

THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN EMPOWERING NIGERIA YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

This work investigate the role of entrepreneurship education in empowering Nigeria youth. . Three objectives and three research question guided this study. Deceptive survey research design was adopted in this study. The population of the study comprised 2680 entrepreneurship education students in public university in Anambra State. The sample size comprised 10 % of the entire population of entrepreneurship education students made up 268. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Role of Entrepreneurship Education In Empowering Nigeria Youth" (REEENY). The face and content validity of the instrument were determined. The data collected from the pilot test were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistical analysis which gave Alpha coefficient of .86.63 .82 respectively. Mean and standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. While the hypotheses formulated were tested using paired sample t-test. The result reveled that skill acquisitions play a significant role on youth empowerment; innovations play a significant role on youth empowerment and opportunity recognition plays a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State. The study concluded that entrepreneurship education plays a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State. The study therefore, recommended among others thatgovernment should make adequate supply of learning materials and workshop facilities to entrepreneurship education institutions to help in preparing the youth for self-employment.

Keywords: Skill Acquisitions; Innovations Opportunity Recognition and Youth Empowerment

Introduction

Education in Nigeria is overseen by the Federal Ministry of Education. The local authorities take responsibility for implementing state-controlled policy regarding public education and state schools. The education system is divided into Kindergarten, Primary education, Secondary education, and Tertiary education (Ajibade 2019). Nigeria's federal government has been dominated by instability since declaring independence from Britain, and as a result, a unified set of education policies is yet to be successfully implemented (Abdullahi & Abdullah 2018). Regional differences in quality, curriculum, and funding characterize the education system in Nigeria. Currently, Nigeria possesses the largest population of out-of-school learning youths in the world.(Sule, et, Ia. (2019).Education in Nigeria was designed to change the orientation and attitude of the youths and the process will equip them with the skills and knowledge to enable them start and manage a business. It aims at developing the requisite entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, competencies, and

disposition that will predispose the youths to be a driving force in managing a business (Agu, 2021). On the other hand, entrepreneurship education can be said to focus on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attitudes in widely different contexts. This type of education is open to all and not exclusively the domain of the some self-acclaimed business gurus.

Entrepreneurship education is made up of all kinds of experiences that give youths the ability and vision of accessing and transforming opportunities of different kinds (Akpomi, 2019). It goes beyond business creation. It is about increasing students' ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes. Besides, it is the type of education that seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. It thus empowers youths to develop and use their innate creative skills to take initiatives, responsibility and risks. Nigeria is a country with abundant economic and business potentials due to its natural endowment of human and material resources. Promoting youth innovation and creativity has become the hallmark of government policies and programs. Job creation has been inadequate to keep pace with the expanding working age population. The shrinking job spaces in the public sector that hitherto generated employment for many youth raise the need for a private sector-led growth and self-employment. The youth potential which remains a major source of economic prosperity is largely untapped (Emmanuel, 2019).

Youths in every society form a significant segment that cannot be ignored. They are considered to be the future leaders and also the bedrock to sustainable development. Nigerian youths are faced with many problems bothering on poverty and unemployment due to lack of skill in the needed areas, drug abuse and poor health among other things. Youths are the most active and most energetic group of the country's population in whose hand lays the destiny of the nation. (Ojaleye 2019). Jega (2018) defines the youth as a special group of people with strong stamina and passion for realizing certain set goals and objectives. The youth are energetic and full of life; they are fearless (sometimes to a fault). They are generally militant in nature; rebellious and sometimes disregard social norms and ethics especially when they perceive lack of care and attention towards them. Youth empowerment implies a situation whereby the young and active age bracket of a community or country are given their power and authority to improve their socioeconomic conditions, through exposure Youth empowerment means providing an enabling environment for youths to develop their true potentials so that they can contribute to the development of the society (Ekere 2020). The major instrument needed to empower youths is education. As already stated in the introductory part of this study, entrepreneurship education gives necessary skills to individuals to make them self-reliant economically. Investment in quality education is fundamental to the construction of knowledge and is a critical component of a nation's developmental efforts. It is seen as the cornerstone of development because it forms the basis of literacy, skill acquisition, technological advancement, knowledge acquisition and ability to harness the natural resources of the environment. (Riti & Kamar, 2021). In this, the society depends increasingly on knowledge through education. Pargaru, Ghergina and Duca (2019) summarized that the secret of a future society is education but not in the old fashioned concept of teaching but of permanent education over the entire lifetime, to gain superior competencies which include; to verify,

