

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION A TOOL IN THE REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT;
A FOCUS ON UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

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Abstract

This paper examines entrepreneurship education as a tool for reducing unemployment in Nigeria (a case study of the University of Benin University). Three research questions guided the study. The survey research design was used for the study. The total population comprised 200 students made up of 300- 400 level of university students. The Chi-square statistics was used to answer the research questions. The findings of the study indicated that entrepreneurship education can serve as a tool for reducing unemployment in Nigeria, entrepreneur education in Nigeria universities can stimulate entrepreneurship skills in graduating students and entrepreneurship education courses are compulsory in higher institutions in the country. Based on the findings it was concluded that entrepreneurship education is a tool for reducing unemployment in Nigeria. The major recommendations include that there should be a working partnership between industry and the universities such that government should give incentives such as tax cuts for very organization that is involved in the field and that industrial experience in entrepreneurship education should be encouraged.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education is the incorporation in to the student syllabus steps involved in starting a new business based on recognized business opportunities as well as operating and maintaining that business (Griffin and Hommis, 2001). Entrepreneurs generally continues to manage the business they create. They choose risks over certainty, hard work over life of ease, all in an effort to make money. It should however be noted that for anybody to be a successful entrepreneur, he or she needs to learn the skills. Entrepreneurship education is meant to teach the skills and knowledge that need to be known before embarking on a new business venture. This would enable the necessary identification and avoidance of many pit falls awaiting the less well trained and vigilant contemporaries. The training in entrepreneurship education may initially be perceived as a cost in terms of time and money nut it would eventually be appreciated.

Entrepreneurship is as the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. The wealth is created by individuals who assume the major risks in terms of equity, time and or career commitment or provide value for some product or services (service may or may not be new or unique but maybe infused by the entrepreneur by receiving and allocating the necessary skills and resources.

Nigeria is not left out as a part of the changing world economy. For a more articulate policy on the small and medium enterprises (SMES). Most world economics are characterized by large number of Macrol cottage, small and medium scale enterprises (SME) mainly in the informal sector. In many economics; they account for a segment of productive population. Nigeria falls victim this latter category of economy. The Federal government of Nigeria in her effort to ensure that her citizens are self-employed established the National Directorate of Employment in 1986.

Entrepreneurship education is regarded as a natural fit for business education department of higher institutions in Nigeria as most of the department join the functional area for business, accounting, finance, marketing, management, the legal and economic bid to reduce unemployment. It is therefore important for

those categories of student in this field to think like an entrepreneur since they are expected to start their own business after graduation or work closely with entrepreneurs (Griffin and Hammis, 2003).

Entrepreneurship education also has a general education aspect as well as a professional entrepreneurship development and education component on Nigeria high institution. All higher institutions in Nigeria combine irrespective of initial course admission and expect them to start their own business after graduation on vocational or professional level to alleviate poverty and join in the scheme of improving their socio-economic environment in particular and beyond for self-economic emancipation. They are also fit to work closely with entrepreneurs with small and medium enterprises (SMES). This will go a long way to reduce unemployment in Nigeria. However, this study will examine entrepreneurship education as a tool for unemployment reduction in Nigeria using the undergraduates of University of Benin as a case of study.

Entrepreneur contribute in an immeasurable way towards creation of new jobs, wealth creation, poverty reduction and income generation for both government and individuals. Schumpeter (2003) argued that entrepreneurship education is very significant to the growth and economic development of the individual. Having understood the vital role of entrepreneurship in economic development, it becomes apparent that careful attention is needed to invest and promote entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, education is seen as one of the preconditions for entrepreneurship development particularly in a place where the spirit and culture is very minimal. It is said to be an important determinant of selection into entrepreneurship, formation of new venture and entrepreneurial success (Dickson, Solomon and Weaver, 2008). It assumes here that there is a positive relationship between education and individual's choice to become an entrepreneur as well as the outcome of his or her entrepreneurial activity.

Entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education helps to provide students with knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in variety of settings. It equips the students with basic skills needed to start their own business.

