

Entrepreneurial Intention Among Senior High School Students in the Sunyani Municipality

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ABSTRACT: Most policymakers and academics agree that entrepreneurship is critical to the development and well-being of society. Entrepreneurs create jobs. They drive and shape innovation, speeding up structural changes in the economy. By introducing new competition, they contribute indirectly to productivity. Entrepreneurship is thus a catalyst for economic growth and national competitiveness. While there has been significant research on the causes of entrepreneurial propensity, only a limited number of studies have focused on the entrepreneurial intent among students (especially Senior High School students). Currently, in Ghana graduate unemployment has become an albatross around the necks of the average school leaver in particular and the society in general. Graduate unemployment has increased the already high dependency syndrome and many believe entrepreneurship is the number one medicine to this unfortunate situation. 42-item questions were used to assess the entrepreneurial intention. Two mixed and two single-sex institutions in the Sunyani municipality were studied. The sample size for the study was 499 for the four (4) institutions. Data was analyzed via SPSS-17.0. The study seeks: to identify the impact of family business on entrepreneurial intention; to assess the students' perception on the impact of education on entrepreneurial intention; to identify the risk-taking propensity of senior high school (SHS) students in the Sunyani Municipality; to compare males' entrepreneurial intentions with females; to examine SHS students' orientation towards entrepreneurship. It is believed that the ideal stage to acquire basic knowledge about entrepreneurship and to foster a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship is during childhood and adolescence years. Generally, entrepreneurial intention among SHS students in the Sunyani municipality is high according to this study.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; Senior High School students; Entrepreneurial intention

JEL Classifications: MOO; M1

1. Introduction

Most policymakers and academics agree that entrepreneurship is critical to the development and well-being of society. Entrepreneurs create jobs. They drive and shape innovation, speeding up structural changes in the economy. By introducing new competition, they contribute indirectly to productivity. Entrepreneurship is thus a catalyst for economic growth and national competitiveness (GEM 2010). Entrepreneurship, touted by economists in the Schumpeterian tradition for over a century, has been rediscovered as a potential catalyst for technological progress (Schumpeter 1934;

Baumol 1986). It is becoming increasingly clear that economic policy reforms in Ghana cannot be successful without strengthening entrepreneurship.

Well endowed with natural resources, Ghana has attained the middle lower income status. Gold, timber, and cocoa production and recently crude oil are major sources of foreign exchange but Ghana remains heavily dependent on international financial and technical assistance; and this dependency has consistently featured in the country's Annual Budget statement.

While there has been significant research on the causes of entrepreneurial propensity (Learned, 1992; Brandstatter, 1997, cited in Amofah, 2006), only a limited number of studies have focused on the entrepreneurial intent among students (especially SHS students).

Ghana is currently in a crossroad, as graduate unemployment has become an albatross around the necks of the average school leaver in particular and the government in general. Graduate unemployment has increased the already high dependency syndrome and it is believed that entrepreneurship is the number one medicine to this unfortunate situation. Thus Ghana's prosperity is highly dependent on a dynamic entrepreneurship sector. As the Bible puts it, 'Train up a child the way he should go and when he grows he will not depart from it'.

The study sought;

- i. To identify the impact of family business on entrepreneurial intention
- ii. To assess the students' perception with respect to the impact of education on entrepreneurial intention
- iii. To identify the risk-taking propensity of SHS students in the Sunyani Municipality
- iv. To compare males' entrepreneurial intentions with females'
- v. To examine SHS students' orientation towards entrepreneurship

Hypotheses on Entrepreneurial Intention

It is hypothesized in the study that:

H₁: The level of interest in entrepreneurship in males is higher than females.

H₂: Students with a family background in starting business are more likely to be interested in entrepreneurship.

H₃: Single-sex institutions are more entrepreneurial than mixed institutions.

