurs' satisfaction and their academic, career, and personal development (Cameron, 1978).

In contrast, empirical studies focusing on non-business students, such as those in the PA field, who are increasingly venturing into entrepreneurial endeavors or participating in HE-sponsored entrepreneurial programs are scarce. Considering the abode discussions, this study aims to discuss the effectiveness of EE in fostering entrepreneurship development among prospective PA entrepreneurs. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the perceptions of prospective PA entrepreneurs regarding the efficacy of EE in HE. The study focuses on understanding how EE and HE contribute to the growth of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ventures in the PA sector. Overall, this paper aims to contribute to the understanding and improvement of EE in the PA discipline.

To address these objectives, the following research questions are posed:

1. What motivates undergraduate students in HE to pursue EE in PA?
2. What are the perceived benefits of PA entrepreneurship among undergraduate and graduate students?
3. What challenges hinder the advancement of professional careers for undergraduate and graduate students in the PA field?
4. What are the prospects for undergraduate and graduate students in their PA professional careers within the context of EE and HE?

This paper is structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of EE in the context of the PA. It begins by establishing the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that support the relevance of entrepreneurial competencies for PA graduates and the potential impact of EE. The research methodology employed for the study is then outlined. The paper proceeds to present the results obtained from interviews conducted with prospective PA entrepreneurs, highlighting their perspectives on EE and its effectiveness. Finally, the paper concludes by offering recommendations, implications, and potential areas for future research.

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Literature Review

Entrepreneurship Education

EE encompasses the development of entrepreneurial knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills through various pedagogical programs and approaches (Bae et al., 2014; Wilson, 2009; Fayolle et al. 2006). The implementation of EE is diverse with different programs and instructional strategies (Ndofirepi, 2020).

Pittaway and Cope (2007) and Pittaway and Edwards (2012) classified EE into four categories: education "for," "in," "about," and "through" entrepreneurship. Education "for" entrepreneurship prepares individuals for starting a business and focuses on practical, action-oriented learning (Rauch and Hulsink, 2015). Education "in" entrepreneurship emphasizes the practical aspects, with participants engaging in entrepreneurial behaviors and actions, aiming to create value for customers. Education "about" entrepreneurship raises awareness about entrepreneurship. Education "through" entrepreneurship develops human competencies that encourage an entrepreneurial approach to achieving societal goals (Ndofirepi, 2020).

The effectiveness of EE in promoting sustainable entrepreneurship development has been debated in the literature. Some studies have found a positive impact of EE on entrepreneurship development (Lián, 2008; Trivedi, 2016; Zhang et al., 2013), while others have reported a statistically insignificant relationship (Oosterbeek et al., 2010). Various internal and external factors have been identified as influencing entrepreneurial success, including effective decision-making, the need for achievement, creativity, institutional support, education and training, and the willingness to become self-employed (Say, 1971; Clennard, 1961; Schumpeter, 1934; Tajeddini and Muller, 2009; Fayolle et al., 2006; Muhammad, 2015). However, EE and entrepreneurial intentions (EI) have remained prominent topics in the entrepreneurship literature.

Theoretical perspectives suggest that education and training programs can have a positive influence on entrepreneurial intentions and subsequent success in entrepreneurship (Lawal & Williams, 2019). When students are exposed to EE, they often develop a desire to pursue successful business ventures. However, empirical studies present mixed results regarding the impact of EE on entrepreneurial intentions (EI).

Some studies have found a significant positive relationship between EE and students' intentions to start their own businesses (e.g., Wu & Wu, 2008; Fayolle et al. 2006; Block et al. 2013; Walter & Dolise, 2012). On the other hand, there are studies that have reported statistically insignificant or even negative effects of EE on EI (e.g., Von-Graeventiz, Harhoff, & Webber, 2010). These conflicting findings can result, in part, from situational factors such as gender, age, and timing (Wilson et al., 2007). A meta-analysis conducted by Rauch & Hulsink (2015) examined 42 independent samples and revealed that EE is generally beneficial for enhancing EI, however, the impact of EE on actual entrepreneurial behavior may not always be consistent or guaranteed.

