

# Entrepreneurship Development Programme and Job Creation in Awka, Anambra State Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

### Abstract

The problem of unemployment has remained a reoccurring issues in Awka, Anambra State and Nigeria as a whole. In bid to this problem, the study focused on the effect of entrepreneurship on job creation in Awka, Anambra State. The study was anchored on Human Capital Theory by Becker (2002). Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and complete enumeration was used to determine the sample size of 270 which also is the population size of the study. Data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaire while bio data were presented using simple frequency and percentage tables. Data were analyzed using arithmetic mean and hypotheses were tested using Simple Regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS version 27). Findings revealed that there is significant effect of entrepreneurship development on job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria by indicating positive effect of entrepreneurship education on job creation, secondly, positive relationship between entrepreneurship skill training and job creation; and lastly, positive effect of entrepreneurship continuity on job creation. The study concluded that entrepreneurship development significantly contributes to job creation as indicators of entrepreneurship development such as entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship skill training and entrepreneurship continuity promotes self-employment and generate employment for others. The study therefore, recommended that both government and non-government organizations should focus on entrepreneurship developmental programmes as solution to unemployment situation in Awka, Anambra State.

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## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is as old as man, with the first man having the skills and creativity to farm and raise rare livestock as a source of income. Entrepreneurship has gained global attention and recognition as a means of revolving and sustaining a nation's economic growth and stability. Entrepreneurship knowledge enables people to assess and apply their creative abilities for the personal and economic development of a nation. Entrepreneurship is defined as activities that allow an individual to discover and apply their skills in the creation of new products or the improvement of existing products through innovative skills, thereby becoming self-sufficient. An entrepreneur is someone who is driven, has creative and innovative skills, and is passionate about becoming self-sufficient without relying entirely on government for survival. Furthermore, an entrepreneur is someone who channels his or her talent and skills into a profitable venture.

Entrepreneurship development is the key to poverty eradication, unemployment, job creation, and rapid economic development; various governments in Nigeria have evolved policies and programs over the last three decades. With Nigeria's unending unemployment situation, there is likely no hope for aspiring graduates and uneducated youths, as unemployment is regarded as one of the country's major problems. Though successive governments have implemented strategies, policies, and programs to address the issue of unemployment, it appears that the more efforts made to create jobs, the higher the rate of unemployment in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship has played a critical role and is a vital engine in a nation's economic growth and development because it promotes indigenous entrepreneurship in Nigeria (Paul, 2017). In addition to the role of entrepreneurship, the government has initiated a number of programs to empower and encourage entrepreneurial activities, recognizing the critical role it plays in economic development and the improvement of people's standard of living. However, the goal of creating the aforementioned programs was thwarted by their inability to provide the necessary assistance to entrepreneurs (Asogwa & Anah, 2017). Furthermore, some of the programs initiated by various administrations in Nigeria have suffered setbacks due to a lack of education, skill training, entrepreneurship continuity, corruption among officials charged with such responsibilities and lack of clarity of goals. The issue of lack of continuity in project delivery is synonymous with the Nigerian government, and it has had a negative impact on the country's economic development as well as waste of resources and productive ideas. Many strategic programs aimed at addressing the problem of graduate unemployment have failed due to a lack of continuity in the implementation of inherited programs, as almost every regime wants to claim credit as the originator of a program while ignoring the former.

The practice of entrepreneurship is at minimum in Awka, Anambra State as there are more business repetitions than the innovations and creativity. The low involvement of individuals and business owners in entrepreneurship practices have resulted in high competitiveness of business. Though, programmes organized by both governmental and non-governmental organizations were targeted encouraging the involvement of youths especially in the agricultural sector. But it seems the entrepreneurship-centered programmes have not yielded success in creating more job opportunities. In an effort to address the issue of unemployment in Awka, Anambra State, the government has begun incorporating entrepreneurship education into the school curriculum in order to impact the knowledge of entrepreneurship in educational institutions.

Because of the critical role that entrepreneurship plays in a nation's economic development, failure to effectively manage entrepreneurship development programs will have a negative impact on Nigeria's economic development. To that end, this study focused on the effect of entrepreneurship development on job creation in Awka, Anambra State Nigeria. This study intends to;

1. examine the impact of entrepreneurship education on job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.
2. determine the relationship between entrepreneurship skill training and job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.
3. examine the effect of entrepreneurship continuity on job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

#### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent does entrepreneurship education influence on job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria?
2. what is the relationship between entrepreneurship skill training and job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria?
3. what is the effect of entrepreneurship continuity on job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria?