H₄: School Prefects are more entrepreneurial than Non-Prefects

2. Literature Review

According to Bird (1988) intentions models that focus on attitudes and their antecedents have been proposed to better explain the entrepreneurial process. Davidson (1995) cited in Amofah (2006) related personal variables including age, gender, education, vicarious experience and experiences of change to a variety of attitudes that influenced conviction and entrepreneurial intentions.

Entrepreneurship development in primary and secondary schools has received growing attention (Kourilsky, 1995) because students have expressed a desire to participate in, entrepreneurship education programs. It is believed that the ideal stage to acquire basic knowledge about entrepreneurship and to foster a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship is during childhood and adolescence years (Filion, 1994). Recognizing that starting a business is an intentional act holds substantial implications for this study because intentions models offer an opportunity to increase one's ability to explain and predict entrepreneurial activity.

Intentions are also an unbiased predictor of action (Bagozzi et al., 1989), even where time lags exist. A strong intention to start a business result in an eventual attempt, even if immediate circumstances such as marriage, child bearing, finishing school, a lucrative or rewarding job, or earthquakes dictate a long delay. Subsequently, if the entrepreneurial intention is known, then perhaps some structures can be put in place for their dreams to be materialised.

Understanding intentions helps researchers and theoreticians to understand related phenomena. These include: what triggers opportunity scanning, the sources of ideas for a business venture, and how the venture ultimately becomes a reality. Intention models can describe how entrepreneurial training moulds intentions in subsequent venture creation.

Promoting entrepreneurial intentions by promoting public perceptions of feasibility and desirability is not just desirable; promoting entrepreneurial intentions is also thoroughly feasible.

In less developed countries, the encouragement of entrepreneurial activities is recommended as a way to stimulate economic growth (Harper, 1991). Consequently, national incentive and

education programs designed to stimulate new venture development have been instituted by the governments of a large number of Asian and Latin American countries as well as in the transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe (Gibb, 1993). Ghana obviously needs to learn something from these economies.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Setting

The Brong Ahafo Region, formerly a part of the Ashanti Region, was created in April 1959. It covers an area of 39,557 square kilometres and shares boundaries with the Northern Region to the north, the Ashanti and Western Regions to the south, the Volta Region to the east, the Eastern Region to the southeast and La Cote d'Ivoire to the west. It has 22 administrative districts, with Sunyani as the regional capital. Sunyani municipality has 8 Senior High Schools and 2 vocational and technical institutions. But the student population of the 8 SHS would be approximately 7000.

3.2. Research Design

A recognizance tour was done among the 8 SHS institutions in the Sunyani municipality and 4 were randomly selected. A descriptive approach was used to describe in detail the analysis and presentation of results of the study.

3.3. Sampling procedure

The stratified sampling technique was used to group the institutions into mixed and single sex. This was to ensure that different institutions that exist in the municipality were included in the study. The students in the four institutions formed the sampling unit for this study. The target population was the students in the 8 institutions in the Sunyani municipality. The survey population for the study was drawn from a list of institutions in Brong Ahafo region of Ghana which were obtained from the Ghana Education Service and this constituted the sampling frame from which the study population was obtained.

The stratified sampling technique was used to select the sample size because the population consisted of a number of subgroups that differed in their characteristics. Thus, in order to obtain an adequate sample, a multi-stage sampling procedure was used. At the first stage, the stratified sampling technique was used to categorise the institutions into mixed and single-sex institutions. At the second stage of sampling, two mixed and two single-sex organisations were randomly selected from the sampling frame. Stage three of the sampling involved random selection of the students from each institution. The total population for the 4 institutions for the study was given as follows; Twene Amanfo SHS -1500, Sunyani Senior High School-1943, St James Seminary-750 and Notre Dame Girls SHS-579. The sample size of 499 respondents was purposefully selected from the 4772 students to specifically provide information that would be relevant to the data collection. Out of the total respondents of 499 respondents, the breakdown was as follows; 105 students from Twene Amanfo SHS, 188 students from SUSEC, 108 students from Saint James Seminary and 98 from Notre Dame Girls.