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Performing Arts as Theatrepreneurs

The Performing Arts (PA) encompass music, dance, and drama, and have a rich historical background that dates back to ancient times. PA holds significant cultural importance, particularly in African societies, where it is deeply intertwined with social events and functions such as festivals, funerals, weddings, and naming ceremonies. PA serves as a means of conveying cultural values and artistic expression, evolving over time to fulfill religious, educational, livelihood, and entertainment purposes. The concept of "theatrepreneur" is a term coined to represent the various careers within the field of PA, including acting, choreography, music, directing, editing, scriptwriting, makeup, cinematography, stage production management, and set design.

EE in PA can be approached through two models: the business model and the professional career model. The business model focuses on teaching students how to create new ventures, similar to EE in business schools. On the other hand, the professional career model prepares PA students for the practical realities they will face outside of academia. While business skills like financial management and marketing are important in PA entrepreneurship, it is argued that they should not overshadow the pedagogical emphasis on creativity and technical skills that PA students acquire through intensive studio experiences. Thus, the professional career model proposed by Beckman (2007) is considered more appropriate for creative and PA students, as it aligns with the nature of the field and contributes to the advancement of creative and performing arts education.

Entrepreneurship Development Programme in Nigeria: A Lagos State University of Science and Technology

Attempts by successive Nigerian governments to eradicate poverty initially focused on the development of large-scale industries based on the traditional economy of scale. Subsequent strategies to alleviate poverty and unemployment ranged from the establishment of the Industrial Development Centers (IDC) Policy in the sixties to the National Accelerated Food Programme and the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) in the seventies. The 1980s and 1990s witnessed programs like Family Support Programs (FSP) and the 1997 Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP). In the 2000s, the Nigerian government implemented programs and policies to eradicate poverty. Examples are the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agencies of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Entrepreneurship and Development Centre (EDC), National Economic Entrepreneurship and Development Strategies (NEEDS), Subsidy Re-investment Programme (SUREP) and Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN).

The foregoing programs imply that the Nigerian government has persistently made efforts toward the reduction of poverty and unemployment; however, it is ironic that in spite of these efforts, the expected results are far from being achieved. Recently, the Nigerian Federal

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Government has visibly underscored the importance of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria's socioeconomic growth by increasing the level of entrepreneurship potential of graduates on the national agenda. Entrepreneurship development has been attracting the interest of policymakers, educators, and development agencies to the extent that EE is mandatory in HEIs and incorporated as a significant component of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) programs.

The Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) was introduced at Lagos State Polytechnic (LASPOTECH), now Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH) in 1991. The program was compulsory for all National Diploma (ND) students and non-LASPOTECH ND graduates in Higher National Diploma (HND). Additionally, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) made EE mandatory and the establishment of an Entrepreneurship Center a prerequisite for institutional accreditation.

In 2009, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Skills Acquisition (CESA) was established at LASUSTECH by the directive of the NBTE. The aim was to instill an entrepreneurial culture among all students, providing them with theoretical and practical knowledge to address the issue of unemployment. The objective was to develop a generation of entrepreneurs equipped with the right mindset and skills to foster creativity, innovation, and enterprise, enabling them to become job creators.

The Centre's vision is to produce entrepreneurs who will contribute to the sustainable growth and development of the Nigerian economy. Its mission is to foster a culture of creativity and innovation, instilling entrepreneurial values in students, staff, and others for self-empowerment and national development. The objectives of the Centre encompass creating and promoting entrepreneurial awareness and opportunities, facilitating career development for economic growth, imparting entrepreneurial skills to students and staff, empowering graduates to become employers, and fostering the development of entrepreneurship in Lagos State and Nigeria as a whole.

In line with the directives of the NBTE, the Centre offers specific courses related to entrepreneurship education:

i. EED126: Introduction to Entrepreneurship
ii. EED216: Practice of Entrepreneurship
iii. EED316: Entrepreneurship Skill Development
iv. EED413: Entrepreneurship Development

The first two courses are taught at the ND level, while the last two are for HND students. The activities of the Centre encompass coordinating and teaching theoretical aspects of entrepreneurship, organizing practical demonstrations in various entrepreneurial fields, conducting community impact initiatives and capacity-building programs, providing career development guidance and counseling, and coordinating entrepreneurship workshops, seminars, and conferences.

