

EFFECTIVENESS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT AND CURB SOCIAL VICES AMONG NIGERIAN GRADUATES

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Abstract

The paper analyzed the impact of entrepreneurship education in reducing unemployment and curb social vices among Nigerian graduates. It provided insights into the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in addressing unemployment among Nigeria graduates. The Nigerian government recognizes the importance of entrepreneurship education in preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century, as emphasized in the National Policy on Education (2019). Effective entrepreneurship education can empower graduates to develop the mindset and skills to create their own jobs, contribute to economic growth, and reduce unemployment and curb social vices. To thrive in an economy plagued by unemployment and insecurity, Nigerian graduates need entrepreneurship skills, including background knowledge in ideas generation, business planning, time management, creative problem-solving, digital literacy, financial management, marketing and sales, leadership and team management, risk management, adaptability and resilience, networking and partnership and communication and presentation. The paper also acknowledges that political instability, corruption, terrorism, banditry, religious conflicts and porous borders exacerbate insecurity and unemployment in Nigeria. Among the recommendations include strengthening democratic institutions, addressing root causes like poverty, improving law enforcement, promoting dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Unemployment, Insecurity, Nigerian Graduates.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital field in university education, recognized for its potential to foster innovation, self-reliance and economic growth. The Nigerian government has acknowledged the importance of entrepreneurship education in preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century, as emphasized in the National Policy on Education (2019). The policy highlights the need for entrepreneurship education to develop entrepreneurial skills, promote innovation, enhance employability, and support national development. The policy also encourages the integration of entrepreneurship education into the curriculum, starting from basic education to tertiary level, and advocates for the provision of resources and support structures to facilitate effective implementation. Oriazowanlan (2020) posited that entrepreneurship leads to substantial benefits in employment generation, increasing utility level and innovativeness.

Entrepreneurship education aims to equip undergraduates with skills and knowledge necessary to become self-reliant and innovative, enabling them to create their own job opportunities and contribute to economic growth. However, unemployment remains a significant challenge among Nigerian youth, leading to increased militancy, violent crimes, and social delinquency. Ajufu (2013) asserted that

youth unemployment is devastating to both the individual and the society as a whole both psychologically and economically. To address this, a comprehensive approach is required, focusing on creating job opportunities and equipping graduates with relevant skills for the competitive job market

Nigeria's security and development are also threatened by insecurity, ranging from terrorism to banditry and secessionist agitation. Effective entrepreneurship education can empower Nigerian graduates to develop the mindset and capabilities to create their own jobs, contribute to economic growth, and reduce unemployment and insecurity. This paper argues that entrepreneurship education can play a crucial role in addressing these challenges, and that possessing basic entrepreneurship knowledge in areas such as idea generation, business planning, financial management, marketing and sales, leadership and team management, risk management, adaptability and resilience, networking and partnership, digital literacy, creative problem-solving, time-management and productivity, and communication and presentation can help reduce unemployment among youths.

Background of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

The educational system in Nigeria has traditionally emphasized white-collar jobs, contributing to the country's unemployment crisis. Historically, youths have been educated in arts and sciences that are not aligned with the demands of the workforce. This has led to widespread unemployment, which has spawned various vices such as armed robbery, prostitution, kidnapping, drugs fraud and corruption. To address these issues, it is essential to integrate entrepreneurship skills into the curriculum, empowering youths to become self-reliant and productive members of society.

As Nwaokolo (1997) noted, entrepreneurship involves more than just starting a business; it requires a distinct set of skills, ideas, and managerial abilities that differ from those acquired for paid employment. These skills enable individuals to explore their environment, develop saleable skills and cultivate the right habits and attitudes necessary for personal self-reliance. When individuals become gainfully productive through self-employment, the Gross National Product (GNP) and income per capita are enhanced, leading to national self-reliance. By inculcating entrepreneurship skills in Nigerian youths, we can equip them with the tools necessary to succeed in the world of work, mitigate unemployment, and foster economic growth and development.

The primary objective of introducing entrepreneurship in the classroom is to provide young individuals with experiential learning opportunities, transcending traditional pedagogical methods.

Entrepreneurship culture among young people emphasizes learning by doing, exchanging ideas, emulating experiences, creative problem-solving, role-playing, and dramatization (European Confederation of Junior Enterprise, 2006). By adopting this approach, education can cultivate essential personal attributes, such as creativity, initiative, responsibility, risk-taking capacity, and independence, which form the foundation of entrepreneurship. This hands-on approach enables students to experience the entrepreneurial process firsthand, developing skills in innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration. By promoting entrepreneurship in primary and secondary school teaching, we can inspire young minds to embrace an entrepreneurial mindset, preparing them for success in various aspects of life.