3.4. Data collection tool

A questionnaire was the only tool which was used to collect data and the design of the questionnaire was preceded by a critical theoretical review on theories of entrepreneurial intention. The questionnaire instrument was pre-tested to determine the attitudes and behaviour of respondents toward the structuring and wording of questions and also to find out whether the questionnaire items would be able to bring forth the required responses.

3.5. Fieldwork

Access to the research sites is one of the ethical requirements which often receive insufficient attention in research. In Ghana, institutions have specific regulations which govern the conduct of research and the release of information to non-employees. Thus, permission to study the organisations was sought from the school authorities, and approval was given. To ensure confidentiality and avoid being ridiculed by colleagues for giving certain information, and one's answer influencing the other, the authors personally supervised the exercise by promoting independent responses. The authors did field editing by checking that all questions were answered and clearly marked.

3.6. Self-administered questionnaire

This method was used to elicit information relevant to the study from students because they were educated and could read, understand and respond to the questions. The questionnaires were hand-

delivered which enabled the exact respondents to receive and fill them out appropriately. In addition, the method gave respondents a high degree of confidence and a sense of privacy.

3.7. Data Analysis

This consisted of editing and data entry. All the items in the questionnaire were coded after the office editing. The SPSS for Windows software was used to key in the data. The computer editing was done as soon as the keying of the data was completed. Due to the nature of the variables (nominal values), descriptive analysis was the main tool used for the interpretation of data. The analysis and presentation of results showed absolute figures of respondents with the corresponding percentages in brackets.

4. Results and Testing of Hypotheses

Table 1 shows the breakdown and the distribution of respondents by Institutions, departments, programme, year, gender and position. The table did not show the breakdown of respondents by age group because the average age was 18 years.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	293	58.7
Female	206	41.3
Total	499	100.0
INSTITUTION		
Twene Amanfo	105	21.0
SUSEC	188	37.7
Saint James Seminary	108	21.6
Notre Dame Girls SHS	98	19.6
Total	499	100.0
PROGRAMME		
Science	115	23.0
Visual Arts	27	5.4
Business	146	29.3
Home Economics	40	8.0
VOTEC	31	6.2
General Arts	118	23.6
Agric	22	4.4
Total	499	100.0
YEAR		
2	104	20.8
3	89	17.8
4	306	61.3
Total	499	100.0
POSITION		
Prefects	253	50.7
Non-Prefects	246	49.3
Total	499	100.0