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The Centre is committed to vocational training and skills acquisition programs for students, conducting practical classes in selected entrepreneurial fields each semester. Technologists at the Centre facilitate the practical training, and students are expected to choose one skill class and have practical classes for two semesters during their ND program and one semester during their HND program. There are no restrictions on students selecting only one skill, as they can opt for a different skill in subsequent semesters.

Currently, the Centre offers training in thirteen skills, including Drama and Choreography, Music, Tailoring, Events Planning and Decorating, Leatherworks, Catering/Confectioneries, Makeup Artistry, Food Processing, House Paint Production, Bead-making, Hairdressing, and Carpentry.

Efficacy of EE in Performing Arts

In recent years, the field of EE has experienced significant growth, with an expanded range of courses being offered. Entrepreneurship, once primarily associated with business schools, has now become a universal subject. Within the performing arts (PA) domain, EE plays a crucial role in preparing prospective PA professionals for the challenges they may face after graduation. PA entrepreneurs often navigate uncertain career paths that differ from traditional business career patterns. Their careers are characterized by a portfolio approach, involving simultaneous and overlapping engagements such as teaching, performing, and other embedded positions.

Regardless of their chosen career path, EE is essential for PA professionals to achieve desired outcomes, such as creating new ventures and developing entrepreneurial competencies. These competencies are valuable in all types of organisations, including start-ups, government agencies, and even rock music ensembles. Empirical studies have highlighted the effectiveness of EE in the PA field. For example, research has shown that in addition to performance skills, working musicians require entrepreneurial competencies such as marketing, self-promotion, small business management, and opportunity recognition to sustain their careers. (Torscher, 2019)

Similar findings have been observed in developed countries like the UK, Germany, and Denmark, where musicians who are self-employed and juggle multiple professional roles need to adopt various entrepreneurial competencies to support and advance their careers. These studies underscore the importance of integrating EE into the PA discipline to equip aspiring PA entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their multifaceted careers. (Torscher, 2019)

Methodology

This study takes an exploratory approach, utilizing qualitative methods to delve into the perceptions of prospective PA entrepreneurs regarding EE. Qualitative research focuses on

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understanding the meaning and context of phenomena in the social world, rather than relying on frequency or numerical data. It involves immersing researchers in natural social settings to observe and interact with the phenomena under investigation. Qualitative research prioritizes words and narratives to capture the constantly evolving social reality that individuals create.

Qualitative research techniques are employed throughout the data collection and analysis stages. These techniques include focus groups, individual depth interviews (IDIs), case studies, and ethnography, all aimed at capturing rich and detailed insights. The main purpose of this study of adopting these techniques is systematically and empirically explore EE in PA. In the context of this study, interviews with PA actors are conducted to gather the perceptions of prospective PA entrepreneurs regarding the role of EE in achieving their business and professional career goals.

Given that EE in PA is considered an evolving field, qualitative research is crucial for conducting in-depth investigations. Rather than predicting specific phenomena, qualitative research aims to explore and understand them. This approach aligns with the research questions of the study, which seek to gain comprehensive insights into the perceptions of prospective PA entrepreneurs on the role of EE.

Data Collection Sources

Given the relatively limited body of research on PA entrepreneurship, particularly in qualitative terms, this study adopts an exploratory approach to gather relevant insights. To emphasize the exploratory nature, remote interviews were conducted using telephone-mediated communication. Remote interviews offer flexibility compared to traditional face-to-face interviews (Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

Structured interviews were conducted with purposively selected prospective PA entrepreneurs who specialized in skills such as drama and choreography, music, and makeup artistry. The interviews focused on gathering the perceptions of the respondents regarding the effectiveness of EE and the challenges they face. The majority of the interviews were transcribed verbatim for subsequent analysis, with each interview lasting between 15 to 30 minutes. Participants were invited to participate through email inquiries, without any compensation offered. Anonymity was assured to encourage open and honest responses.

