

THE INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND JOB CREATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN NIGERIA.

AYOLE, OLUWATOYIN OMOTAYO

DEPARTMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY
CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:AYOLEOLUWATOYIN@GMAIL.COM

OBADARE, GRACE OLUWATOYIN PHD

DEPARTMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY

LAWAL, NURENI ADEKUNLE PHD

DEPARTMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY

&

OYEKAN, MARVELLOUS ADETOLA

DEPARTMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract

This study examines the influence of entrepreneurial education on youth empowerment and job creation among university students in Nigeria. With the rising rate of youth unemployment and underemployment in the country, entrepreneurship has become a crucial pathway toward economic self-reliance and sustainable development. The study investigates how exposure to entrepreneurial education enhances students' creativity, innovation, self-confidence, and business start-up intentions. A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to selected students across public and private universities in Nigeria. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative analyses to evaluate the relationship between entrepreneurial education, youth empowerment, and job creation potential. Findings revealed that entrepreneurial education significantly improves students' entrepreneurial mindset, skills acquisition, and readiness to establish self-sustaining ventures. The study also found that practical exposure, mentorship, and institutional support are key determinants of how effectively entrepreneurial education translates into job creation and empowerment outcomes. Entrepreneurial education is widely recognized as a key driver of youth empowerment and job creation, particularly in countries with high unemployment rates like Nigeria. It equips young people with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to become self-reliant and create employment opportunities. This study investigates the influence of entrepreneurial education on youth empowerment and job creation among university students in Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 200 students across selected universities through structured questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial education significantly enhances students' creativity, self-confidence, and ability to start businesses. Challenges such as limited funding, poor practical exposure, and inadequate mentorship were identified as barriers. The study concludes that entrepreneurship education is crucial for addressing youth unemployment and recommends more practical training, incubation centers, government support, and university-industry partnerships.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Education, Youth Empowerment, Job Creation, University Students, Nigeria

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has become increasingly important for economic growth and development globally. In Nigeria, youth unemployment remains a critical issue, with

many graduates unable to secure formal employment. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2023), approximately 40% of Nigerian youths are unemployed. As a response, universities have introduced

entrepreneurship education to equip students with skills necessary for self-employment and job creation.

Entrepreneurial education refers to structured programs aimed at developing students' entrepreneurial mindset, creativity, problem-solving, and business management skills. It empowers students to create businesses and contribute to the economy rather than rely solely on traditional employment. Despite these programs, unemployment among graduates remains high, prompting the need to evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a critical driver of economic growth, innovation, and employment globally. In Nigeria, where youth unemployment remains a persistent challenge, entrepreneurial education has gained recognition as a strategic intervention to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and mindset required to create and sustain businesses. Universities, as centers of learning and innovation, play a pivotal role in shaping the entrepreneurial competencies of students, enabling them not only to generate personal income but also to contribute to broader societal development through job creation and wealth generation.

The concept of entrepreneurial education extends beyond traditional business instruction; it emphasizes experiential learning, problem-solving, creativity, and the cultivation of an entrepreneurial mindset. For Nigerian university students, exposure to structured entrepreneurial programs can enhance self-efficacy, encourage innovative thinking, and foster resilience in the face of economic challenges. As such, entrepreneurial education is increasingly seen as a tool for youth empowerment, offering students the capacity to transform ideas into viable

business ventures and, in turn, reduce dependency on formal employment opportunities.

Despite the growing emphasis on entrepreneurship in higher education, empirical studies assessing its direct influence on youth empowerment and job creation in Nigeria remain limited. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the extent to which entrepreneurial education equips university students with the necessary skills, attitudes, and confidence to establish businesses, create employment opportunities, and contribute to sustainable economic development. By examining the relationship between entrepreneurial education and youth empowerment, this research aims to provide insights that can inform policy, curriculum development, and program implementation within Nigerian universities.