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

Table 2. Locus of Control Scale

1. Whether or not I am successful in life depends mostly on my ability				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	48 (16.4%)	36 (12.3%)	209 (71.3%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	27 (13.1%)	31 (15.0%)	148 (71.8%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	75 (15.0%)	67 (13.4%)	357 (71.5%)	499 (100.0%)
2. I feel that what happens in my life is mostly determined by people in powerful positions				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	162 (55.3%)	63 (21.5%)	68 (23.2%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	128 (62.1%)	40 (19.4%)	38 (18.4%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	75 (15.0%)	67 (13.4%)	357 (71.5%)	499 (100.0%)
3. My success depends on whether I am lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	94 (32.1%)	50 (17.1%)	149 (50.9%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	72 (35.0%)	38 (18.4%)	96 (46.6%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	166 (33.3%)	88 (17.6%)	245 (49.1%)	499 (100.0%)
4. To a great extent my life is controlled by accidental happenings				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	163 (55.6%)	82 (28.0%)	48 (16.4%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	119 (57.8%)	54 (26.2%)	33 (16.0%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	282 (56.5%)	136 (27.3%)	81 (16.2%)	499 (100.0%)
5. When I get what I want, it is usually because I am lucky				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	158 (53.9%)	56 (19.1%)	79 (27.0%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	84 (40.8%)	41 (19.9%)	81 (39.3%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	242 (48.5%)	97 (19.4%)	160 (32.1%)	499 (100.0%)
6. My life is determined by my own actions				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	30 (10.2%)	23 (7.8%)	240 (81.9%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	20 (9.7%)	17 (8.3%)	169 (82.0%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	50 (10.0%)	40 (8.0%)	409 (82.0%)	499 (100.0%)
7. When I get what I want, it is usually because I worked hard for it				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	44 (15.0%)	38 (13.0%)	211 (72.0%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	32 (15.5%)	24 (11.7%)	150 (72.8%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	76 (15.2%)	62 (12.4%)	361 (72.3%)	499 (100.0%)
8. I feel in control of my life				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	58 (19.8%)	58 (19.8%)	177 (60.4%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	52 (25.2%)	43 (20.9%)	111 (53.9%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	110 (22.0%)	101 (20.2%)	288 (57.7%)	499 (100.0%)
9. Success in business is mostly a matter of luck				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	158 (53.9%)	72 (24.6%)	63 (21.5%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	104 (50.5%)	43 (20.9%)	59 (28.6%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	262 (52.5%)	115 (23.0%)	122 (24.4%)	499 (100.0%)
10. It is not wise for me to plan too far ahead, because things turn out to be a matter of bad fortune				
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Total
Male	173 (59.0%)	57 (19.5%)	63 (21.5%)	293 (100.0%)
Female	131 (63.6%)	39 (18.9%)	36 (17.5%)	206 (100.0%)
Total	304 (60.9%)	96 (19.2%)	99 (19.8%)	499 (100.0%)

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

Table 3. Innovativeness Scale

I often surprise people with my new and different ideas		
	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	55	11.0
Neither agree	79	15.8
Agree	365	73.1
Total	499	100
People often ask me for help in creative activities		
Disagree	84	16.8
Neither agree	86	17.2
Agree	329	65.9
Total	499	100
I obtain more satisfaction from mastering a skill than coming up with a new		
Disagree	172	34.5
Neither agree	116	23.2
Agree	211	42.3
Total	499	100
I prefer work that requires original thinking		
Disagree	84	16.8
Neither agree	95	19.0
Agree	320	64.1
Total	499	100

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

Table 4. Entrepreneurship and Education

	My school teaches students about entrepreneurship and starting a business				Entrepreneurship can be developed through education			
	Yes	No	Dont know	Total	Yes	No	Dont know	Total
Twene Amanfo SHS	67 63.8%	19 18.1%	19 18.1%	105 100.0%	99 94.3%	6 5.7%	0 .0%	105 100.0%
SUSEC	133 70.7%	35 18.6%	20 10.6%	188 100.0%	168 89.4%	13 6.9%	7 3.7%	188 100.0%
Saint James Seminary	60 55.6%	35 32.4%	13 12.0%	108 100.0%	102 94.4%	4 3.7%	2 1.9%	108 100.0%
Notre Dame Girls SHS	66 67.3%	25 25.5%	7 7.1%	98 100.0%	85 86.7%	7 7.1%	6 6.1%	98 100.0%
Total	326 65.3%	114 22.8%	59 11.8%	499 100.0%	454 91.0%	30 6.0%	15 3.0%	499 100.0%

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

Table 5. Need for Achievement Scale

I will do very well in fairly difficult task relating to my study				
	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Total
Male	39 13.3%	71 24.2%	183 62.5%	293 100.0%
Female	30 14.6%	33 16.0%	143 69.4%	206 100.0%
Total	69 13.8%	104 20.8%	326 65.3%	499 100.0%
I will try hard to improve on past work performance				
Male	29 9.9%	21 7.2%	243 82.9%	293 100.0%
Female	15 7.3%	7 3.4%	184 89.3%	206 100.0%
Total	44 8.8%	28 5.6%	427 85.6%	499 100.0%
I will try hard to perform better than my friends				
Male	26 8.9%	23 7.8%	244 83.3%	293 100.0%
Female	14 6.8%	13 6.3%	179 86.9%	206 100.0%
Total	40 8.0%	36 7.2%	423 84.8%	499 100.0%

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

Majority of the respondents 353(70.7%) of the respondents perceived an entrepreneur to be a person who owned a small business; 36(7.2%) -A manager of a large corporation; 7(1.4%) - a government official running a regulatory agency; 63(12.6) -some /combination/all; 40(8) -none of the above.

