

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT REDUCTION IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated entrepreneurship education and unemployment reduction in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was guided by four research questions and four null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all 1,915 NCE and Bed Economics students of the African Thinkers Community. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 345 students for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. The instrument was duly validated by three experts and subjected to reliability test using the test re-test method which yielded a coefficient value of 0.90. The data collected were analyzed using the mean to answer the research questions and chi-square to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed among others that the causes of unemployment among graduates of Economics in Anambra State include: lack of entrepreneurial skills demanded by employers, high cost of living, low industrialization, lack of social amenities and over-population. It also found that entrepreneurship education equips the graduates with vocational skills like sowing, cake making, soap making, designing barbing; it helps one to start up a personal business; it helps provides the graduates the techniques for creating self-employment venture. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government should regularly train and retrain teachers that teach entrepreneurship education through workshops, conferences seminars, study leaves to enable them to acquire marketable skills for the achievement of the aims and objectives of the programme.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Education, Unemployment, Reduction

1. Introduction

Education is the medium for the transmission of knowledge and worthwhile values from one person to another and it transcends generations. It is also a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, and or research (Brunner, 2012). Education frequently takes place under the guidance of others but learners may also educate themselves (autodidactic learning). Any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels or acts may be considered educational. The importance of education to human beings cannot be overemphasized. Thus, the quality of education in any country is one of the major keys to national development.

Education aims at influencing the learner's character and also enabling the learner to develop in all areas. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), education is perceived as an instrument per excellence for effecting national development. The decline in the quality and standard of education in Nigeria is alarming. It is noted that there had been poor standards in the educational system leading to poor quality of graduates produced. The first and perhaps, the greatest challenge facing the Nigerian education sector which makes it difficult for the attainment of sustainable development, is inadequate funding.

The twenty-first century has been tagged the entrepreneurial age. This is because nations are being shaped by entrepreneurs. The unacceptable rate of graduates' unemployment in the country, the low living standard and the level of technological transfer had led to a renewed interest in entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. Some of the major problems facing Nigeria include recession, unemployment, poverty, inadequate and poor health care services, and insecurity. The Nigerian government cannot resolve these problems without developing the capacity for entrepreneurship which will lead to the employability of graduates and undergraduates.

Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people including the undergraduate to be reasonable and independent rather than dependent, to be thinkers who will contribute to economic development. Nedum-Ogbede (2017) asserted that entrepreneurship education equips the learner with the knowledge and skills to desire, seek, recognize and utilize the available opportunity to do something new to create wealth for self and others and consequently contribute effectively to the development of society in this era of global economic crisis. Entrepreneurship education does not just facilitate teaching someone how to start a business but it also encourages creative thinking innovation and the visualization of the thought. Jacobs, Ezeokafor and Ekwere (2021) entrepreneurial education aims to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills of setting up and hovering a business with other skills needed for its survival and also to become successful entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship education could be used to combat the growing rate of unemployment in Nigeria. Okoye, Nwakoby and Ezike (2021) pointed out that entrepreneurship education has been a potent tool for mitigating unemployment and other social-economic challenges inhibiting sustainable development in all parts of the globe.

Unemployment is a situation in which people with requisite qualifications and who are willing to work at a given wage rate are unable to get a job. Rotimi, Dare and Zekeri (2021) defined unemployment as the situation whereby several graduates (who are mentally and physically fit and are seeking job opportunities under the prevailing condition of service) could not find a paid job. Gbosi cited in Ayomide, Olubukola and Adeolu (2019) defined unemployment as a situation in which people who are willing to work at the prevailing wage rate are unable to find jobs. Unemployment has been another interactive social challenge that is facing any developing country, especially Nigeria. This has remained one of the fundamental problems threatening the economic development in Nigeria.

(Ezinwanne, 2015), the challenge posed by unemployment necessitated the introduction of an entrepreneurship education curriculum, especially at the levels of education in Anambra State. Beverage (2017) noted that Nigerian graduates of today that can no longer fit into the demand of employers in the labour market led to increased unemployment that necessitated the introduction

of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum. Entrepreneurship education, therefore, is meant to alleviate unemployment.