As the European Confederation of Junior Enterprise (2006) notes, encouraging the enterprise spirit in young people is a pre-condition for achieving progress, employment, growth, competitiveness, and innovation. By integrating entrepreneurship into the curriculum, we can empower students to become proactive problem-solvers, effective communicators, and adaptable leaders, equipped to navigate the complexities of the 21st century.

Concepts of Entrepreneurship Education

This is the mandate to equip the youth with new knowledge and skills, providing wealth creation and gives further push to innovations. The general notion of entrepreneurship education include:-

- (1). **Idea Generation:-** Entrepreneurial idea is a key determinant of a business success. Entrepreneurial idea is a way of generating new ideas, research, editing or revising and finally carrying out the plan. The first step in generating idea is ability to identify problems and create innovative solutions. According to Obialo and Akinjo (2021) idea generation involves systematically searching for new approaches to solving problems and bringing into existence something new that might consist of a process, product, technology or service. That is why in today's innovation-driven economy, understanding how to generate great ideas is one of the most important managerial priorities. A critical examination of idea is therefore, central to effective innovation.
- (2). **Business Planning:-** Developing a roadmap that is aimed at achieving business goal is business planning. It is a written document arrived at after brainstorming ideas and strategies by stakeholders for the overall growth of a business. It is a document that outlines the long-term strategy of what a venture will set out to do. It formally documents everything about how the business will generate money, who will take key decisions, how operations would run and so on. Without a clear business plan, navigating the complex business landscape can leave one overwhelmed and directionless. The absence of a solid business plan in entrepreneurship can lead to critical oversights, misallocated resources, and missed opportunities. It is essential then, to focus on what is effective and why (Rahman, 2024).
- (3). **Enthusiasm and Common Sense:-** An entrepreneur is full of enthusiasm and common sense after establishing a business of his own and now looking forward to increasing his earnings and enjoying the freedom of self-employment. Enthusiasm and common sense, therefore, enhance the pleasure of new life which self-employment has now bestowed. This would make him to organize his time at work in order to make him perform his job according to plan (Jones, 1994).
- (4). **Time Management and Productivity:-** This the ability to prioritize tasks and manage time effectively. In order to allow for task accomplishment, a target should be set. This is very important for the entrepreneur in order to avoid unnecessary piling up of work and achieve the organizational objectives.
- (5). **Financial Management:-** Knowledge of budgeting, fundraising, and cash flow management are very important in entrepreneurship. Many businesses failed because of improper financial control, therefore, in order to succeed, entrepreneur should be able to keep their accounts accurately. In order to maintain a good financial management, the entrepreneur should try to reduce over-spending and money spend should be reviewed monthly.
- (6). **Marketing and Sales:-** This is the skill to effectively promote and sell products or services.
- (7). **Risk Management:-** Businesses that are able to identify risks, will prepare better and have more cost-effective way of dealing with them. .Legal, financial and regulatory risks should be well understood. Identifying what could go wrong is the g new ways of conducting business. The first focus of risk management is identifying the problem, then evaluate which risk should be dealt with and finally implementing strategic to deal with those risks.

- (8). **Communication and Presentation:-** This is the ability to articulate ideas and present them Persuasively.
- (9). **Creative Problem-Solving:-** This is the ability to think critically and develop innovative solutions.
- (10). **Digital Literacy:-** This is a way of enhancing business operations by understanding technology and digital tools. According to Drydakis (2022), digital skills are envisioned as traits that enables firms to exploit opportunities provided by information communications technologies (ICTs) thereby ensuring more efficient performance and explorations.
- (11). **Leadership and Team Management:-** This is the ability to lead people, motivate and manage them,
- (12). **Adaptability and Resilience:-** Adaptability is the ability to adjust and respond to changing circumstances due to dynamic external forces. This gives competitive advantage in business. Entrepreneurial resilience is having mental toughness and determination to continue , even when things get tough. It is the ability of the entrepreneurs to recover from setbacks and challenges in business.
- (13). **Networking and Partnership:-**This is the skill to build relationship. Networking is the process of meeting and interacting with people to exchange information, ideas, and resources. Networking and building strategic partnerships are critical elements of success in today's business world. Whether you are an entrepreneur, a small business owner, or a corporate executive, the ability to form strong relationships and partnerships can help you achieve your goals, expand your reach, and increase your influence (Dhumal, 2023).