to conceive, to create and to invent. Permanent education referred to in this context include entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education is a process of training our youths at the secondary, undergraduate and postgraduate levels to acquire resourceful skills to enhance productivity and self-reliance in Nigerian society. Aig-Imoukhuede (2018) opined that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, among other things seeks to provide students in secondary schools and higher education with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of ventures. It applies to all levels of education and training and concerns all stages of life as well as the different forms of apprenticeship. Therefore, the move by the government through the Federal Ministry of Education to make entrepreneurship education one of the compulsory general studies for students in secondary schools across the country should be seen as a positive step in the right direction as it will serve as a panacea for cultism and youth unemployment. This is to inculcate in the youths the spirit of self-reliance. This development will not only address the problem of unemployment, under employment and cultism but will also ensure an entrepreneurial human capacity for national development.

Carter (2018) also noted that entrepreneurship is the management of skills, or the personal initiative used to combine resources in productive ways. In fact, entrepreneurship involves taking risks. Growth in entrepreneurship education has accelerated dramatically over the past years in both developed and developing countries. Robinson and Carpenter (2019) confirmed that this is reflected in the inauguration of numerous international inter-collegiate business plans, competitions, new entrepreneurship curricula and programmes, and endowed professorships in entrepreneurship. Youth empowerment is one of the most cancerous problems inhibiting sustained economic growth and development in Nigeria. Youth unemployment has led to a lot of the social vices. Prominent among them include internet and other frauds, kidnapping, armed robbery, destitution, prostitution, terrorism, political thuggery, among others (Okoye et al., 2021).

The basic entrepreneurship training that empower the youths are computer training or networking, vocational training, micro business entrepreneurship and innovation entrepreneurship programme. The basic objective of computer training is to achieve computer literacy in an inclusive manner. The basic computer course is to impact basic level computer appreciation programme with more emphasis on hands on training and empowering the youths. Vocation training refers to instructional programmes or courses that focus on the skills required for a particular job function or trade and empowering of the youths. Vocational education also called career and technical education, prepares learners for jobs that are based in manual or practical activities, that empower the youths (Cartar 2018). Innovative entrepreneurship are people or youths who are constantly coming up with new ideas and inventions. They take these ideas and turn them into business ventures. They often aim to change the way people like for the better.

Entrepreneurship education is made of all kinds of experiences that give youths the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. As such, it goes beyond business creation (Enu, 2021). It is about increasing youths ability to participate and respond to societal changes. Entrepreneurship education according to Emeraton (2018)

deals with those attitudes and skills that are necessary for the youth to respond to its environment in the process of conserving, starting and managing a business enterprise. He observed that certain basic attitudes and skills are essential for an youths to respond positively to his environment and explore its potentials. This implies that entrepreneurship education prepares the individual to be properly equipped to acquire saleable skills which could be used to manage his own business or that of other persons (Oduwaiye, 2019). Entrepreneurship education which assists youths to develop positive attitudes, innovation and skills for self-reliance rather than depending on the government for employment. Such an experience will in return produce graduates with self-confidence and capacities for independent thought to discover new information leading to economic development.