The unemployment rate in the state has reached a level of difficulty for the government to tackle alone. The role of entrepreneurship as a provider of employment and instrument for poverty alleviation and key components in national advancement has been recognized by all stakeholders in national developments. The problem of unemployment started assuming crisis during the economic recession of the 1980s and continued to worsen with the implementation of economic reforms policies of privatization deregulation and trade liberalization which resulted in lowering of capacity utilization in industries the collapse of various businesses and massive staff rationalization in both government and private agencies (Iwala 2016).

According to Kerr (2015), Anambra State with its population of more than four million had suffered from persistently high unemployment among the youths. The government in a bid to tackle unemployment had over the years established several government parastatals whose primary objective was to create employment opportunities. The introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 was geared toward creating employment. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) created in November 22, 1986, was saddled with the primary responsibility of creating employment opportunities with an emphasis on the development of agricultural programmes, entrepreneurship and self-employment (Adeloye, 2014). Other employment strategies include the Directorate of Food and Rural infrastructure, the Family Support Programme among others. In 2016, the presidency directed Nigerian higher Educational Institutions to include Entrepreneurship Education as a compulsory course for all students with effect from the 2017/2018 academic session. Entrepreneurship education focuses on developing skills, talents, knowledge and identifying brand new business opportunities and has become increasingly significant for developing state like Anambra where the unemployment rate is high.

Unemployment which promotes poverty could partly be attributed to the ineffectiveness of the school curriculum. Alanna (2013) maintained that ineffectiveness of school curriculum in the country makes youth perpetually dependent on relatives and some youths had to work as bodyguard and thugs either political or otherwise with the portfolio of harnessing political rivals, stealing of ballot boxes kidnapping and all sorts of social vices to get their daily bread and meet up with other economic demand. It makes millions of school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions remain unemployed over the year.

Beverage (2017) states that it is because of mass outcry towards unemployment and the ways to develop individual potentialities, especially in the area of skill acquisition and personal competencies to enable him to process and tap the huge resource in the environment that makes the curriculum planners devise a course title Entrepreneurship Education. Entrepreneurship Education is meant to alleviate unemployment the course has the potential to expose students to many of vital issues and immense them in key learning experiences such as the Nigerian environment as well as the concept and management of innovation. It will go a long way in equipping the graduates with skills and ideas that can make them self-reliant.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian educational system that turns out graduates from various institutions fails to adequately train their graduates to be self-reliant instead these graduates depend solely on white-collar jobs for sustenance. It has been reported that about 80% of graduates find it difficult to get employed yearly and at the same time much has not been done in trying to solve this problem

However, entrepreneurship education can bridge this gap by equipping undergraduates to become successful entrepreneurs thereby creating employment. Entrepreneurship skills acquired through entrepreneurship education have been recognized as an important aspect of organizations and the economy as a whole. It contributes in an immeasurable way toward creating new jobs, poverty reduction, wealth creation and income generation for both government and individuals.

Although several attempts have been made at encouraging entrepreneurial activities in Anambra State in the past there is no gain in saying the fact that these initiatives failed to produce the desired result due to various constraints such as poor infrastructural facilities and overbearing bureaucracy have been identifying as being responsible for the failure.

This study, therefore, intends to examine the causes of unemployment among graduates of Economics, determine the extent to which entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of Economics, identify the challenges that hinder sound entrepreneurship education for skill development of economics graduates and suggest ways of tackling the challenges in the implementation of sound entrepreneurship education programmed in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to investigate entrepreneurship education and skill development among graduates of Economics for reducing unemployment in Anambra State. Specifically, the study will seek to

1. Examine the causes of unemployment among graduates of economics
2. Determine the extent to which entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of economics.
3. Identified the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for skill development of Economics graduates.
4. Suggest ways of tackling the challenges in the implementation of a sound entrepreneurship education programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions were constructed to guide the study.

1. What are the causes of unemployment among graduates of Economics in Anambra State?
2. To what extent does entrepreneurship education on enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of economics
3. What are the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for skill development of economics graduates?

4. What are the ways of tackling the challenges of the implementation of a sound entrepreneurship education programme.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypothesis is formulated to guide the study

1. There is no significant influence of entrepreneurship education on the reduction of unemployment among Economics graduates.
2. There is a significant influence of entrepreneurship education on the reduction of unemployment among Economics graduates.

2. Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is the survey research design According to Nworgu (2015), a survey research design is the one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representativeness of the entire group. The area of the study is the African Thinkers Community of Inquiry Enugu.