Computer Applications Training:- The Key to Gainful Employment of Nigerian Graduates

Computer applications training is an important skill for Nigerian graduates to acquire, enhancing their employability and competitiveness in the job market. It is a solid foundation for a successful and rewarding career. Computer application training is an essential key to gainful employment of graduates due to the following reasons:-

- (1). **Digital Transformation:-** Digital transformation is a way of increasing efficiency and keeping up with rapid-changing market demands by adapting existing business practices to new digital methods. It is integrating new technologies such as big data, cloud computing, machine learning, and artificial intelligence into every area of business.
- (2). **Competitive Edge:-** Staying competitive is not merely an aspiration, but a necessity in today's rapidly evolving business landscape. An organization must recognize the important role of continuous IT training of staff in order to maintain a competitive edge. A proactive approach to adapt and innovate continually is essential in order to stay competitive.
- (3). **Career Opportunities:-** Career opportunities in computer applications training are diverse and widespread, spanning various industries and roles. These career paths offer the following benefits – opportunities for advancement and growth, constant learning and skill development, competitive salaries and benefits, high demand and job security, opportunities for specialization and expertise and many more.
- (4). **Remote Work Opportunities:-** Remote work opportunities include providing technical assistance and support to clients and customers, managing and leading IT projects with

remote teams, developing software applications for clients and companies, analyzing and interpreting data for clients and companies, creating online courses and training programmes, developing websites and web applications for clients and companies and many more.

Benefits of Entrepreneurship Education

The benefits of entrepreneurship education are numerous, it includes the following:-

- i. **Fosters Self-Reliance:-** Entrepreneurship education encourages autonomy as students learn to take ownership of their ideas, decisions and actions developing a sense of independence. It helps students develop the ability to bounce back from setbacks relying on their own strength and determination.
- ii. **Enhances Employability:-** Entrepreneurship education creates opportunity for students to connect with mentors, peers and entrepreneurs, thereby creating job opportunities. It provides real experience, internships and practical projects for students, thereby opening up wide range of career opportunities.
- iii. **Develops Problem-Solving Skills:-** Entrepreneurship education encourages critical thinking and teaches students to navigate limited resources, finally, innovation ways to overcome obstacles. It encourages students to think outside the box, exploring solutions to problems
- iv. **Develops Leadership Skills:-** Entrepreneurship education encourages vision and goal-setting, accountability, adaptability and resilience. It fosters communication skills as students learn to develop and articulate their vision, empower team members and build strong relationship.. Students are empowered to become effective leaders by motivating and inspiring others to achieve a shared vision.
- v. **Boosts Confidence:-** Entrepreneurship education encourages self-belief. Students learn to trust their abilities, developing confidence in their potential and a strong sense of self-belief. Students are encouraged to take calculated risks, helping them build confidence in their decision-making abilities.
- vi. **Fosters Resilience:-** Entrepreneurship education teaches students how to embrace calculated risks, be persevere through challenges and learn from failures. It also teaches how to adjust and pivot plans when faced with unexpected setbacks or changes. Students learn to manage stress, anxiety and uncertainty. Failures and setbacks are viewed as opportunity for growth.
- vii. **Improves Financial Literacy:-** Entrepreneurship education teaches budgeting, financial planning and cash flow management. Students develops understanding of financial statement, pricing and revenue strategies. It encourages financial analysis and financial risk management. It fosters understanding of funding options, taxes and regulations. Entrepreneurship education covers tax obligations, legal requirements and regulatory compliance.
- viii. **Create Job Opportunities:-**it provides opportunity for students to create their own jobs and employ others.
- ix. **Enhances Creativity:-** It encourages innovative thinking and imagination.
- x. **Develops Critical Thinking:** It encourages strategic and analytical thinking.
- xi. **Contributes To Economic Growth:** It brings about economic development.

Graduate Youth: Performance of a Self-Analysis Plan

Ober (2010) explained that after graduation, a student, who is now a prospective employee, will start to search for job. The first thing that comes to mind is self-analysis. When you are convinced that it is time to decide how to use your college education, you must do some soul-searching to decide

exactly how you wish to spend the working hours of your life. You must do this for yourself, and it is not profitable for another person to do it for you because you are the owner of your talents, ideals and visions hence, "you are the architect of your own fortune." This is the reason why every student must think about his or her life, interests, things he or she is good at, and those they are not, and the experiences that have given them the most satisfaction that will encourage him or her to be very competent at work. Such introspection will help to make sound career decisions. Take a few moments to answer the following questions:-

1. Which courses or subject trades have you enjoyed most or enjoyed least in school:- industrial training in a small-scale business or teaching practice period in a school setting?
2. Recalling projects on which you have worked in class, in organizations you belong to, or at work, which kinds have you been most successful at and enjoyed the most? Which one have you disliked?
3. Do you enjoy working most with records (reports, correspondence, and forms), people, ideas or things?
4. Do you enjoy working more with your mind or with your body?
5. Do you enjoy working independently on a project or with a team?
6. How important is it for you to work for yourself and be your own boss?
7. What is important about the geographical location of your job in terms of climate, size of metropolis, rural and urban?
8. For which kind of organization would you like to work: large, medium or small establishment or new commercial, government or non-profit?
9. How would you like to dress for work?
10. What types of material rewards are important for you in terms of salary, commissions, fringe benefits, job security and the like?
11. How willing or eager are you to participate in an extensive on-the-job training programme?
12. What are your career goals five years after graduating from college?

