



Achinewhu–Nworgu, E. (2019)“A critical analysis of why some professionals, who try to combine job roles of academic and being a business owner fail or succeed – Learning from experience”,

a presentation for the *KIE-WEF Collaborative International Conference*, 2–4 September, Dubai, UAE.



Introduction

- ▶ Paper aims to present some of the experiences and challenges encountered as a female entrepreneur, combining academic career in running own business in an inner city area of London United Kingdom.
 - ▶ Similar paper was first presented in Bulgarian Comparative Education conference with three colleagues. For this conference I decided to use this media to share my own personal experience as an entrepreneur that combined the academic role to my personal businesses
 - ▶ Becoming an entrepreneur can be a challenging and daunting task
 - ▶ It can also come with good experience in managing own small businesses and putting theory into practice in teaching students.
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Focus Learning Support (FLS)



- ▶ Journey of entrepreneurship:
- ▶ All began from personal interest in school days selling peanuts to my classmates and my determination to be a big business woman, combined with professional academic career in education
- ▶ Moving to the UK after secondary school to study a law degree was a dream of my family that law would be a more suitable career for me and the best country to study law must be in the United Kingdom.

Focus Learning Support (FLS)



- ▶ **First Business in the UK was set up in 2002**
- ▶ FLS works to educate and empower students, Women, families and interested persons by bridging the educational gaps that prevent them from realising their fullest potential in employment, education and business.
- ▶ FLS emphasises that educational development is a lifelong learning venture that merits continuous support from various societal organisation and institutions.
- ▶ FLS, with assistance from **community alliances**, embarks on a variety of **teaching and learning activities** to help it to fulfil its aims in developing people. We partner with various institutions to support youth education and women into business. You can find us: www.focuslearningsupport.org
- ▶ [Email: focuslearningstpport@googlemail.com](mailto:focuslearningstpport@googlemail.com)

Lizzy Cozy African Restaurant

Second business was Lizzy Cozy African Restaurant UK Ltd (Traded as Star Express) Near Emirate Stadium from 2013–2017

Third:

- ▶ Lizzy Show with Ben Television Sky 175 UK and RSTV Port Harcourt Nigeria 2007 – Present

Why the journey?

- ▶ It was a journey of career aspiration based on determination and how to juggle a combination of roles.
 - ▶ As stated in Determine to succeed, Achinewhu–Nworgu (2014, p. 1), there have been more opportunities available to individuals to progress in education, to make a good career for themselves and to enjoy a fulfilling family and personal life.
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Challenges

- ▶ These opportunities must be explored and utilised in one way or the other.
 - ▶ However, in every available opportunity, there are challenges that come with it.
 - ▶ We truly live in an age of opportunity but successfully realising one's aspirations is never easy (Achinewhu-Nworgu, 2014, p. 1).
 - ▶ The ambition to combine job roles of being in academy and also a business owner can confront us with challenges and benefits.
 - ▶ The experience of being an entrepreneur and a lecturer is worth sharing to encourage the women with this ambitious career or wanting to be in it to realise that the journey is worth pursuing but, it comes with challenges and hurdles that can put a barrier to success.
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Key note

- ▶ Educator
 - ▶ Entrepreneur
 - ▶ Professional development
 - ▶ Female
 - ▶ Challenges
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Literature

- ▶ Different research and literature have all contributed to the definitions and meanings of being an entrepreneur, however, most of the literature have not specifically examined why some professionals in education combine full time jobs and also become a business owner, benefits and challenges faced in the combined roles.
- ▶ Definitions are provided from exploring various literature of which Cooper and Dundleberg (1987) defined entrepreneur as a person who either own or manage a business.
- ▶ Knight (1921), an entrepreneur is considered as a bearer for risks and uncertainties in making business choices, and make innovations for new goods, new methods of production, new markets, and new types of industrial organization.
- ▶ McClelland (1961) confirms an entrepreneur as a business manager who has the responsibility as a decision maker and takes responsibility for the decision made in the business.
- ▶ Others have described entrepreneurship as a career in business start-up .
- ▶ Schumpeter (1934) stated that entrepreneur has long history of being recognised as important economic sector to local, regional and national levels.

Why choose to become an entrepreneurs

- ▶ Poor treatment and poor relationship with employers or line manager,
- ▶ Choice of becoming own boss becomes a priority, particularly for those who may not be in good terms with colleagues or line managers, may choose to work for themselves for respect deserved.
- ▶ Become a millionaire or billionaire,
- ▶ Develop own skill or target in business
- ▶ Own a business and to some, it could be because of being the main bread winner of the family, hence the choice to have own business for steady income and Job security and fear of unknown

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- ▶ Research indicates that women entrepreneurs are playing an important role in most developed countries and also some developing countries (Brush, 1992).
- ▶ However, the number of women entrepreneurs' participation is still relatively small compared to men-owned businesses (Minniti & Arenius, 2003 in Idris & Tan, 2017).
- ▶ Female entrepreneurs like Oprah Winfrey, Rhonda Byrne for example have already proved the concept that these women are not only recognized as the house makers but also as an entrepreneur.
- ▶ The assumption that 21st century women can equally be equipped to face the challenges in their personal as well as their professional life indicates the perception held about women in business.
- ▶ Most female academic entrepreneurs do it to impact the lives of young people and to give their students the practical experience of what it takes to be in the business world.
- ▶ Create positive impact on their students, teaching from practical experience, whatever reasons attached to their decision, it is obvious that there are a lot of challenges confronting the success of these women hence some give up the aspirations.