Statement of the Problem

Unemployment among Nigerian youth continues to rise, despite government policies and entrepreneurship programs in universities. Many students perceive entrepreneurship courses as theoretical and lack practical exposure to apply their knowledge. This gap reduces the potential of entrepreneurship education in empowering students and generating jobs. This study aims to assess how entrepreneurship education influences youth empowerment and job creation among university students.

Objectives of the Study

1. Examine the relationship between entrepreneurial education and youth empowerment among university students.
2. Determine the extent to which entrepreneurial education contributes to job creation.

3. Identify challenges affecting the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education.

Research Questions

1. what is the relationship between entrepreneurial education and youth empowerment among university students?
2. To what extent does entrepreneurial education contribute to job creation
3. What challenges affect the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial education and youth empowerment.

H₀₂: Entrepreneurial education does not significantly contribute to job creation.

H₀₃: There are no significant challenges affecting the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education.

Significance of the Study

This study provides insights for university administrators, policymakers, and students. It highlights the importance of entrepreneurship education in reducing unemployment, promoting self-reliance, and stimulating economic development. Findings will inform curriculum improvement and practical training initiatives.

Literature Review

Concept of Entrepreneurial Education

Entrepreneurial education equips individuals with skills, knowledge, and attitudes to identify opportunities and create value. According to Garba (2020), it promotes innovation, problem-solving, and business management competencies. Effective entrepreneurship education includes practical experience, mentorship, and

exposure to real-world business environments

Concept of Youth Empowerment

Youth empowerment involves equipping young people to make informed decisions, access economic resources, and contribute meaningfully to society. Eze and Okonkwo (2021) note that empowerment results from education, skill development, and support structures that increase self-confidence and independence. Entrepreneurial education fosters these qualities by preparing students for business creation and leadership.

Entrepreneurship Education and Job Creation

Job creation is the process of generating employment through business ventures. Studies show a positive link between entrepreneurship education and job creation. Adebayo and Kolawole (2020) found that students receiving entrepreneurial training are more likely to start businesses and employ others. Effective entrepreneurship programs also enhance problem-solving skills and employability.

The progress of a nation is a function of the level of the resourcefulness of the people which to a great extent, relates to the level of quality of the training and purposeful development of education in that nation. Such progress or development could only occur when an individual in the society is gainfully employed and per capital income is enhanced. This could only be possible when government educational policies are geared towards a functional education that can lead to job creation and also self reliance. Entrepreneurship education is a means through which government could attain such development in the society. Therefore, this paper examines how the role of entrepreneurship education and how it could

help in job creation in Nigeria. The challenges of quality entrepreneurship education were also discussed. Finally, the paper advanced some suggestions on how to overcome the challenges so as to reduce unemployment and enhances job creation in Nigeria.

One of the greatest social challenges in Nigeria today is large scale youths unemployment due to non-empowerment of the youths through entrepreneurship education. The youths are the foundation of any society. The energy, vigour, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pace of development and security of any society as such any neglect is devastating. The Nigerian National Youth Development Policy classified all persons of ages 18-35 years who are Nigerians as youths. Entrepreneurship education if fully implemented is a panacea to societal menace perpetrated by the youths. This paper carefully examines the historical perspective of entrepreneurship in Nigeria, conceptual clarification of entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and youth, the rationale for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, the Nigerian educational system and youth empowerment, entrepreneurship education for sustainable youth empowerment, the danger of non-empowerment of the youths, constraints to entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and proffer some recommendations which include among others that there is need to redesign school curriculum for practical youth empowerment.