In essence, educational entrepreneurship provides a platform for youths to transform opportunities to business ventures and to manage those ventures to become a medium for job creation for themselves and others. Enu (2021) argues that the ultimate goal of educational entrepreneurship is all about increasing the student's ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes. In other words, through educational entrepreneurship, students are equipped to deploy their creativity ability for their good and benefits of the larger society. They are also empowered to take initiatives, responsibilities and risks. This study was therefore aimed at examining the role of entrepreneurship education in empowering Nigeria youth

Statement of the Problems

Despite the energy, large population and huge proportion of youth in the labour force, yet these entrepreneurship education programmes are not fully utilized in economic production in Nigeria. Evidence shows that employment opportunities are scarce and especially youth are generally more likely to be unemployed than the older people. Compared to adults, the youth of today are almost three times unemployed, and globally one in five working youth continues to live in extreme poverty on one thousand Naria perday. Many youth are therefore simply pushed into self-employment becoming "entrepreneurs by necessity" rather than "entrepreneurs by choice. The Nigerian government in recent times, having realized the ever-growing problem of unemployment in the country has introduced entrepreneurship education as a way of harnessing the teeming youths as assets for the economic growth of the country.

However, the poor socio-economic stance of the country and the inability of youths to harness available resources and economically viable field of commerce and social venture has most often been blamed on undue emphasis on paper qualification of graduates rather than functional or pragmatic education which has resulted in the production of unemployed graduates not suited for the labour market, and inadequate empowerment of young people to invest in their own commercial or social venture. It is as a result of the increase of unemployment in Nigeria's economy at the moment that this study investigates to ascertain if there is any relation between entrepreneurial education and youth empowerment. This study would be significant to the large percentage of individuals, especially youths who are not convinced of the benefits of entrepreneurship education which is a functional and pragmatic learning process. Furthermore, this study would throw more light on components

of entrepreneurship education which could empower youths to use the finance available for adequate and fruitful investment in a venture.

Objectives of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of entrepreneurship education on youth empowerment in Anambra State. Specifically; the study sought to:

1. Examine the role of skill acquisition on youth empowerment in Anambra State;
2. Determine the role of innovation on youth empowerment in Anambra State and
3. Ascertain the role of opportunity recognition on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the role of skill acquisition on youth empowerment in Anambra State?
2. What is the of role of innovation on youth empowerment in Anambra State?
3. What is the the role of opportunity recognition on youth empowerment in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference between skill acquisition and youth empowerment in Anambra State
2. There is no significant difference between innovation and youth empowerment in Anambra State.
3. There is no significant difference between opportunity recognition and youth empowerment in Anambra State

Method

The research design that was adopted for this study is the descriptive survey research design. According to Nwankwo (2013) a survey design is a research in which data are collected from a sample of a population with a view of finding out the relative opinion, belief, attitude and status of that population about a phenomenon. The study was carried out in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 2680 entrepreneurship education students in public university in Anambra State. The sample size comprised 10 % of the entire population of entrepreneurship education students made up 268 as the sample size of this study. The choice of 10% is in line with Nwankwo, (2010) who stated that when the population is large, the choice of a higher percentage becomes necessary in order to have a manageable population size. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Role of Entrepreneurship Education In Empowering Nigeria Youth" (REEENY). The instrument made up of; A and B. Section A elicited information on the personal data of the respondents. The face and content validity of the instrument were determined. The data collected from the pilot test were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistical analysis which gave Alpha coefficient of .86.63 and .82 respectively. The overall coefficient value of .77 indicated that instrument was reliable to be used for the

study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Decision rule for the research question is 2.50 and above were accepted and 2.49 and below were rejected. While the hypotheses formulated were tested using paired sample t-test. As a result, if P calculated $\leq .05$ rejected H_0 or if the p calculated $> .05$ do not reject H_0 .