The interview schedule was designed specifically for undergraduate and graduate prospective PA entrepreneurs, aiming to identify their characteristics, motivations, major challenges, and needs in their professional and entrepreneurial careers. Sample questions included inquiries about the factors motivating their choice of PA as a professional career, perceived benefits, the prospects they envision, and major challenges faced in career advancement.

In addition to interviews, data collection also involved extensive desk-based research utilising archival sources such as institutional websites and media releases to enhance the

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credibility of findings. Content analysis, a widely used method for both qualitative and quantitative research in management and international business studies, was employed to facilitate data extraction and draw conclusions from various communication sources (Ritchie, 2014).

Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Technique

The study population comprised ND and HND students of Lagos State Polytechnic, Lagos, Nigeria. The selection of this institution was based on its historical significance and reputation as one of the leading vocational institutions, ranking fifth according to the Journal Consortium. Additionally, the institution was an active member of the Commonwealth Association of African Polytechnics (CAPA), which fostered the widespread adoption of EE throughout the institution. The Polytechnic students are required to participate in the Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP), a one-year EE program designed for aspiring entrepreneurs. The program entails comprehensive group training, mentoring, and the acquisition of vocational skills in at least two business ventures.

The data needed for this study encompass the perceptions of prospective PA entrepreneurs regarding the EE programs offered at the institution. These data were collected through interviews and desk research. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, was employed to select participants from the population. This non-probability sampling technique involves selecting sampling units based on the advice of experts or the intuition of the investigators (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). The aim was not to generate a representative sample but rather to capture diverse perspectives. Forty participants were arbitrarily chosen based on their unique experiences. The analytical approach employed in this study is qualitative descriptive analysis, which aims to determine the perceptions of prospective PA entrepreneurs regarding EE.

Results

Following the completion of the interview schedule, the collected responses were subjected to a rigorous data validation process through separate content analysis. This content analysis technique, as outlined by Krippendorff (2012) is commonly employed in qualitative research to analyse written and recorded materials obtained from personal expressions by the participants. Cooper and Schinder (2014) emphasize the significance of content analysis in qualitative research, while Ajai and Kumar (2018) note its popularity in management and international business research, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The researchers opted for this method due to its effectiveness in extracting data and drawing meaningful conclusions from various communication tools (Ritchie, 2014). The utilization of content analysis in management studies has been on the rise in recent years (Krippendorff, 2004; Duriau, Reger, & Pfarrer, 2007).

The objective of the content analysis conducted in this study was to identify recurrent themes within the data. The researchers employed a thematic analysis approach to synthesize the findings and provide an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and perspectives of

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prospective PA entrepreneurs regarding the effectiveness of EE.

Respondents Characteristics

Prior to analysing the effectiveness of EE in PA, it is essential to examine the demographic characteristics of the prospective PA entrepreneurs included in the sample. Table 1 presents the biographical data of the respondents:

Table 1 Demographic statistics of Respondents - Undergraduates 20 and Graduates 20 Performing Arts Entrepreneurs (Theatrepreneurs)

S/N	Profit of Respondents	Frequency	Frequency %
	Gender		
	Male	19	47.5%
	Female	21	52.5%
	Age		
	Below 20	05	12.5%
	20 – 25	19	47.5%
	25 – 30	13	32.5%
	Above 30	3	7.5%
	Schools		
	Mass Communication	20	50%
	Environmental Sciences	06	15%
	Management Sciences	12	30%
	Natural Sciences	02	5%
	Areas of specialization*		
	Acting	17	34%
	Choreography	06	12%
	Music	04	8%
	Directing	06	12%
	Editing	03	6%
	Scriptwriting	03	6%
	Make-up	03	6%
	Cinematography	03	6%
	Stage/Production Management	03	6%
	Set design	02	4%

*Participants opted for two or three PA areas of specialization

The characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 4.1. The table highlights the diverse range of fields and interests represented among the 40 survey participants. The distribution of participants across fields is as follows: mass communication (50 percent), management sciences (30 percent), environmental sciences (15 percent), and natural sciences (5 percent). Engineering was not included in the sample. Furthermore, the age of the participants in the sample ranged from 21 to 30 years, and there was adequate gender representation.