Entrepreneurship education involves a specialized training given to students of vocational business education to enable them acquire the skills, ideals and managerial abilities and capabilities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay. The United States' Colorado Education cited in Osula (2004) defines entrepreneurship education as a programme or part of the education programme that prepares an individual to undertake the formation and operation of a small business enterprise. It is a program of instruction that will enable beneficiary to be properly equipped to establish and operate a profits-oriented business venture. Entrepreneurship education is not only about teaching someone how to run a business, but also encouraging creative thinking and promoting a strong sense of self-worth and accountability. Through entrepreneurship education, students learn how to create business.

The core knowledge gained through entrepreneurship education include:

- i. The ability to recognize business opportunities in one's life.
- ii. Ability to create and operate a new venture and ability to think in a creative and critical manner.

Entrepreneurship education as learning directed towards developing in young people those skills, competences, understanding and attributes which equips them to be innovative and to identify, create ideas or value and successfully manage personal, community business and work opportunities including work for themselves.

Kruegera and Brazeel (2007) saw entrepreneurship education as the force that mobilized other resources to meet unmet demands. It is the process of creating value by polling together a unique package of economic resources to exploit business opportunity.

Ashmore (2007) noted that entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people especially youths to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and who contribute to economic development and sustainable community.

Azubuikwe (2006) noted that entrepreneurship education focuses on educating the recipient to equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge ability, characteristics, interest and motivation to be effective entrepreneur. It also assists the beneficiaries and makes them become successful entrepreneurs. The aim of entrepreneurship education is to encourage and train people to create self-employment opportunity for themselves through inventing new business. In this direction entrepreneurship education is the key agent in the development of human creative and innovative talent and potential including the development of managerial skills, human relation and operation of new business venture on the profit bases.

The oldest theory of entrepreneurship emanated from the work of Alfred Marshall, as the Neo-Classical theory of entrepreneurship. The basic premises of this theory is that the level of profit a business earns usually commensurate with the level of inputs. If an entrepreneur has more knowledge and expertise than other entrepreneurs; he or she is likely to derive more benefits. This implies that the harder you work, the more money you make. This theory is extended to the management practice of F.W. Taylor of scientific management school. He believed and practiced the premises that the more the labourer or worker puts in the more his or her pay.

Resources Based Theory:

This theory argues that sustained competitive advantage are derived from a firm's values, imitable and non-substitution resources (VRIN). Barney (1991) emphasizes the role of firms embedded resources in shopping competitive advantages. For examples according to Hossain (2013) from a resource-based perspective and in association with more competitive valuable capital practice, equity firms need to differentiate themselves and more clearly established their competitive advantage to select target and obtain capital.

The Role of entrepreneurship education in Reducing Unemployment in Nigeria.

Unemployment is a wind in any society where it exists. Education remains the most fundamental force for advancing socio-economic development of any country. Entrepreneurship education is the bedrock of any developing country. Education is very important; the nation's formal education system turned out graduates who cannot engage themselves in entrepreneurial activities because they lack the skills and competencies required to become successful entrepreneurs.

According to Uzogg (2012) a reliable option for unemployment situations in Nigeria is entrepreneurship education which fundamentally prepare individuals for self-employment and self-reliance. It prepares individuals to be properly equipped with reliable skills and competencies needed to manage business as well as develop positive attitudes and innovation for self-reliance rather than depending on the government for employment.

Entrepreneurship education is about individuals' ability to turn ideas into actions, to be motivated, take risk, plan and manage product with a view to achieving set objective. For individuals to possess the kind of skills that will enable them to be self-employed, they needed more than understanding of entrepreneurship as a mere factor of production. (NDE, 1988) National Directorate of Employment describes the entrepreneur as the man who perceives business opportunity and take advantage of the scarce resources to use them profitably.