One of the greatest social challenges in Nigeria today is large scale youths unemployment due to non-empowerment of the youths through entrepreneurship education. The youths are the foundation of any society. The energy, vigour, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pace of development and security of any society as such any neglect is devastating. The Nigerian

National Youth Development Policy classified all persons of ages 18-35 years who are Nigerians as youths. Entrepreneurship education if fully implemented is a panacea to societal menace perpetrated by the youths. This paper carefully examines the historical perspective of entrepreneurship in Nigeria, conceptual clarification of entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and youth, the rationale for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, the Nigerian educational system and youth empowerment, entrepreneurship education for sustainable youth empowerment, the danger of non-empowerment of the youths, constraints to entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and proffer some recommendations which include among others that there is need to redesign school curriculum for practical youth empowerment. Entrepreneurial education equips young people with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to succeed as entrepreneurs or within entrepreneurial ventures. By promoting innovation, creativity, and resilience, such education not only prepares youth to start their own businesses but also enhances their employability in various sectors. Through a comprehensive review of literature and case studies, this study explores the impact of entrepreneurial education on youth empowerment, job creation, and poverty reduction. It identifies key factors contributing to successful outcomes and highlights challenges that need to be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of entrepreneurial education initiatives.

This literature review synthesizes theoretical arguments and empirical findings on entrepreneurial education and its influence on youth empowerment and job creation among university students, with a particular focus on Nigerian higher-education

contexts. It is organized into: (1) conceptualizing entrepreneurial education; (2) theoretical frameworks; (3) empirical evidence on outcomes (empowerment, start-ups and job creation); (4) institutional practices (curriculum, experiential learning, incubators and mentorship); (5) constraints and criticisms; and (6) gaps that this study addresses.

Conceptualizing entrepreneurial education

Entrepreneurial education is commonly defined as an intentional teaching and learning process that equips learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and mindsets necessary to identify opportunities, mobilize resources and create value — whether via new ventures, social enterprises or intrapreneurial activity. Unlike traditional business courses that focus on functional knowledge (accounting, marketing), entrepreneurial education emphasizes experiential learning, creativity, opportunity recognition and risk management. Several reviews highlight that entrepreneurship education (EE) should integrate practical activities (business plans, pitching, internships) with reflective learning to develop entrepreneurial self-efficacy and intentions.

Theoretical frameworks underpinning the expected effects

Three theoretical lenses recur in the literature:

- Human Capital Theory — posits that education raises individuals' productive capacities (skills, knowledge) which improves employability and the ability to start viable businesses. EE, therefore, is expected to increase students' capabilities to found and run firms that generate employment.
- Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) — often used to explain entrepreneurship intentions: attitudes toward entrepreneurship,

subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (self-efficacy) predict intention to found a venture. EE interventions commonly aim to strengthen perceived behavioral control and positive attitudes.

- Schumpeterian / Innovation theory — frames entrepreneurs as agents of creative destruction; EE that fosters innovation and opportunity recognition can translate into novel economic activity and job creation if supported by enabling institutions.

These frameworks together suggest plausible causal chains: exposure to high-quality EE → improved skills & self-efficacy → stronger entrepreneurial intentions → higher rates of venture creation → net job creation (subject to enabling conditions).

Empirical evidence: does entrepreneurial education empower youth and create jobs?

Empirical findings are mixed but informative.

1. Positive associations (skills, intentions, modest start-up rates). Multiple Nigerian studies report that entrepreneurship courses increase students' entrepreneurial mindset, knowledge and self-reported readiness to start businesses. Large mixed-sample studies of Nigerian public universities found that EE improves skills acquisition and positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship, and that practical components (projects, internships) strengthen outcomes.

2. Evidence of limited translation into sustained businesses and significant job creation. Other research highlights a weaker link between classroom exposure and actual firm formation or sustainable job creation. Some institutional studies found that while EE increases intentions, constraints such as limited start-up capital, weak incubation support and a difficult business environment reduce conversion of intentions into functioning firms that employ others. A qualitative quantitative study across Nigerian

universities observed positive attitudinal shifts but stressed that entrepreneurship education alone is insufficient without practical support.

3. Contextual outcomes and variability. Recent work shows that the impact of EE varies by program design (experiential vs. theoretical), institutional supports (incubators, mentorship), and student characteristics (discipline, prior exposure). Where universities couple EE with incubation, mentoring and access to funding, outcomes on venture creation and job generation are stronger.