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Entrepreneurship development encompasses initiatives that foster an entrepreneurial mindset, creativity, and risk-taking propensity among individuals, encouraging them to explore and exploit opportunities for value creation and economic growth. However, Shepherd and Douglas, (2019) observed that the essence of entrepreneurship development is the ability to envision and chart a course for a new business venture by combining information from the functional disciplines and from the external environment in the context of the extraordinary uncertainty and ambiguity which faces a new business venture. It then manifests itself in creative strategies, innovative tactics, uncanny perception of trends and market mood changes and courageous leadership. To the duo, 'entrepreneurship', when treated as 'enterprise-creation' helps develop new skills and experiences that can be applied to many other challenging areas in life. More importantly, Schnurr and Newing (2015) justified the need for promoting entrepreneurship culture on the ground that youth in all societies have

sterling qualities such as resourcefulness, initiative, drive, imagination, enthusiasm, zest, dash, ambition, energy, boldness, audacity and courage which are all valuable traits for entrepreneurship development. Supporting this assertion, Bennell, (2018) maintained that governments, NGOs and international bodies seeking to improve youth livelihoods could best pursue their empowerment objective by tapping into the dynamism of young people and build on their strong spirit of risk-taking through entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship development has also led to employment generation, growth of the economy and sustainable development. The current number of colleges and universities offering small business management and entrepreneurship development programme has grown from one university in 1947 to over 1600 in the 1990s (Solomon & Fernald, 2018).

Fayolle and Gailly (2015) identified some key component of entrepreneurship development which include: Empowerment, Training, Mentorship, Access to Resources, Networking Opportunities, Viability and Sustainability, Innovation and Creativity, Business Development and Supportive Ecosystem. Moreover, it is estimated that connecting entrepreneurship education only with business world is not enough, as it limits the opportunities of learners and teaching community. Entrepreneurship education has taken on dimensions related to social, psychological and pedagogical aspects, making it a process through which learners acquire a broad set of competencies by bringing individual, social, and economic benefits (European Commission 2011; Hägg and Gabrielsson 2019; Ndou, 2019).

### **Job Creation**

The concept of job creation is not new in social and management science, consequently, the concept has been variously defined by scholars in the disciplines (Bertoldi, et al., 2020). The concept of job creation varies from scholars, depending on their notion of what job creation should be. One of such definition has been defined by the Director-General of Small and Medium Enterprises and Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) - Umar, Muhammad and Nadada (2016) defines the concept of job creation in the following manner; “the process of providing new jobs for unemployed people, the process of providing jobs for yourself, and the process of providing more paid jobs” (Zellweger, et al, 2022).

Entrepreneurship sensitization plays a significant role in job creation and employment generation. When more individuals are encouraged and empowered to become entrepreneurs, they are likely to start their own businesses, which can lead to several job opportunities for others (Okoh 2021). In today's rapidly evolving global economy, traditional job markets face challenges such as automation, digitization, and shifts in consumer preferences. These challenges underscore the importance of fostering a culture of entrepreneurship. By sensitizing individuals about the potential of starting their own ventures, we can inspire a new generation of problem solvers and job creators. (Eric 2023). Marin Lackeus (2015), states that entrepreneurship education/training enables youths to understand that though a job can be done with certain skill today, tomorrow a new set of skills may be required to suit the job this is due to the ever-changing nature of business and as such youth are better informed that they constantly have to improve themselves to suit the ever-changing business environment.

### **Entrepreneurship Education and Job Creation**

Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings (Abiogu, 2015). Entrepreneurship education is known as a specialized knowledge that inculcates in learners the traits of risk-taking, innovation, arbitrage and co-ordination of factors of production for the purpose of creating new products or services for new and existing users within human communities (Akhue-monkhan & Raimi, 2014). Entrepreneurship education is considered central to the economic development of nations (Kabongo & Okpara, 2020). Entrepreneurship education has to increase entrepreneurial self-efficacy, self-employment, and risk-taking attitude of the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship education creates enormous business opportunities and trains people with innovative enterprise skills to grasp the opportunities for starting new entrepreneurial activities (Cheng & Chan 2018). Entrepreneurship education is one way of enhancing job creation thereby addressing poverty reduction, as there is strong empirical evidence suggesting that economic growth over time is necessary for poverty reduction. Entrepreneurship boosts economic growth, enhances educational attainment and increases the rate of economic growth (Mitral & Abubakar, 2015).

The significant need for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria today, more than ever, is permeated by the high rate of unemployment and its negative effect on both the populace and the nation's socio-economic development,

among others such as robbery, prostitution, human trafficking, militancy, terrorism, drug abuse, and political snuggery and assassination (Okpako, 2018). To this end, there is a prime need for entrepreneurship education to be propagated, to enable individuals to go into venture creation as self-employed or joint venture creation, thus promoting the advancement of small and medium enterprises, as well as reducing the rate of unemployment.