Result

Research Question 1: What is the role of skill acquisition on youth empowerment in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Scores of the role of skill acquisition on youth empowerment in Anambra State

Variables	N	Mean	Sd
Skill Acquisition	326	28.18	6.51
Youth Empowerment	326	45.24	14.20

The analysis in Table 1 shows the mean of role of skill acquisition on youth empowerment in Anambra State. The Mean of skill acquisition is 28.18 and that of youth empowerment in English language is 45.24. The effect size (Cohen's d) for skill acquisition on youth empowerment was -1.65. Using effect size, skill acquisition has high role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the role of innovation on youth empowerment in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean Score of Role of innovation on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Mean	Sd
Innovation	326	27.56	6.77
Youth Empowerment	326	45.24	14.20

Result Table 2 indicated the Mean score of innovation on youth empowerment in English language. It revealed the mean of innovation to be 27.56 as against youth empowerment which is 45.24. The effect size (Cohen's d) for innovation on youth empowerment was -1.70. Using effect size innovation has high influence on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: What is the role of opportunity recognition on youth empowerment in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean Scores of the role of opportunity recognition on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Mean	Sd
Opportunity Recognition	326	28.34	5.80
Youth Empowerment	326	45.23	14.20

Findings from Table 3 revealed that the Mean for opportunity recognition is 28.24 as against youth empowerment of 45.23. The effect size (Cohen's d) for opportunity recognition on youth empowerment was 1.69. Using effect size, opportunity recognition plays an important role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Hypothesis one: Skill acquisition did not play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Table 4: Paired Sample t-test of Skill acquisition and Youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Mean	Sd	df	t-cal	P-value
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Skill acquisition	326	28.15	6.51	325	19.34	.000
Youth empowerment	326	45.24	14.20			

Data from Table 4, calculated t-value was 19.34 at 325 degrees of freedom and p-value of .000 was less than .05 level of significance. This mean that null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, skill play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State..

Hypothesis Two: Innovation did not play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Table 5: Paired Sample t-test of Innovation and Youth Empowerment in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Mean	Sd	df	t-cal	P-value
Innovation	326	27.56	6.77	325	20.61	.000
Youth Empowerment	326	45.23	14.20			

As displayed in Table 5, the calculated t-value was 20.61 at 325 degrees of freedom and p-value of .000 which is less than 0.5 alpha level, hence the null hypotheses was rejected. Therefore, innovations play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Three: Opportunity recognition did play role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Table 6: Paired Sample t-test of Opportunity recognition and Youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Mean	Sd	df	t-cal	P-value
Opportunity Recognition	326	28.34	5.80	325	19.47	.000
Youth Empowerment	326	45.24	14.20			

Result in Table 6 shows the calculated t-value to be 19.47 at 325 degrees of freedom at p-value of .000.The P-value (.000) is less than .05 alpha level hence, null hypotheses is rejected. This showed that opportunity recognition play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Summary of Major Findings

The findings of the study were summarized as followighs:

1. Skill acquisitions play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.
2. Innovations play a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.
3. Opportunity recognition plays a significant role on youth empowerment in Anambra State.

Conclusions

Nigeria youths need Entrepreneurship Education. This entrepreneurship education will empower the youths and promote self-employment, promotion of industrial development and the mind for national unity in the county. Entrepreneurship education will empower youths by encouraging them to make use of their brains and hands to acquire suitable

knowledge and skills, to design and to produce and use methods and processes which will help them to make maximum use of the abundant nation's resources for their benefit and benefit of the society. Therefore, there is urgent need to direct the consciousness of the Nigerian youths towards being empowered with the technological and managerial skills obtainable at various technical, vocational, educational and training centres and other centres in the country for advancement and national integration.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made

1. The government should make adequate supply of learning materials and workshop facilities to Entrepreneurship Education institutions to help in preparing the youth for self-employment.
2. Government programmes should prepare a wide range of opportunities for youth's empowerment for industrial development and nation building.
3. Establishment and equipping of Entrepreneurship Education training institutions to enable them for self-reliance should be the focus of the three tiers of government.

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