Research Methodology

- ▶ It was important to speak to some of the participants in person and on phone to find out how they perceived their roles in combining two busy jobs, impact on their students, institutions and personal development; also sharing personal experience in similar situation.
- ▶ A combination of qualitative and quantitative research paradigms were employed to seek the perceptions of some professionals who were able to combine academic work and being an entrepreneur, challenges faced in the combined roles on their students, institution and professional development were gathered and analysed.
- ▶ A combined approach to research was very important in generating rich data that informed opinion and to reach a conclusion.

Findings: Participants' comments and analyses

Personal factors:

- ▶ Factors that present challenges, determinants and barriers to women in their choice of combining business with academic roles.
- ▶ Personal circumstances such as income stability in the family as some women are the main bread winner of their families; they face challenges along with the ambition and aspirations. To overcome these challenges women need to become active academic entrepreneurs which they can have flexibility as well as feasibility.
- ▶ Putting theory into practice of teaching was a major urge to be in the field of combining both tasks. This was also applicable to some of the participants interviewed:
 - ▶ *The desire to accomplish my career goal was a motive behind having a hair dressing saloon and being a teacher, it comes with challenges and hard work, but rewarding on the long run. (E2)*

Women academic entrepreneurs and their rewards

- ▶ **Financial freedom and multiple revenue**
- ▶ Female entrepreneurs are confronted with problems of accessing finance from experience, hence limiting the business growth, expansion and in most cases failure.
- ▶ *It is obvious that most women entrepreneurs will use higher education or any education as a platform to plethora their source of income and also receive the stability required to sustain the demand of the family. Experience affirms the above, as an entrepreneur, the fear of unknown and financial instability in some cases, could result in combing job roles to sustain the business and cope with family financial demands. (E7)*

Non-traditional student cohort

- ▶ Women academic entrepreneurs promote and cultivate the entrepreneurial culture among the non-traditional students to encourage them to become successful entrepreneur, hence leading to more and more professional women becoming entrepreneurs. In addition, most academic female entrepreneurs have realised the benefits of linking their practical experience to the benefits of their students.
- ▶ *‘I share my practical experience with my students particularly in one of my modules which required students to carry out a research on challenges facing their chosen profession or career, also those wanting to have their own business after their studies. Sharing what it takes to run a business from practical experience gives them the first-hand knowledge. (E8).*

Change agents

- ▶ Most women entrepreneurs in academia can act as a catalyst to bringing the desired changes in education institution as well as the students who aspire to become an entrepreneur. Women academic entrepreneurs can become an entrepreneur within the education system to enhance the employability skills of the students and more so, most of the modules require input on employability skill.
- ▶ As stated by one of the participants:
- ▶ *‘Developing myself for the practice of business and putting theory into practice to educate my students gave me the motivation to combine teaching career and being an entrepreneur. Useful experience to share with students and colleagues, but hard to work and not easy to do it all, hence I gave up and sold my business. (E10)*

Innovation

- ▶ Innovation is one of the key characteristics for any entrepreneurs to develop their business through organic or inorganic growth particularly in the fast growing world of innovation . Innovation plays a vital role in the field of education, entrepreneurship and environment.
- ▶ Academic women entrepreneurs have laid foundation by promoting innovative teaching practices based on their experience as educators as well as being entrepreneurs.
- ▶ Most Female entrepreneurs are ready to act as knowledge brokers by passing the information from generation to generation, as commented by one of the participants:
- ▶ *'I love my teaching job, but I combined it with looking after my late parents' business that I inherited. Father, before passing on, insisted that the business remains the property of the family generation that geared to innovation and passing on the practical experience to younger generation. This is what has kept me combining teaching and being a business owner; however, it requires good time, good leadership and motivation. (E12)*

Enhanced working conditions

- ▶ Most women left their full time jobs to ensure that they have stable income at the same time they have better working conditions which they never had before and this is confirmed by one of the participants.
- ▶ *'I combined business and my academic work to have freedom and work balance which I enjoy being my own Boss, good for my career, practical experience to share with my students and at the end of it, value added to my organisational goals. (E14)*

Learning experience leading to failure/Success

- ▶ Busy life – combining academic role and own business is very demanding and daunting
 - ▶ Financial demands
 - ▶ Staff and customer demand
 - ▶ Discrimination being a woman and ethnicity
 - ▶ Community dominated by different ethnic group
 - ▶ Competition
 - ▶ Technology
 - ▶ Support
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Positive Experience

- ▶ Students gaining both theoretical and practical side of business (teaching from experience)
 - ▶ Making impact in your community
 - ▶ Contribution to society – Tax & Insurance
 - ▶ Job opportunities for minority groups
 - ▶ Meeting nice people
 - ▶ Motivation
 - ▶ Being your own Boss
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Conclusions



- ▶ Key challenges faced by female professional entrepreneurs who combine their teaching roles with being entrepreneurs are presented.
- ▶ Some teachers derive joy and benefits in having their personal businesses and education roles, which they are confronted with by circumstances and factors discussed above.
- ▶ Most of the participants in this research that combine job roles do that to enhance their careers, make more money or be their own boss.
- ▶ However, most of them have found the job daunting as it seems more difficult for the female entrepreneurs combining full-time teaching with owning a business, hence some drop out and some persevere to the end. Others have also gained good experience and skills to enhance their students' experience of the nature of the industries and challenges faced by entrepreneurs.
- ▶ Students have developed practical experience, theoretical skill and knowledge and in return, value added to the organisation and personal development.
- ▶ The research and experience have helped to realise it is possible to combine being an entrepreneur and a teacher and to achieve this; you must be determined and motivated to face the challenges and being patient, you will smile with big yield.
- ▶ Findings also present areas for further research on how male teachers who combine teaching with personal business perceive the challenges.

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