The population of the study comprises all NCE and B.Ed Economics students of African Thinkers Community of Inquiry Enugu (Office of Statistics and Records, Economics (2018/2021) academic session). A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 345 economics students from the population for the study. The students were stratified based on the year of study. A stratified sampling technique was used to draw 345 students from African Thinkers Community of Inquiry Enugu. This is in line with Nwankwo (2010) who stated that when the population is large the choice of lower size will become necessary to have a manageable size.

The instrument used for collecting data was structured a questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed based on the research questions. The questionnaire has two sections. They are section A and section B. Section A contains respondents' data, while section B contains research questions and possible responses for them. The responses to items are organized on Likert rating scale as follows: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The instrument used for data collection was validated as it was submitted to an expert in measurement and evaluation from the department of educational psychology in the African Thinkers Community of Inquiry, Enugu. Afterward, it was submitted to two experts who equally made some corrections that helped in the drafting of the present version. Thus the validators certified the face and contents validities of the instrument.

The reliability of the instrument was established through the test-retest method of testing reliability. Fifty copies of the questionnaire were administered to students outside the institution of study in Enugu State. After two weeks, the same questionnaire was also re-administered to the same group of respondents and their responses in the first and second chances were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient and it yielded a reliability score of 0.90.

The researchers visited the students in their schools and administered the questionnaire to three hundred and forty-five (345) students. This aids the researcher to explain to the respondents where necessary. Hence 340 copies were properly filled and returned to the researcher.

Data collected were presented and analyzed in the table and arithmetic mean (\bar{X}) was used to analyze the data collected for clarity.

In finding the mean the following formula was used:

$$\text{Mean } (\bar{x}) = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

Where \sum = Summation

X = Total respondents for an item

F = the frequency of the responses

N = Total number of the respondents

The mean is therefore, calculated as follows:

$$x = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

Since the calculated mean is 2.50 this implies that the mean response that is up to 2.50 and above indicated agree and any mean response which is below 2.50 indicated disagree.

Formula for Calculating Chi-square

$$(x^2) \text{ is } x^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where \sum = summation

O = Observable

E = Expected frequency

Though, the formula for obtaining the expected frequency is given by

$$E = \frac{(RT \times CT)}{\text{Grand total}}$$

Where RT = Row total

CT = Column total

Grand total is the sum of the values of CT

The decision was made based on acceptance and rejection. This means that any mean value of the respondents which is up to 2.5 and above was accepted and below was rejected. On the other hand when the $X^2_{cal} > X^2_{crit}$ (alpha) the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted and vice versa.

3. Result

Research Question One: What are the causes of unemployment among graduates of economics in Anambra State?

Table 1: Showing the mean responses of the causes of unemployment among graduates of Economics in Anambra State

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\sum fx$	\bar{X}	Remark
1	Lack of entrepreneurial skill demanded by employers	100	130	20	30				
		400	450	40	30	300	910	3.0	Accepted
2	High cost of living	80	140	50	30				
		320	420	100	39	300	870	2.9	Accepted
3	Low industrialization	70	145	50	35				
		280	435	100	35	300	850	2.8	Accepted
4	Lack of social amenities	90	160	30	20				
		360	480	60	20	300	920	3.0	Accepted
5	Over population	100	150	20	30				
		400	450	40	30	300	910	3.0	Accepted

Considering the analysis in above table 1, Items 1-5 with their corresponding means of 3.0, 2.9, 2.8, 3.0, and 3.0 respectively were all accepted because they were up to above the acceptance level of 2.5 respectively. Therefore the result shows that causes of unemployment among graduates of Economics in Anambra State include Lack of entrepreneurial skills demanded by employers, high cost of living, low industrialization lack of social amenities and overpopulation.

Research Question Two: To what extent does entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of economics?