Entrepreneurship education is the panacea to youth development in Nigeria. It helps in the following ways:

1. Entrepreneurship education gives information on where and how to get financial and technical literacy skills needed to start their business.
2. It builds the spirit of being an entrepreneur on the mind of recipients which makes them to find new business opportunity.
3. It creates a job through the formation of new enterprises especially small and medium scale enterprises.
4. Entrepreneurship education enables its beneficiaries to stand on their own business because of the knowledge, skills and creative abilities they have gained which are also needed for self-employment.

5. It equips the recipients with skills attitude and competencies to become job creators or employers of labour by identifying opportunities.

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education on Graduating Students.

The entrepreneur is a risk-taker. The propensity to take risk is reinforced through training and understanding of the business terrain to inculcate the confidence to be successful entrepreneurs, there is need to optimize both the internal and external conditions that stand as limitations to the functional challenges identified as follow:

1. Education:
Our system of education fails to provide the necessary foundation for such workforce.
2. Finance:
There is need for substantial funds for financing start up and expansion of business venture in order to produce successful entrepreneurs. These funds could be from external sources like government agencies and non-governmental organizations. These sources do not these funds. The graduates therefore have little or nothing on themselves to start up.
3. Economic Pressure from Parents:
There is often pressure from parents who prefer their children making money in short term over a long term.
4. Inadequate Equipment and Technology:
The cost of equipment is quite high and cannot be offered by most Nigerians especially young graduates or graduating students. It makes it difficult to develop for students.
5. Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities: In absence of infrastructural facilities; entrepreneurship education can have some problems like bad roads, bad network which can lead to poor communication and electricity, etc. there will be effective entrepreneurship activities.

Factors Relating to Unemployment in Nigeria.

Abosi (2006) defined unemployment as a situation in which people who are willing to work at the prevailing wage rate are unable to find jobs. This implies that not just labour force, in order to avoid overestimation of the official rate unemployment in Nigeria includes the following:

1. Corruption
2. Poor Leadership
3. Lack of infrastructure cultures
4. Lack of saving and poor investment culture
5. Incompetent management

Corruption:

Corruption means dishonest or illegal behavior especially those in authority. Corruption plays a major role in the problem of unemployment that is currently experience in Nigeria. Unemployment brings about corruption, when there is no job opportunity in the nation there will be a lot corruption in the nation example: 20 (twenty) billion at NNPC was missing and this money was budgeting to do some investment that will aid job creation and opening of more education institutions but was being eaten up by people in charge.

Poor Leadership:

Where there is poor leadership, the nation will remain undeveloped, which can lead to mismanagement of resources when a leader doesn't have plan for the future of the nation cannot move forward in the sense that no job opportunity, infrastructure etc., because of poor leadership.

Lack of Infrastructure:

Nigeria is a consuming nation rather than a producing nation; the manufacturing sectors, agricultural sectors and construction sectors are the ones that help in creation and increase in the effect on the economy to move forward.

Lack of Saving and Poor Investment Culture:

Some of the unemployed Nigerians has job on financial sectors, manufacturing sectors and service sector, but because of saving and investing for the raining day is alien to some of us, we now have a situation whereby people who had worked for fifteen (15) years or more and were laid off with severance benefit still find themselves into labour market of graduating to become employers to labour.

Incompetent Management:

A small business will grow and become great with the help of competent management. It can grow for over fifty thousand employees. But an incompetent management will make a great business to become a small business.

Prospect of Youth Employment in Nigeria.

Speaking of the prospect of youth employment in Nigeria which has to do with the entrepreneurship development in graduating employment in Nigeria. Youth are the future of every society as their energy and skills contributed to the development of any society. However, perception on how really is a youth vary among major development stakeholders such as the government, international organizations and individuals. The NYSC in 2013 gave out loans to coppers who are engaged in agriculture and they were given moratorium of one year on the loan repayment and are expected to be complete.

Table 1: Demographic Analysis of the Respondents.

Sex	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
Male	114	57
Female	86	43
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that the number of male respondents was 114 or 57% and the number of female respondents was 86 or 43%.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents.