Your answers to these questions will help you to identify the type of career that would offer you the most satisfaction and success in life. Remember that for any particular college major, many jobs are available. One of them will likely meet your needs and desires.

Social Vices and Unemployment that Aggravates Criminality of Nigerian graduates

With the coming of the internet system, Nigerian youths especially, the undergraduates, have taken to the illicit trade called Internet Scam (Ezea, 2017). Widespread cyber fraud has overshadowed cultism in the higher institutions. Youths who engage in the fraud scam become rich overnight, with or without their parents' knowledge. They owned expensive cars, houses, jewellery and more. They are highly respected and often initiate their peers into the scam.

According to Ogbeidi (2012) pathetically, the logic of the Nigerian political leadership class has been that of self- service as some of the leaders are mired in the pursuit of selfish and personal goals at the expense of broader national interests. Consequently, emphasis has been on personal aggrandizement and self-glorification with the result that corruption has become an euphemism for

explaining political leadership in Nigeria in relation to the management of national wealth. Seye (2013) opined that so many gangs in the forms of kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, militancy, pipeline vandalization for purposes of stealing crude oil, smuggling, commercial sex working, sex abuse and raping activities, baby factory for human sales, and so on, have made national life to become insecure. Other factors includes -terrorism and insurgency (e.g, Boko Haram),banditry and Kidnapping,porous borders and illegal activities, economic instability and poverty, political instability and corruption, religious and ethnic conflicts, poor law enforcement and security infrastructure. Unemployment factors includes - limited job opportunities, brain drain and talent migration, high population growth rate,over-reliance on oil exports, political instability and unfavourable business environment, inefficient labour market and mismatch between skills and jobs, limited access to credit and funding for entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the efficacy of entrepreneurship education in mitigating unemployment and curb social vices among Nigerian graduates. By integrating comprehensive training in computer applications, entrepreneurship education can empower students to develop a resilient mindset and versatile skills, enabling them to create their own employment opportunities, contribute to economic growth, and become proactive problem-solvers, effective communicators, and adaptable leaders. As the world navigates the complexities of the 21st century, fostering entrepreneurial spirit and digital literacy among graduates is crucial for sustainable development and socioeconomic prosperity. The findings of this research underscore the imperative of integrating entrepreneurship education into the Nigerian tertiary education curriculum, ensuring graduates are equipped with the skills and mindset necessary to thrive in an increasingly dynamic and competitive global landscape.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made:-

Possible solutions to insecurity challenges in Nigeria-

- (1).Terrorism and insurgency:- It is important to address the root cause of terrorism and insurgency like poverty, social marginalization and unemployment.
- (2). Banditry and kidnapping:- Socioeconomics grievances should be addressed and alternative means of livelihoods provided. Government should ensure that law enforcement and security personnels are available in affected areas.
- (3). Porous borders and illegal activities:- Human trafficking, smuggling and other illegal activities should be combated, surveillance and border security enhanced.
- (4). Religious and ethnic conflict:- National peace and reconciliation commission should be established. Dialogue, peaceful coexistence and reconciliation promoted.
- (5). Political instability and corruption:- Democratic institutions and the rule of law should be strengthened and anti-corruption reforms put in place and accountability ensured.
- (6). Poor law enforcement and security infrastructure:- Law enforcement agencies should be modernized and more investment made in security infrastructure and technology.

Possible solutions to unemployment challenges in Nigeria:-

- (1). Limited job opportunities:- Industrialization and diversification of the economy should be promoted and private sector investment encouraged.
- (2). Brain drain and talent migration:-Knowledge transfer and diaspora engagement should be encouraged. Also working conditions and opportunities encouraged.

- (3). High population growth rate:- Access to education and family planning services should be improved and population control measures implemented.
- (4). Over reliance on oil exports:- Other sectors like agriculture, manufacturing and services should be developed and the economy diversified.
- (5). Political instability and unfavourable business environment:- Bus environment and investment climate should be improved and democratic institutions and the rule of law strengthened.
- (6). Limited access to credit and funding for Entrepreneurs:- Entrepreneurship and innovation programme should be supported and access to finance and credit facilities improved.

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