Key load-bearing empirical takeaways

1. Entrepreneurship education generally increases entrepreneurial knowledge, self-efficacy and intentions among students.
2. Practical, experiential components (incubation, mentorship, internships) markedly improve the likelihood that intentions become ventures.
3. EE's contribution to measurable job creation is conditional — constrained by access to finance, weak institutional linkages, and the broader business environment.
4. National-level labor markets show persistent youth employment challenges in Nigeria, reinforcing the need for effective EE as part of a wider policy mix. (Youth unemployment remains a major policy concern; international sources report elevated and volatile youth unemployment rates in Nigeria.)
5. Recent Nigerian studies call for integrating entrepreneurship curricula with university-led incubation and stronger industry partnerships to scale impact.

Institutional practices that strengthen EE outcomes

The literature identifies several practices associated with better outcomes:

Experiential learning (start-up projects, live briefs, internships): Programs that prioritize hands-on venture creation, iterative feedback and real customers improve learning transfer.

Incubation and acceleration: University incubators that offer workspace, legal/financial advice and investor linkages reduce barriers to firm formation. Evidence from recent Nigerian university programs shows incubators can increase survival rates of student ventures when well-resourced.

Mentorship and networks: Access to mentors and alumni networks provides tacit knowledge, credibility and sometimes funding—factors that help convert ideas to employ-generating firms.

Entrepreneurship ecosystems / industry partnerships: Partnerships with industry and government schemes (competitions, grants) create pathways to market and finance.

Constraints, criticisms and contextual challenges

Scholars caution against over-claiming the capacity of EE to solve youth unemployment:

Measurement issues: Many studies rely on self-reported intentions or short-term post-training outcomes rather than longitudinal evidence on firm survival and jobs created. This creates uncertainty about longer-term impact.

Structural limits: High start-up costs, limited access to credit, poor infrastructure and an unfavorable regulatory environment blunt the effect of EE on actual job creation. Nigeria's labor-market indicators and critiques of official unemployment statistics underscore complex structural challenges.

Program design weaknesses: Courses that remain theoretical or that lack linkages to markets and support services produce

limited practical impact. Several Nigerian studies recommend shifting from theory-heavy curricula to problem-based and venture-driven approaches.

Research gaps and implications for the present study

The review surfaces several gaps that motivate this research:

1. Longitudinal evidence shortage: There are few longitudinal studies in the Nigerian context tracking student cohorts from training through venture creation and job generation. Many claims about job creation rest on short-term or intention measures.
2. Heterogeneity of programs and outcomes: Existing studies document variation but do not always disaggregate which specific program elements (mentorship, seed funding, incubator quality) most strongly drive job creation among student entrepreneurs.
3. Micro-level mechanisms: More evidence is needed on how EE shapes empowerment beyond economic metrics (e.g., changes in agency, problem-solving, civic participation), especially across different student groups (gender, discipline, socioeconomic status).
4. Contextual policy interactions: Few studies examine how university EE interacts with external policies (national entrepreneurship funds, SME support programmers) to influence job creation at scale.

This study aims to contribute by (a) measuring both empowerment (psychosocial and capacity indicators) and job-creation outcomes among university students exposed to EE; (b) comparing types of EE delivery (theoretical vs. experiential; incubated vs. non-incubated); and (c) identifying institutional and contextual barriers that impede the translation of entrepreneurial learning into net employment generation.

Nigeria has one of the poorest sets of national development indices in the world and it is widely believed that the underdevelopment of human capacity is a major factor contributing to Nigeria's underdevelopment. Demographic

segregation of the Nigerian population indicates that youths form the largest segment of the population. Hence, developmental efforts must target and/or capture the youthful population to have tangible and meaningful impact. The term youth empowerment is broadly employed to explain efforts aimed at providing coping skills and an enabling environment for youths to lead decent lives and contribute meaningfully to national development. An emerging trend in youth empowerment in Nigeria is entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education assumed importance against the background of poverty, widespread unemployment and the need to shift the attention of the citizenry away from white collar jobs and government patronage. This study highlights the importance of youth empowerment towards attaining sustainable development of the Nigerian nation. It examines the place of entrepreneurship education in the empowerment of youths, and attempts to identify missing links in the execution of entrepreneurship education initiatives in Nigeria.