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
15-24	38	69.0
25-34	61	30.5
36 and above	1	0.50
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that the number of respondents within the age group of 15-24 was 138 or 69%, the age group within 25-34 was 61 or 30.5%, while the age group within 36 and above was 1 or 0.50%.

Table 3: Level of Students

School Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
300	105	52.5
400	95	47.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that the level of students within 300 level was 105 or 52.5% while those within 400 level was 95 or 47.5%.

Analysis of Research Questions:

Table 4: (Question 1): Do you believe that Entrepreneurship Education can reduce unemployment?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	115	57.5
No	85	42.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that 115 or 57.5 of the respondents believed that entrepreneurship education can reduce unemployment in Nigeria while 85 or 42.5% did not believe that.

Table 5: (Question 2): Do you accept the role of entrepreneurship education in reducing unemployment in Nigeria?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	135	67.5
No	85	32.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

In answer to research question 2, an analysis in table 5 shows that 135 or 67.5% accepted the role of entrepreneurship education in reducing unemployment in Nigeria, while 65 or 42.5% of the respondents disagreed to this fact.

Table 6: (Question 3): What is Nigerian attitude on entrepreneurship education?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Positive attitude	150	73.0
Negative attitude	50	25.0
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

Table 6 above shows that 150 or 75.5% of the respondents indicated that Nigerians have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education while 50 or 25% indicated that Nigerians have negative attitude on entrepreneurship education.

Table 7: (Question 4): How do you rate unemployment in Nigeria?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Very high	100	50.0
High	50	25.0
Low	20	10.0
Very low	30	15.0
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

The above table indicated that 100 or 50% of the respondents were of the view that the rate of unemployment in Nigeria was very high; 50 or 25% felt that the rate of unemployment in Nigeria was high whereas 20 or 10% said that it is low and 30 or 15% said that it is very low.

Table 8: (Question 5): How do you rate the impact of entrepreneurship education on the economy?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Positive impact	110	55.0
Negative impact	90	45.0
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that 110 or 55% of the respondents indicated that entrepreneurship education has positive impact on the economy while 90 or 45% were of the view that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has a negative impact on the economy.

Table 9:(Question 6): Have entrepreneurship education and self-reliant been able to prepare individuals to be self-employed?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	107	53.5
No	93	46.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that 107 or 53.5% respondents indicated that entrepreneurship education has been able to prepare individuals to be self-employed and elf-reliant while 93 or 46.5% disagreed to that.

Table 10 (Question): Entrepreneurship Education supply beneficiaries with knowledge, skills and abilities needed to be self-employed.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	140	70
No	60	30
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that 140 or 70% of the respondents accepted the fact that Entrepreneurship Education supplies their beneficiaries with the knowledge, skills and abilities to be self-employed while 60 or 30% disagreed.

Table 11: (Question 8): Are Entrepreneurship Education courses in higher institutions compulsory, optional or not compulsory?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Compulsory	132	65
Optional	68	34
Not Compulsory	2	1
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that 130 or 65% of the respondents indicated that Entrepreneurship Education courses are compulsory in higher institutions; 68 or 34% said they were optional while 2 or 1% said it is not compulsory.

Table 12: (Question 9): To what extent has entrepreneurship Education courses stimulated entrepreneurship skills in graduating students?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
High Extent	120	60
Average Extent	60	30
Low Extent	20	10
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The table above shows that 120 or 60% of the respondents said that the available Entrepreneurship Education courses have stimulated Entrepreneurship skills to a high extent; 60 or 30% said average extent and 20 or 10% said to a low extent to the graduating students.

Table 13: (Question 10): Entrepreneurship Education is fully recognized as a guide for unemployment.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
True	160	80
False	40	20
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The table above shows that 160 or 80% indicated that entrepreneurship education is fully recognized as a guide for unemployment while 40 or 20% said false.

Table 14: (Question 11): would you like to be an entrepreneur?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	140	70
No	60	30
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

From the table above. 140 or 70% of the undergraduates wanted to be entrepreneurs while 60 or 30% did not want to be entrepreneurs.