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Reasons for Venturing into Performing Arts Entrepreneurship

Table 2 presents the reasons provided by our survey participants for venturing into PA. The findings indicate that the sampled students were motivated by personal career development, including factors such as passion, career growth, and the realization of their vision. Notably, financial incentives were not identified as significant reasons among the respondents. This suggests that their motivation to pursue PA was driven more by intrinsic factors than external rewards. Moreover, all participants exhibited a strong sense of motivation and self-direction in acquiring PA skills, as evidenced by their dedication and commitment to their PA careers. They expressed a willingness to engage in work-study arrangements and collaborate with like-minded peers in their pursuit of PA entrepreneurship.

Table 2: Motivation for Entrepreneurship Education in Performing Arts

Motivation for Undergraduates	
• Love from childhood	• Likeness for public acting
• Interest in PA	• Career advancement
• Passion for PA	• Opportunity to actualize my dream
• To boost inherent talent	• Source of happiness and joy for its fulfillment

Furthermore, the interview schedule included a thematic analysis of undergraduate motivations for venturing into PA. This analysis aimed to capture the key themes that emerged from the interviews and provide a comprehensive summary of the participants' motivations for pursuing PA. Some of the emerging remarks include:

> "…..I choose performing arts because I have a passion for it. I find joy anytime I am in the theatre. I believe I am born to be an actress. I really have a passion for acting and entertainment generally….."

Understanding the factors that drive students to pursue entrepreneurship is crucial for fostering entrepreneurial behaviors (Kuratko, 2005; Storen, 2014). It provides insights into the triggers that inspire students to engage in entrepreneurial activities and enables the development of effective policies and programs to promote and sustain entrepreneurship (Hessels, Van Gelderen, & Thurnik, 2008). Motivation plays a key role in entrepreneurship and is influenced by individuals' ambitions, internal motives, and values (Driessen & Zwart, 2007). It is important to recognize that knowledge and skills alone are insufficient without the necessary motivation to apply them effectively.

Perceived Benefits Derivable from Performing Arts

Table 3 presents the perceived benefits of PA as reported by our survey participants. The findings highlight those respondents identified several benefits, including talent development, confidence building, and professional and personal growth. Interestingly, financial benefits were not emphasised in their responses. This suggests that the participants valued the non-

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monetary aspects of PA, focusing more on the development of their skills and personal attributes.

Table 3: Perceived Benefits Derivable from Performing Arts

Perceived Benefits for Undergraduates	Perceived Benefits for Graduates
• Learned how to face the audience • Confidence on stage (no stage fright again • Learned a lot in terms of acting and improving the chanting talent • Exposure in terms of public performances to perform or show • The lectures received are awesome • Experienced how to dance and on the job generally • Helped the level of seriousness positively • Learned to be bold and courageous • Being able to learn other dances from other people's tribes or culture • Learning new things • A great source of influence for aspiring theatre persons (would be artistic) • Source of inspiration • Added advantage when other successful practitioners interact with us • Can now teach people a little about theatre • Interest in development in PA • Nurtured for the future/ belief to do well in theatre	• Becoming professional artists • Learned a lot in the field of theatre • Gaining knowledge of stage and theatre tricks • Exposed to other ethnic cultures in Nigeria • Know the acting norms • Know the art of costuming • Many opportunities to showcase talents • Improvement in potential and talents • Knowing how to be a team player since the theatre is a collaborative art • A right step to the career path • One is better than before

The benefits of Entrepreneurship Education (EE) in the Performing Arts (PA), as expressed by both undergraduate and postgraduate participants, encompass personal development and social and cultural advantages. Notably, economic benefits were not emphasised in their responses. One undergraduate respondent eloquently articulated the benefits of EE in PA, stating:

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"…..I have learned a lot in EED's D'Theatrepreneurs. I learned how to face the audience (boldness) when on stage. Before I did not have confidence on stage. I also have to know that acting on stage is more engaging than acting in a movie. I derived my confidence from acting on stage and found out later that I now know many things I did not know before….."