### **Skill Training and Job Creation**

Entrepreneurship skill training (skill acquisition) is always about value creation, this creation of value is often through identification of unmet needs or through the identification of opportunities for change (Ernst & Young, 2019). In every act of entrepreneurship development through skill training, a new firm is raised hence entrepreneurship is enterprise-creation. Some efforts of the Federal Government towards entrepreneurship can be seen in the establishment of the following skills-specific enterprises (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Industrial Attachment or Student Industrial Working Experience Scheme (SIWES), Vocational and technical training, Agricultural training, Information and Communication Technology Training (ICT training). The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) for instance was Nigeria's response to the need for entrepreneurship training of school youths towards solving the problem of unemployment.

The importance of entrepreneurship skill training cannot be over-emphasized since appropriate skills acquisition through entrepreneurship will help to make young school leavers and graduates self-reliant and boost their economic status through self-employment and joint venture creation (Anyadike, et al., 2022). To this end, for applauding the benefits of entrepreneurial orientation to manifest in our youths' and the general public, training (skill acquisition), innovativeness, and risk-taking must be learned through formal or non-formal settings. The acquisition of entrepreneurship skills and competencies will not only assist in job creation for the elimination of unemployment but will so enhance economic development and reduce social ills plaguing the society. It will enable these jobless graduates to be employers of labour themselves. (Chijioke, 2023).

### **Entrepreneurship Continuity and Job Creation**

Entrepreneurship continuity is the ability of entrepreneurs to sustain and grow their businesses over time, despite the challenges and uncertainties they may face (Audretsch & Keilbach, 2023). Entrepreneurship continuity can have a positive effect on job creation, as well as on economic, social, and environmental welfare (European Commission, 2019). However, the extent and nature of this effect may depend on various factors, such as the type, size, sector, and location of the entrepreneurial ventures, the quality and quantity of the jobs created, and the policy and institutional environment that supports or hinders entrepreneurship. According to European Commission (2019), entrepreneurship continuity can contribute to job creation in the following ways:

New and innovative firms can create new jobs by introducing new products, services, technologies, or business models that meet unmet or latent market needs (European Commission, 2019). These firms can also stimulate competition and productivity in the economy, leading to more efficient resource allocation and higher growth potential.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Human Capital Theory was credited to this study as it emphatically highlights the transformative power of investing in human skills, knowledge, and experiences. By recognizing the significance of human potential, entrepreneurship education can shape aspiring entrepreneurs with an unwavering entrepreneurial mindset, fostering creativity, risk-taking, and opportunity recognition. Emphasizing skill development and practical know-how, it equips individuals with the tools they need to make informed decisions, manage risks effectively, and succeed in the competitive business landscape. Through human capital-driven entrepreneurship education, innovation thrives as entrepreneurs are encouraged to think critically, explore new ideas, and create groundbreaking solutions. Moreover, this approach unlocks access to vital resources like funding, partnerships, and talent, empowering entrepreneurs to grow and scale their ventures, thus stimulating job creation and contributing to overall economic growth.

An emphatic embrace of human capital theory in entrepreneurship education results in a more inclusive and diverse entrepreneurial ecosystem. By providing opportunities to individuals from all backgrounds and

communities, it fosters an environment where innovation and economic progress know no bounds. Additionally, this approach encourages lifelong learning, ensuring that entrepreneurs stay updated with industry trends, technological advancements, and best practices, making them agile, adaptable, and poised to overcome challenges. In essence, human capital theory's emphatic influence on entrepreneurship development and education ignites a cycle of growth and sustainability, transforming potential into reality and paving the way for a prosperous and resilient future.

### Empirical Review

Ogundele and Akingbade (2023) investigate the impact of entrepreneurship training intensity on the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by small-scale businesses in Nigeria. The study used a survey design, and 250 entrepreneurs were selected from five recognized local government areas in Lagos state, South Western Nigeria. They used stratified random sampling via a self-monitored questionnaire survey, and simple regression analysis was used to test the relationship between entrepreneurship training and education and poverty alleviation. They discovered that entrepreneurship training had a significant impact on entrepreneurial skills. The study also discovered that youth empowerment was influenced by their technical skills. The study recommended that effective technical education, youth empowerment, and social welfare services serve as a catalyst for poverty alleviation.