Majority-340 (68.1%) of the respondents was of the opinion that money is the main motivator for entrepreneurs and although money is the main factor that drives entrepreneurs to act, but in fact the most important in business is the idea. Ideas lead to creating the product and sales of this good make profit.

6. Discussion

Students' perception on the impact of education on entrepreneurial intention

Walstad (1998) argues that the impact of entrepreneurship education has been recognized as one of the crucial factors that help youths to understand and foster an entrepreneurial attitude. Many researchers, academics and commentators on entrepreneurship now say the 'nature versus nurture debate is over' and that entrepreneurship can be a learned set of competences and this certainly poses a new challenge to individuals follow their apparent desire to run their own business stakeholders in the educational sector (Bolton and Thompson, 2004). It is refreshing to note that majority (91.0%) of the respondents were of the opinion that entrepreneurship could be developed through education. Also,

65.3% of the respondents indicated that their various schools taught them about entrepreneurship (refer to Table 4).

Table 6. H3: Single-sex institutions are more entrepreneurial than mixed institutions.

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Significance value
Pearson Chi-Square	14.711(a)	9	0.10

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

Entrepreneurship swing between single sex students and mix schools favoured the single sex schools. A test of which group will be more willing to take risk of doing their own business proved that the single sex students were in favour of doing their own business. The study conducted a hypothesis to ascertain which category will be willing to venture against those who will not. At 5% significance level, the data supported at 3 degrees freedom that the single sex schools would be more willing compared to the mixed sex schools. This is indicated in the Table 6 showing 0.1 as the significance level which is greater than 0.05 used to test the hypothesis. The risk-taking variable was used because it is one of the essential features of entrepreneurial characteristics and consequently of entrepreneurial education. The issue of risk is central to the study of entrepreneurial behaviour and performance, but risk-taking propensity does not distinguish between successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs (Brockhaus, 1980).

Table 7. H4: School Prefects are more entrepreneurial than Non-Prefects

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Significance value
Pearson Chi-Square	0.820	2	0.66

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

The study also assessed the relationship between student leaders and their desire to be entrepreneurs. The data indicated by frequency that most student leaders in school are willing to take up initiatives after school. A further, test on the significance of this assertion was conducted using the chi-square test at 5% significance level and the results showed at 2 degrees of freedom that there was correlation between leaders and non-student leaders. A computed 0.66 significance level supported the hypothesis that prefects in SHS are more likely to take initiatives as entrepreneurs compared to those who do not take up any leadership position whiles in school.

Family business and entrepreneurship

Table 8. H2: Students with a family background in starting business are more likely to be interested in entrepreneurship

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	7.125	4	0.129

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

A test of the relationship between entrepreneurial acumen and family business was further conducted using a chi-square test at 4 degrees of freedom and 5% significance level. The results can be interpreted thus; given a test at 5% significance level if $p_{computed} < p - value (0.05)$ the data failed to support the null hypothesis and if it is greater the data would have supported the null hypothesis. In this study the result computed a p - value of 0.13 (table above) which is far greater than 5 percent (0.05), it can thus be concluded that the data supported the hypotheses that the students whose families own business are more inclined to entrepreneurship compared to the folks whose families do not own business. Studies examining the impact of family background on entrepreneurship have explored the extent to which having a parent who is self-employed can affect entrepreneurial propensity in offspring (Cooper and Dunkleburg 1987; Davidsson, 1995). Growing up in a family business should provide dramatic developmental influences. A family firm should strongly influence its family

members, especially children, in their perceptions of entrepreneurship and could shape their career plans (Katz, 1992).