Similarly, a graduate respondent was highlighted in the thematic content of benefits of venturing into PA:

"…..I have been exposed to different facilitations and was able to work with different people as a group and individual….."

Challenges of Prospective Performing Arts Entrepreneurs

Table 4 presents the major challenges, in which our content analysis identified five themes in the survey responses. Time management, financial constraint, adaptation to PA environment, ethical and personal style. This result should not be surprising since our survey respondents value their professional careers in PA.

Table 4: Challenges of Prospective Performing Arts Entrepreneurs

Challenges for Undergraduates	**Challenges for Graduates**
• Time for rehearsals clashing with other courses • At times, money for transport to and from rehearsals • Lack of charisma, audibility, and voice for music • Getting distracted easily • Memorization of lines and actors needs a memory • Living a far distance from school, so coming to rehearsal punctually transport issues • Trying to blend the training with major courses	• Everybody was a fast learner so time for rehearsal is prolonged and that could be stressful we need to do it since the theatre is a collaboration art • It is cost and time demanding • No sex for no role as it is applicable in some places

A response on the challenges of Theatrepreneurs from one of the undergraduate respondents reveals the limitation imposed by inadequate funds and time on the attainment of a professional career as follows:

"…..Without money and time, it is very difficult for me to focus on my art As such, the lack of money and time has a negative effect on artists' career advancement. In addition, I will say the challenge is the stress of what I passed through in achieving the task ahead of us that needed to be achieved then. Time was the major bane. Not everybody is a fast

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learner, so we needed time for rehearsals coupled with time for other lectures. Preparation for the stage production is time taking….."

A graduate PA entrepreneur reported stiff competition as a major challenge in the PA industry as clearly summarized:

"…..There is a challenge on the issue of competition because there are a lot of performers out there so you need to know how to do things differently to create a niche for yourself and this is not always easy. It is also not easy to get sponsors, so the financial constraint is another challenge….."

Ethical Practices Promoted by Entrepreneurship in Performing Arts

The increasing prevalence of unethical practices within the performance arts industry poses significant challenges to the career progression of graduate theatrepreneurs. To address this issue, several initiatives have been implemented to promote ethical conduct in the industry. These initiatives are outlined in Table 5:

Table 5: Ethical Practices Promoted by Performing Arts Entrepreneurs

Ethical Practices By Graduates	
• Trying to blend the training with major ethical courses • Promotion of culture • Appearance of culture/Preservation of culture • Evangelization/Ministration geared • towards winning souls back for Christ • Decency/good dress code/discourage • indecency • Correction of vices in the society • Using P A to achieve national unity in Nigeria • Sensitization of youths on illegal migration	• Encouraging optimism • Developing moral uprightness • Discipline and hardworking • Humanity • Repositioning of government institutions like the police force • Motivational towards lending helping hands to others in the society • Promotion of stage drama tradition

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From Table 5, PA entrepreneurs have been actively promoting Nigerian cultural heritage and unity. A graduate entrepreneur summarized his involvement in promoting African culture as follows:

> "…...What I promote, first, decency, I am an African and we should be moderate. I also promote that culture though I don't go into the diabolic aspect but I talk about our ways of dressing and the like. In addition, the gospel….."

Performing Arts and Government Policies

PA is influenced by environmental constraints, particularly government policies, programs, and directives. These constraints are designed to regulate PA activities. Table 6 summarizes these constraints.

Table 6: Government Policies Affecting Performing Arts

Government Policies
• To boost talent you cannot shoot in some areas
• Drones are not allowed in some areas
• Police harassment because of appearance e.g. tinted hair
• Payment for copyright leads to idea theft
• Getting copyright procedure is rigorous

Government formulates policies to facilitate and regulate PA. Some of these regulations may impede the performance of PA entrepreneurs. A female PA entrepreneur commenting on the impact of government policies remarked thus:

> "…..I have not come across any of such policies although I was working with someone of recently at Lekki to my utmost surprise, we were told that we could not use drones in the area. I don't know if it is the government or the community that made the law. There are even, some places where you cannot shoot. We were still able to shoot what we want to shoot though. I learn that the government made a law that proscribed shooting in some areas….."