Table 2: Showing the mean responses to the extent entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of Economics.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\sum fx$	\bar{X}	Remark
6	Entrepreneurship education equips the graduates with vocation skills like sowing, cake making, soap making, designing, barbing etc.	140	80	60	20				
		560	240	120	20	300	940	3.1	Accepted
7	It helps one to start up personal business	140	80	60	20				
		560	240	120	20	300	940	3.1	Accepted
8	It provides the graduates the techniques for creating self-employment venture	90	160	30	20				
		360	480	60	20	300	920	3.0	Accepted
9	Entrepreneurship education through Economics can educate the graduate on how to write business proposal that help them	140	80	60	20				
		560	240	120	20	300	940	3.1	Accepted

to source financial support for starting up personal business self-reliance

10	It makes the graduate resource persons	140	80	60	20	560	240	240	20	300	940	3.1	Accepted
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In table 2, items 6-10 with their corresponding means of 3.1, 3.1, 3.0, 3.1, and 3.1 were all accepted because they were up to 2.50 and above the acceptance mean. Therefore the results show that the extent to which entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of economics is that Entrepreneurship education equips the graduates with vocation skills like sowing cake making soap making designing barbing it helps one to start up personal business it provides the graduates the techniques for creating self-employment venture. Entrepreneurship education through Economics can educate the graduates on how to write a business proposal that help them to source financial support for starting up personal business self-reliance and it makes the graduate resource persons.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for the skill development of economics graduates?

Table 3: Showing the mean responses of the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for the skill development of economics graduates

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\sum fx$	\bar{X}	Remark
11	Lack of entrepreneurship teachers, materials and equipment	80	140	50	30	300	870	2.9	Accepted
12	Poor funding	70	145	50	35	300	850	2.8	Accepted
13	Inadequate instructional materials for teaching and learning of the subject matter	90	160	30	20	300	920	3.0	Accepted
14	Non-inclusion of entrepreneurship programme in the school curriculum	100	150	20	30	300	910	3.0	Accepted
15	Poor knowledge base economy and low spirit of competition	80	140	50	30	300	870	2.9	Accepted

In table 3, items 11-15 with their corresponding means values of 3.0, 2.9, 2.8, 3.0, and 2.9 respectively were all accepted because they were above the acceptance level of 2.50. There the results show that the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for skill development

of economics graduates include: lack of entrepreneurship teachers, materials and equipment, poor funding inadequate instructional materials for teaching and learning of the subject matter, non-inclusion of entrepreneurship programme in the school curriculum and poor knowledge base economy and low spirit of competition.

Research Question Four: What are the ways of tackling the challenges of the implementation of a sound Entrepreneurship education programme?

Table 4: Showing the mean responses of the ways of tackling the challenges of the implementation of a sound entrepreneurship education programme

S/N	IIEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\sum fx$	\bar{X}	Remark
16	Introduction of extra-curriculum activities which have a small business orientation	80	140	50	30	300	870	2.9	Accepted
17	Employment of qualified teachers with entrepreneurial skill	70	145	50	35	300	850	2.8	Accepted
18	Teachers should use appropriate instructional materials or improvise if standard ones are not available	90	160	30	20	300	920	3.0	Accepted
19	Education should give explanation of market system to students in early education	100	150	20	30	300	910	3.0	Accepted
20	Students should take entrepreneurship education seriously and also acquire practical skills to enable them become marketable in the labour market	80	140	50	30	300	870	2.9	Accepted

In the above table 4, items 16-20 with their corresponding means of 3.0, 2.9, 2.8, 3.0, and 2.9 respectively were all accepted because they were up to above the acceptance level of 2.5. The analysis of the result presented above shows that ways of tackling the challenges of the implementation of sound entrepreneurship education programme are through the introduction of extra-curriculum activities which have a small business orientation, employment of qualified teachers with entrepreneurial skills, teachers should use appropriate instructional materials or improvise if standard ones are not available, educations should explain the market system to students in early education, students should take entrepreneurial education seriously and also acquire practical to enable them to become marketable in the labour market.

Ho1: There is no significant influence of entrepreneurship education on the reduction of unemployment among economics graduates.

Ho2: There is a significant influence of entrepreneurship education on the reduction of unemployment among economics graduates.

χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -crit.	Df	α	Remark
87.969	21.026	12	0.05	Rejected H_0

The computation of Chi-Square is:

$$\chi^2\text{-cal} = 87.969$$

Degree of Freedom (df) = (r-1) (c-1) i.e row less x column less 1

$$= (5-1) (4-1)$$

$$4 \times 3 = 12$$

Level of significance = 0.05

χ^2 (= 0.05 under 12 in a four figure table i.e. 21.026.

Decision Rule

Using the above analysis of H_0 , the calculated value is 87.969 while the critical value or table value is 21.026. The calculated value is greater than critical value. This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Thus, there is significant influence of entrepreneurship education on the reduction of unemployment among economics graduates.