Males' entrepreneurial intentions with females

Table 9. H1: The level of interest in entrepreneurship in males is higher than females.

	Managing a new company			Starting a new business		
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.884(a)	3	0.597	2.019(a)	2	0.364

Source: Field Survey, October 2011

A test of the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial insight was conducted using a chi-square test at 3 degrees of freedom and 5% significance level. The results revealed that, there was a significant relationship between gender and respondents' quest to be entrepreneurs. The data in this study showed a p - value of 0.13 (Table 9) which is far greater than 5 percent (0.05), the results can thus be interpreted that the data supported the hypotheses that the males students in SHS are more predispose to entrepreneurship compared to the feminine counterparts, and will be willing to venture into new business compared to their female folks. To support this assertion, a further test on starting a new business indicated that the males in SHS will be more willing to start their own businesses compared to the females. This is consistent with a study by Amofah (2006) that students who reported higher entrepreneurial intentions tended to be males rather than females. Males were more likely than females to be potential entrepreneurs as well as risk takers. However, according to GEM (2010), women's participation in entrepreneurship relative to men ranges from a ratio of 120:100 in Ghana.

Need For Achievement and Entrepreneurial Intention

The personality trait theory (Kristiansen and Indarti, 2004) suggests individuals with a high need for achievement have a strong desire to be successful and are thus more likely to behave entrepreneurially as a consequence (McClelland, 1961). A correct response in this variable means the individual has the following qualities: forward looking, self sufficient, optimistic rather than pessimistic, task orientated, results orientated, restless and energetic, self confident, persistent and determined, dedication to completing a task; and as depicted on Table 5, it can be said the SHS students have these qualities.

Locus of Control and Entrepreneurial Intention

According to Hisrich and Peters (1998), locus of control should be understood as an attribute indicating the sense of control that a person has over life. Peoples with internal locus of control often are more achievement oriented than those with external locus of control. To determine the degree to which respondents perceive success and failure as being contingent on his or her personal initiatives, a ten item scale adapted from Rotter (1996) and providing a three structured choices: Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, of which respondents were to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree. It could be deduced from the study (see Table 2) that the respondents registered a positive score on this scale ie: take advantage of opportunities, discount fate, make their own luck, self confident, believe in controlling their own destiny, equate results with effort, and show considerable determination. It should be noted that the Red indicates a negative (wrong) response and Blue indicates a positive (right) response.

Innovativeness

Innovation is one of the enduring characteristics of entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1987). To determine the degree of innovativeness seven items scale adapted from Jackson Personality Inventory as found in Jackson (1994) was used, as to the extent to which respondents agree or disagree. Generally, the SHS students are highly innovative as indicated on Table 3.

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

The research findings are interesting, revealing and promising, and contain several implications and food for thought for policy-makers and stakeholders as a whole.

Based on the findings it can be concluded that the general entrepreneurial intention among SHS students in the Sunyani municipality is high and encouraging. However, further studies can be

done by considering variables like family income of respondents on entrepreneurial intention; students of vocational and technical institutions, how teachers SHS can stimulate entrepreneurial intention among the students.

There is need to incorporate entrepreneurship into educational curriculum of the SHS in Ghana. Students would have to be enlightened more on the concept of who an entrepreneur is since they provided a narrow connotation of the term. For instance majority-70.7% of the respondents saw an entrepreneur to be somebody that owned a small business.

The empowerment of the girl-child must be intensified to bring them to the level of their male counterparts, in order to realise the Millennium Development Goal 3. There is the need to have role models and mentors for the students in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The institutional heads and other stakeholders can help in this direction.

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