The researchers segregated the youthful population into two categories; in-school and out-of-school youths. Using literature study and unstructured observation, the researchers appraised the relative spread and intensity of entrepreneurship education initiatives (especially government-facilitated entrepreneurship education) amongst both groups. While entrepreneurship education initiatives targeted at in-school youth are

easily noticeable nationwide, the same cannot be said about out-of-school youth. Meanwhile, based on national literacy, school enrolment, and tertiary institution matriculation examination/admission records, it can be inferred that out of school youths in Nigeria far outnumber in-school youths. The authors therefore recommend specific and deliberate nationwide efforts to impart entrepreneurial skills to out-of-school youths as a means to empowering them to contribute to sustainable development of the Nigerian nation and society. Such initiatives could have as primary targets, drop-outs from secondary schools, and young people who cannot proceed to higher institutions after their secondary education.

Unemployment of young people especially graduates have reached an alarming height in the nation. This is due to the fact that education system is expanding much faster than the economy. The economy is currently shedding jobs more than it creates. Graduate/Youths scabble for the few available jobs leaving so many unemployed. Youth self-employment seems not to be impressive because very few individuals venture into self-employment. It is for this reason that the researcher is looking carefully at entrepreneurship education as a way of exposing students to the knowledge of various skills and businesses while in school so that after graduation they become self-employed rather than job seekers.

The paper discussed the concept of entrepreneurship education and youth empowerment, the youth empowerment strategies, constraints to entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and ways of promoting entrepreneurship among Nigeria youths. It was recommended among others that the entrepreneurial concept should be integrated into the school curriculum from elementary

school to post-secondary education. Pedagogy and facilities must be upgraded to deliver the entrepreneurial educational experience and youths must be ready to imbibe entrepreneurship culture at school and when they are out of school as a possible remedy for unemployment.

By incorporating entrepreneurial education into both formal and informal learning frameworks, this approach equips youth with the essential skills, mindset, and knowledge needed to thrive in an increasingly complex global economy. In response to the growing challenges of youth unemployment, poverty and dependency, this strategy promotes self-reliance, economic independence and social inclusion. Drawing from existing literature, the development of entrepreneurial skills is identified as a critical tool for enhancing employability, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, while also promoting financial literacy, resilience, and leadership.

Furthermore, this approach encourages social responsibility and community engagement, contributing to social cohesion and individual well-being. With a long-term perspective, this strategy aims to empower the youth, reduce unemployment, and foster sustainable economic growth, ultimately paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for Lagos State. The contribution to knowledge lies in demonstrating how the integration of entrepreneurial education within various learning environments can address the socio-economic challenges faced by youth in Lagos, offering a sustainable model for youth development and community transformation.

This paper explores a transformative strategy for youth empowerment in Lagos State through entrepreneurial skills

development, with a focus on creating long term impact in the lives of young individuals. By incorporating entrepreneurial education into both formal and informal learning frameworks, this approach equips youth with the essential skills, mindset, and knowledge needed to thrive in an increasingly complex global economy. In response to the growing challenges of youth unemployment, poverty and dependency, this strategy promotes self-reliance, economic independence and social inclusion. Drawing from existing literature, the development of entrepreneurial skills is identified as a critical tool for enhancing employability, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, while also promoting financial literacy, resilience, and leadership.