4. Discussion

Research question one examines the causes of unemployment among graduates of economics in Anambra State. The findings revealed that the causes of unemployment among graduates of economics in Anambra State include Lack of Entrepreneurial skills demanded by employers, high cost of living, low industrialization, lack of social amenities and overpopulation. The finding is in line with that of Ezinwanne (2013), Iwala (2015). Alanana (2003) and Beverage (2017) which revealed that inadequate educational system, lack of social amenities lack of industrial growth high cost of education and over population were among the causes of unemployment in Nigeria.

Research question two evaluated the extent to which entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of economics. However the findings show that the extent to which entrepreneurship education enhances the development of skills for gainful employment among graduates of economics is that entrepreneurship education equips the graduates with vocation skills like sowing cake making soap making designing barbing it helps one to start up personal business, it helps one to start up a personal business, it provides the graduates the techniques for creating self-employment venture. Entrepreneurship education through economics can educate the graduates on how to write business proposal that help them to source financial support for starting up personal it also makes the graduates' resource persons. These findings were also supported by Orisa (2013) entrepreneurship education will be beneficial to the youth/students through the acquisition of skills, knowledge and creation of wealth as well as make them become the employer of labour which will also contribute immensely to the development of Anambra State. Nicholas and Dana (2013) also noted that entrepreneurship

education has been recognized for its potential wealth creation, poverty alleviation and unemployment reduction. Entrepreneurship education leads to the creation of new technology, increase productivity, enhancement of effective market domestic resources utilization and employment generation. Through entrepreneurship education the youth should be taught various skills that will make them create wealth for themselves and also become employers of labour.

Research question three assessed the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for skill development of economics graduates. The findings revealed that the challenges hindering sound entrepreneurship education for the skill development of economics graduates include: Lack of entrepreneurship teacher's materials and equipment poor funding, inadequate instructional materials for teaching and learning of the subject matter, non-inclusion of entrepreneurship programme in the school curriculum and poor knowledge base economy and low spirit of competition.

Research question four examined the ways of tackling the challenges of the implementation of a sound entrepreneurship education programme. The finding revealed that ways of tackling the challenges of the implementation of sound entrepreneurship education programme are through the introduction of extra-curriculum activities which have a small business orientation employment of qualified teachers with entrepreneurial skills teachers should use appropriate instructional materials or improvise if standard ones are not available educations should explain market system to students in early education students should take entrepreneurship education serious and also acquire practical to enable them to become marketable in the labour market.

5. Conclusion

These study the effects of entrepreneurship education on skill development among graduates of reducing unemployment in Anambra State. It reviewed the importance of entrepreneurship education and skill acquisition as well as factors affecting the subject matter. However, it was noted that entrepreneurship is the process of searching out opportunities in the market place arranging resources required to exploit these opportunities for long-term gains. It is the process of planning and organizing opportunities and assumptions. Thus it is a risk to business enterprise. It may be distinguished as the ability to take independently for utmost earning in the market it is a creative and innovative skill that adapts to the real environment. Entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur which can be defined as one who undertakes innovation finance and business acumen to transform innovation into economic goods.

Therefore there is a need of including entrepreneurial skills acquisition into the economics curriculum to expose the students to the concept and theories that will make them employable in the labour market hence Entrepreneurship education has been recognized for its potential wealth creation, poverty alleviation and unemployment reduction. Entrepreneurial skill acquisition through vocational education develops self-employment potency among the graduates of economics.

6. Recommendations

The following suggestions for improvement are recommended by the researchers:

1. Government should facilitate training and retraining in entrepreneurship skills for students that dropped out of formal education through public-private partnership in collaboration with efficiency to enlarge the pool of skilled labour reduce to miscreant and the level of crimes in the country
2. Government should regularly train and retrain teachers that teach entrepreneurship education through workshops, conferences seminars, study leaves to enable them to acquire marketable skills for the achievement of the aims and objectives of the programme.
3. Government both at the Federal, State and Local levels should assist by providing funds for financing entrepreneurship education
4. corporate organizations and government at all tiers through the appropriate organs should provide a package of financial and material assistance to unemployed graduates with required skills that are willing to establish their ventures so that they can become gainfully self-employed and also employ other persons to reduce unemployment
5. Students should engage in entrepreneurial skill acquisition training to enable them to become employable in the labour market.

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