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A comparative Study of the Entrepreneurial Characteristics of Architecture and Building Students:

Evidences from a Developing Economy

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Abstract

Nigeria like every other nation is in a race to achieve vision 2020. One of the goals articulated by the National Technical Working Group on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is to increase entrepreneurship and raise employment contribution to 60 percent by 2015 & 80 percent by 2020. The number of entrepreneurs in a country can be increased by several means including education. However, entrepreneurship had been considered a subject mainly for students with a predominantly business background. Nowadays, entrepreneurship is gaining much ground even among other disciplines with a non- business background. The aim of this research is to compare the entrepreneurial characteristics of architecture and building students of Covenant University, Nigeria. Students responded to a 10-item questionnaire. Mann-Whitney test was used to test the hypothesis of the study. The findings revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between the entrepreneurial characteristics of creativity, self-confidence /awareness, risk - taking propensity and need for achievement of architecture and building students. The findings also revealed that most of the students have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. Although Covenant University is already empowering all its graduates entrepreneurially to contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of the country, it is suggested that government should put institutional frameworks in place that would drive the teaching of entrepreneurial courses in other higher institutions of learning so as to facilitate the achievement of its goal of increasing entrepreneurship by 2020.

Keywords –architecture, building, entrepreneurship, Nigeria, students

INTRODUCTION

Background

Entrepreneurship is usually associated with innovation and new venture creation (Nabi et al., 2006; Kuip and Verheul, 2003). Entrepreneurship can also be present within existing organizations and even outside the business environment. In such situations it is referred to as intrapreneurship (Edwards et al, 2009).

The benefits of entrepreneurship cannot be over emphasized. Entrepreneurship plays a more vital role in developing countries where it can be used to reduce the socio-economic problem of unemployment that governments battle with. This is because entrepreneurship creates jobs, increases productivity, spurs innovation and eventually grows the economy (Ogundele, 2007; Omeje, 2008).

Moreover, construction activities are a measure of the economic and social progress of a country (Ogunlana, et al. 2003). In order to achieve economic and social progress Nigeria will require more houses for living; hospitals and health centers for health care services; schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities for education; banks, shopping malls, factories, civil buildings; clubs, theatres and cinemas for recreation; churches and mosques for worship (Bala 2011). The design and construction of these facilities is the responsibility of architects and builders.