Future Prospects for Prospecting Performing Arts Entrepreneurs

Finally, during our interview, participants were asked about their prospects in PA careers. The majority of respondents expressed positive outlooks for the future in the field of PA. In fact, all participants, except for one, expressed a desire to pursue Professional Theatre Art. Furthermore, some respondents had already begun engaging in Nollywood activities and had registered as members of the Theatre Arts and Motion Pictures Practitioners of Nigeria (TAMPAN).

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Based on the promising future prospects of PA, participants shared valuable advice for aspiring entrepreneurs considering a career in PA. Their suggestions emphasised the importance of perseverance, consistency, drive, focus, moral integrity, knowledge of the industry, resilience, hard work, and humility. One particular participant, a thirty-year-old graduate, offered the following advice for upcoming PA entrepreneurs:

They should persevere. There are a lot of things that you might want but some challenges will hinder the attainment of these goals. You have to keep on pushing. There will be people who will promise you sponsorship especially if you are female, but nothing will be forthcoming at the end of it. Another thing is to know what exactly they want to do or promote in their content; is it culture, religion, etc.?

Implication

Lastly, it is important to acknowledge and address the limitations of our study. Firstly, our empirical investigation focused exclusively on National Diploma and Higher National Diploma graduates and undergraduates from Lagos State Polytechnic in Lagos, Nigeria. This limited scope restricts the generalizability of our findings to a broader population. Therefore, further research is needed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic across the entire country.

Second, the study was conducted on a small scale with a limited sample size and within a relatively short timeframe. Additionally, our research specifically targeted undergraduate and graduate prospective entrepreneurs. Expanding the sample size and extending the duration of the study would contribute to enhancing the generalizability and reliability of the findings.

By acknowledging these limitations, we recognize the need for future research endeavors to overcome these constraints and provide a more comprehensive and robust understanding of the topic at hand.

Conclusion

Our analysis of interviews with forty prospective entrepreneurs has provided valuable insights into their perceptions of the effectiveness of EE in PA. It is noteworthy that all participants chose PA not primarily for financial gain but for the purpose of self-actualization. This finding aligns with the notion put forth by Eikhof and Haunschild (2006) that Creative and Performing Arts students often prioritize creative fulfillment over monetary rewards by embracing a bohemian lifestyle.

Interestingly, financial incentives were not mentioned as a significant benefit of entrepreneurship in PA during the interviews. Instead, personal development emerged as a predominant theme in the respondents' answers. Our analysis also identified time management, lack of adequate funds, and various personal factors as major challenges hindering the participants' ability to achieve their professional development goals in PA. However, the study also revealed promising prospects for PA, as most respondents expressed confidence in their acceptance within the PA industry.

Prospective P A entrepreneurs are operating within the Nigerian environment are faced with unique, complex, and deeper challenges creating the need for the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies imperative. EE will enable this category of entrepreneurs to maintain a livelihood.

In conclusion, our findings suggest that graduate entrepreneurs in the PA field possess an entrepreneurial mindset that differs from the general mindset. While traditional approaches to EE primarily focus on producing employable graduates, EE in PA should go beyond financial considerations and concentrate on fostering creative, reflective, strategic, and analytical thinking about artistic practices and their broader impact on the cultural landscape. This shift in paradigm is crucial for successful EE in PA. It requires creating an enabling environment that addresses the challenges impeding effective EE in the field.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares that no financial, professional, or personal conflicts of interest influenced the conduct or publication of this study.

Data availability

Data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Ethics declaration

Formal ethics committee approval was not obtained for this study. All research activities were nevertheless undertaken in accordance with established ethical standards. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality and privacy were maintained throughout the research process.

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