Furthermore, this approach encourages social responsibility and community engagement, contributing to social cohesion and individual well-being. With a long-term perspective, this strategy aims to empower the youth, reduce unemployment, and foster sustainable economic growth, ultimately paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for Lagos State. The contribution to knowledge lies in demonstrating how the integration of entrepreneurial education within various learning environments can address the socio-economic challenges faced by youth in Lagos, offering a sustainable model for youth development and community transformation

Nigeria is a nation of paradox, blessed with enormous wealth, but larger proportion of the citizens live in abject poverty and face worsening unemployment. In a bid to mitigate the scourge of poverty and unemployment, previous regimes initiated diverse poverty reductions policies (PRPs) with the objectives of boosting industrial production and level of employment thereby

checkmating joblessness, hopelessness and crime. Despite the various PRPs, the hydra-monster poverty and unemployment have remained endemic judging by official statistics published by reliable bodies. The failures of previous PRPs precipitated the passionate romance with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and compulsory inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curricula of the three levels of higher education in Nigeria.

This paper examines entrepreneurship education and employment stimulation in Nigeria. The authors employed systematic collection of quantitative data and subjected them to econometric analysis on the basis of which informed conclusions were drawn. On the strength of the data sourced, analyzed and interpreted, it was discovered that entrepreneurship development could be effective tools for poverty reduction, stimulating employment as well as fast-tracking realization of universal primary education and promoting gender equality.

The paper recommends that institutions must imbibe a creativity training. This creativity can help the individual view problems from different perspectives. Institutions must intensify the integration of entrepreneurship in education systems. Entrepreneurship education and employment stimulation in Nigeria (*Journal of studies in social sciences* 3 (1), 2013).

Nigeria is a nation of paradox, blessed with enormous wealth, but larger proportion of the citizens live in abject poverty and face worsening unemployment. In a bid to mitigate the scourge of poverty and unemployment, previous regimes initiated diverse poverty reductions policies (PRPs) with the objectives of boosting industrial production and level of employment thereby checkmating joblessness, hopelessness and crime. Despite the various PRPs, the hydra-

monster poverty and unemployment have remained endemic judging by official statistics published by reliable bodies. The failures of previous PRPs precipitated the passionate romance with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and compulsory inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curricula of the three levels of higher education in Nigeria. This paper examines entrepreneurship education and employment stimulation in Nigeria. The authors employed systematic collection of quantitative data and subjected them to econometric analysis on the basis of which informed conclusions were drawn.

On the strength of the data sourced, analyzed and interpreted, it was discovered that entrepreneurship development could be effective tools for poverty reduction, stimulating employment as well as fast-tracking realization of universal primary education and promoting gender equality. The paper recommended that institutions must imbibe a creativity training. This creativity can help the individual view problems from different perspectives. Institutions must intensify the integration of entrepreneurship in education systems.

This paper emphasize properly designed and well implemented Entrepreneurship Education as the solution to youth unemployment problem in Nigeria. Youth unemployment is potentially dangerous as it sends disturbing signal to all segments of the Nigerian Society. The rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria is high, even at the period of economic normalcy i.e. the oil boom of the 1970s (6.2%); 1980s (9.8%) and the 1990s (11.5%). To reduce unemployment, the paper suggests among others, the development of skills, infrastructure and sound curriculum as well as training of trainers and removal of barriers to youth entrepreneurship. This paper sets

out to discuss the role of entrepreneurship education and training in solving the lingering problem of unemployment, particularly among the youth, in developing countries such as Nigeria. This role includes developing human resources through formal programs in entrepreneurship education, training teachers to implement new curricula that emphasize the development of entrepreneurship knowledge and skills, and promoting entrepreneurship and small enterprise creation and growth within local communities through training programs and consultancy services.

This study also highlights the importance of supporting entrepreneurship skills by embedding entrepreneurship teaching throughout the education system, providing information, advice, coaching and mentoring, facilitating access to financing and offering support infrastructure for business start-up with the penultimate result of mitigating youth unemployment problem in the country. The paper further sees hope for Nigeria only if Youths are mobilized by way of genuinely socializing them into taking their roles in the economic development processes. The study concludes with a description of an educational change initiative that is supporting the creation of an "enterprise culture" through entrepreneurship education.

Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964): Investment in education increases individual productivity and economic growth.
Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation (1934): Entrepreneurs drive economic development through innovation. Both theories support the role of entrepreneurship education in youth empowerment and job creation.

Empirical Review

Udu and Amadi (2019) reported a positive impact of entrepreneurship education on job creation in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Ikechukwu and Adetunji (2020) found practical entrepreneurship training increases students' business start-up potential.

Ogunleye and Ojo (2022) highlighted challenges such as inadequate funding and limited practical exposure.

Research Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was used to collect data from selected universities in Nigeria.

Population and Sample

The population comprised 10,000 undergraduate students who had taken entrepreneurship courses. Using stratified random sampling, 200 students were selected to ensure representation across faculties.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into demographic information, entrepreneurial education and empowerment, and job creation. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale.

Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was validated by three experts. Reliability was tested using Cronbach Alpha, resulting in 0.82, indicating high reliability.

Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaires were administered physically and electronically. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean) and inferential statistics (correlation and regression) with SPSS 25.

Results

Demographics

185 completed questionnaires were returned (92.5%). 56% male, 44% female, majority aged 18–25, and 70% final-year students. Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Education and Youth Empowerment, Correlation analysis showed a positive and significant relationship ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.05$).

Entrepreneurial Education and Job Creation

Regression analysis indicated entrepreneurial education accounted for 62% of variance in job creation potential ($R^2 = 0.62$).

Challenges

Main challenges included inadequate funding (83%), poor access to capital (79%), limited practical exposure (74%), and weak university-industry collaboration (68%).

Discussion

Findings indicate that entrepreneurship education significantly empowers students and promotes job creation. It enhances self-confidence, creativity, and business start-up intentions. Challenges such as funding and limited practical exposure reduce program effectiveness, highlighting the need for support structures.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship education is essential for youth empowerment and job creation in Nigeria. Effective implementation with practical training and sufficient resources can transform students into self-reliant job creators.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen practical components through incubation centers and business labs.
2. Provide government and private sector funding support.

3. Review curricula regularly to align with business trends.
4. Build partnerships between universities, industries, and development agencies.
5. Conduct capacity building for lecturers.
6. Encourage participation in innovation hubs and competitions.

References

- Adebayo, T., & Kolawole, J. (2020). Entrepreneurship education and job creation among university graduates in Nigeria. *Journal of Business and Development Studies*, 5(2), 45–57.
- Akpan, U. (2018). Youth empowerment through entrepreneurship education. *African Journal of Educational Research*, 12(3), 87–98.
- Becker, G. S. (1964). *Human capital*. University of Chicago Press.
- Eze, C., & Okonkwo, P. (2021). Entrepreneurship education and youth empowerment in Nigeria. *Journal of Vocational and Technical Education*, 9(1), 33–44.
- Garba, A. (2020). The impact of entrepreneurship education on economic growth in developing countries. *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 9(4), 142–151.
- Ikechukwu, C., & Adetunji, T. (2020). The effect of practical entrepreneurship training on business start-up intentions among Nigerian students. *African Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 4(2), 63–78.
- Ogunleye, T., & Ojo, A. (2022). Institutional support and the success of entrepreneurship education programs in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Educational Development*, 14(1), 55–69.
- Okoro, F. (2021). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy and youth empowerment in Nigeria. *Journal of Management Science*, 8(3), 102–115.
- Olayemi, S. (2019). Entrepreneurship education as a driver for job creation among university graduates in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 7(2), 29–39.
- Olorundare, A., & Kayode, O. (2019). Promoting entrepreneurial learning in Nigerian universities: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Educational Policy and Administration*, 11(1), 91–104.
- Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). *The theory of economic development*. Harvard University Press.
- Udu, A., & Amadi, E. (2019). The impact of entrepreneurship education on job creation in South-Eastern Nigeria. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 10(2), 78–92.