Table 15: (Question 12): Are you capable and component to manage a business?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	118	59
No	82	41
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

From the above table. It was revealed that 118 or 59% are capable while 82 or 41% are not really capable to manage a business.

Table 16: (Question13): The value for Entrepreneurship education in higher institutions is very necessary.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	105	52.5
No	95	47.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The table above shows that 105 or 52.5% said that the value of entrepreneurship education in higher institution is very necessary while 94 or 47.5% said it is not very necessary.

Table 17: (Question 14): What extent have inadequate infrastructure, economic pressure from parents and finance been a hindrance to entrepreneurs in Nigeria?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
To a large Extent	130	65
To a low Extent	50	25
To no Extent	20	10
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

From the table above, it shows that 130 or 65% of the respondents indicated that infrastructure facilities, economic pressure from parents and finance have been a hindrance to entrepreneurs in Nigeria to a large extent while 20 or 10% said to no extent.

Table 18: (Question 15): To what extent has entrepreneurship education helped to stimulate entrepreneurship skills in graduating students?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
To a large Extent	114	37
To a low Extent	86	43
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The table above shows that 114 or 37% of the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education has stimulated entrepreneurship skills for graduating students to a large extent while 86 or 43% said it is to a low extent.

Table 19: (Question 16): Has the society at a large been able to recognize that entrepreneurship education has a role in reducing unemployment in Nigeria?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	107	53.5
No	93	46.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The above table shows that 107 or 53.5% said that society at large recognize that entrepreneurship education has a role in reducing unemployment in Nigeria while 93 or 5% said that the society did not.

Table 20: (Question 17): Is the syllabus of entrepreneurship education up to date?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	140	70
No	60	35
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2019.

The table above shows that 140 or 70% indicated that the syllabus of entrepreneurship education is up to date while 60 or 30% said it is not up to date.

1. ucation courses are compulsory in Nigeria institutions in Nigeria.

Discussion of the findings

The result of the study is discussed in line with the research questions. The result in the tables revealed that the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education can reduce unemployment in Nigeria.

The study revealed that entrepreneurship education is fully recognized as a tool for reducing unemployment in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education recognized the significance gotten from entrepreneurship by providing business opportunities and management skills necessary to mobilize the human, materials and financial resources that will bring the project to function.

The study also revealed that entrepreneurship education supply beneficiaries with skills and abilities needed to be self-employed.

Entrepreneurship education helps to acquire skills needed to be self-employed and for a business to be a successful and very skillful, preparing individuals to be responsible and entrepreneurially conscious; building a link that creates productive and very thoughtful citizens; inspiring and motivating students to achieve while in school and use their knowledge in a real-world setting; provide relevant learning and encourage virgour to develop academic skills to be competitive.

Moreover, the study revealed that the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education courses stimulate entrepreneurship skills in graduating students. Entrepreneurship education courses help to encourage and train people to invent in new business.

Osuak (2004) saw entrepreneurship education as a part of education programme that prepares an individual to undertake the formation and operation of a small business. Entrepreneurship education direct towards developing in young people the skills, competencies which equip them to be innovative and to identify, create and imitate and successfully manage personal and work opportunities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, the following conclusions are made:

1. Entrepreneurship education serves as a tool for reducing unemployment in Nigeria.
2. Entrepreneurship education stimulates entrepreneurship skills in graduating students.

3. Entrepreneurship education courses are compulsory in higher institutions in Nigeria.

Recommendations

As earlier stated, the aim of this study is the role of entrepreneurship education in reducing unemployment in Nigeria; based on the findings and conclusions in this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be a working partnership between industry and universities. This could be encouraged if the government would give incentives such as tax cuts for every organization that involved in the partnership.
2. Universities should be mandated by policy to pattern their entrepreneurship development and entrepreneurial education after the model that works out creativity in the students and not just theoretical practices of entrepreneurial development.
3. The government should strategize how public universities can become entrepreneurial development hub rather than the counts of the educated.

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