Alolaqi, et al., (2021) conducted research on youth unemployment and the role of skill acquisition, with a particular emphasis on factors influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions in Kano, Kano State. The expo facto research design was chosen for the study, and the quantitative method research design is illustrated and will be used in this study. Data were collected using an online survey method, with the target audience being young business owners in Kano, Kano State. Data were analyzed using standard deviation, and hypotheses were tested using Chi-squared (X<sup>2</sup>). The findings revealed that individual entrepreneurship influences undergraduate entrepreneurial intentions to prepare students to become future entrepreneurs in Kano, Kano State. The study suggested that an entrepreneurial orientation facilitates

Asogwa and Nzewi (2020) investigated entrepreneurial skill development and unemployment reduction in Anambra State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was used in conjunction with a structured questionnaire from respondents. The formulated hypothesis was tested at the 5% level of significance using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The findings revealed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between creative capacity and employment generation, as well as opportunity discovery and business ownership. The study concluded that the Anambra state government should financially revitalize and sustain youth empowerment programs.

### METHODOLOGY

As a qualitative study, the study used a survey research design. The study focused on Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. The study sampled nine (9) communities: Umuawulu, Nibo, Awka, Nise, Amawbia, Okpuno, Isiagu, Mbaukwu, and Ezinato, Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State as the study focus, and Krejcie and Morgan, 1970 table of sample size determination, as adopted from (Olannye, 2017). The sample size is 159 because the study is on youths of the nine communities. The study employed simple random sampling. The study used primary data and structured questionnaires, both of which were validated by lecturers and business administration experts, as well as the instrument's reliability was tested through spearman correlation value of 0.97 approximated at 1 greater than 0.7 being the minimum threshold for reliability (Sekaran, 2003). Correlation coefficient was used to test hypotheses at a 5% significance level, regression analysis was performed using SPSS version 27.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

H<sub>01</sub>: Entrepreneurship education does not significantly influence job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Table 1. Regression Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.810 <sup>a</sup>	.212	.105	8.23383



a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurship education

Table 1 shows that regression coefficient which is  $r = 0.810$ , R square is 0.212 and adjusted R square is 0.105. This implies that has entrepreneurship education has positive effect on the dependent variable.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship skill training and job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 2. Regression Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.701 <sup>a</sup>	.035	-.054	2.53167

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurship\_skill\_training

Table 2 shows that regression coefficient which is  $r = 0.701$ , R square is 0.035 and adjusted R square is -0.054. This implies that entrepreneurship skill training is significantly related to the dependent variable.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** entrepreneurship continuity has no significant effect on job creation in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Table 3. Regression Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.725 <sup>a</sup>	.413	.564	1.24706

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurship\_continuity

Table 3 shows that regression coefficient which is  $r = 0.725$ , R square is 0.413 and adjusted R square is 0.564. This implies that entrepreneurship continuity has positive effect on the dependent variable

### Discussion of Findings

The test of the first hypothesis revealed that there is positive effect of entrepreneurship education on job creation with that  $r = 0.810$ ,  $n = 213 - 1 = 212$  and p value of 0.39. This implies that entrepreneurship education significantly contributes to job creation.

Result from the test of the second hypothesis revealed that there is positive relationship between entrepreneurship skill training and job creation with  $r = 0.701$ ,  $n = 213 - 1 = 212$  and p value of 0.019. This implies that entrepreneurship skill training creates entrepreneurs in Awka, Anambra State.

Findings from the third hypothesis revealed that that there is positive effect of entrepreneurship continuity on job creation with  $r = 0.725$ ,  $df = 213 - 1 = 212$ , p value is 0.033. the implication of this finding revealed that entrepreneurship continuity creates a platform for more self-employment

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that entrepreneurship development significantly contributes to job creation as indicators of entrepreneurship development such as entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship skill training and entrepreneurship continuity promotes self-employment and generate employment for others. To an extent, it can be deduced that entrepreneurship development is the foundation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Scale (MSMEs) as owners and managers of MSMEs operates with limited resources and with little or no assistance from government. Entrepreneurship education is a practice that transfers knowledge of innovation, risk evaluation, opportunity identification and creativity in businesses. Lack of entrepreneurship development often results to business practice repetition and results in high competition but the practice of entrepreneurship skill training impacts significant innovative, risk taking and opportunity seeking skills. Entrepreneurship continuity can be enhanced through empowerment of youth and SMEs owners through entrepreneurship development programmes. Lastly, it can be deduced that entrepreneurship education, skill training and

continuity are significant contributors to job creation through self-employment and employment generation for others as well.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that government and non-government organizations should focus on entrepreneurship developmental programmes as solution to unemployment situation in Awka, Anambra State, and there should be sensitization programmes for youths and business owners on the need to subscribe to entrepreneurship education programmes and skill acquisition.

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