**ASSESSMENT OF ENTERPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A STRATEGY FOR REDUCING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA: EMPIRICAL FROM THE FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC ILARO**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study examined entrepreneurship education as a strategy for reducing youth unemployment in Nigeria with reference to Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro. The broad objectives of this study was to examine the possibly ways of eradicating unemployment through the introduction of entrepreneurial skills. The study is a descriptive survey design. Questionnaire items were distributed to 390 respondents to gather factual information about the topic. Their responses were tested using appropriate statistical tool like the simple percentage. The study found that there are roles entrepreneurial skills and businesses play in youth employment in Nigeria through entrepreneurial development. Furthermore, it also revealed that youths in Nigeria could be given basic training on how best to establish and grow business enterprise in local communities within the country. The study therefore recommended that government should curb corruption and greed and formulate policies that will promote the success of entrepreneurship and free enterprise; government should assist entrepreneurs through regular marketing workshops and seminars in conjunction with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) and Chambers of Commerce and Industries.*

*Keywords: Unemployment, Training, Employment, business enterprise, Entrepreneurial Skill.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The background of the studies stated that unemployment have created a huge vacuum in mind of scholars in Nigeria and all over the world. This is so because the rising of poverty and social vices have stimulated the economic and political crises experienced in recent years. World bank (2004), in his report state that poverty in Africa is set to rise and by 2015 constitute 50% of the world poorest people. Thaddeus (2012) and Adebola (2014), also stated that the nation called Nigeria is blessed with raw materials, human resources and blessed with citizens with good knowledge, skills and talents but this has been inhabited by the implementation of inappropriate and unsustainable industrialization policies at different periods.

Government at all levels also come up with various policies designed to entrepreneurship development via small and medium scale enterprise based on technology transfer strategy, were unsuccessful in the achievement of desired goals as it lead to the most indigenous entrepreneurs turning to distribution agent of foreign product in contrast to building in country entrepreneurial capacity for manufacturing mechanized agricultural and expertise services (Adebola, 2014). According to Chukwara (2010); Nwaka (2015); Oyelola, Ajiboshun, Raimi, Raheem and Igwe (2003) between 45 and 60 percent of the urban labour force engage in small private enterprises which is believed to have contributed greatly to the reduction of unemployment in Nigeria.

In Nigeria, private sector comprising of small and medium enterprises provides employment opportunity or job opportunity over 50percent of the country’s population and 50percent of the industrial input (Ariyo, 2005; Oyelola *et al*, 2013).

Many people are unemployed because they have not acquired the skills that are frequently needed in the environment they operate. Others are unemployed because their skills have been rendered obsolete by technological changes or because they have no skills at all (Kpakol, 2006). The rate of unemployment opportunities is far below the growth in population due to lack of productive skills and investments which leave the youth without any sustainable means of livelihood, this is a result of poverty and unemployment. There’s no doubt that one of the major problem or challenges confronting the youth, many nations after graduating from school is lack of unemployment.

The problem facing the social, economic and political standard in Nigeria which leads to recession is unemployment. This problem leads to armed robbery, fraud, kidnapping, drug trafficking, human trafficking, prostitution, among others.Therefore, to curb problems in the society, unemployment must be tackled through various mechanisms, including entrepreneurship education. This study tends to examine entrepreneurship education as a strategy of reducing youth unemployment in Nigeria, with empirical among students of the Federal Polytehchnic, Ilaro, Ogun State.

**2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Concept of Entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship is been defined by various authors to mean many things, since the middle age. The entrepreneur has been seen as an innovator and developer of technology. However, the summary of what entrepreneurship means will reflect the individual definer’s point of view. According to Akanwa and Akpanabia (2012), entrepreneurship is seen as the ability of individual to seek investment opportunities establish and run enterprise successfully. According to Esomomu (1998), define enterprises as the manipulation of human intelligence, as demonstrated in a creative and innovative performance. According to Tijani-Alawiye (2004), defines it as the process of adding to the stock of existing small, medium enterprise available to a country by creating and promoting many entrepreneur who can successfully run an enterprise, nurture them to grow and sustain them with a view to achieving board of social-economic development goals. It is also the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas with management and organizational skill in order to combine people’s money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby creating wealth.

According to Nbaegbu (2008), submitted that there is, therefore no “one best” definition for entrepreneur. He however stated, “Anyone who create a business, establishes it, and nurses it to growth and profitability or takes over an existing business because the founder is dead or has sold it, on a man who inherited it and continue to build and innovate it, or a man who runs a franchise qualifies as an entrepreneur in our usage. Nowadays, businesses, entrepreneurs and individuals are adopting the concept of innovation and creativity.

**2.2 Concept of Unemployment**

The concept of unemployment refers to a situation whereby people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment. It is also a number of population who are without work but available for seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left their jobs due to poor salaries and allowances.

Unemployment and poverty remains the challenges in Nigeria over a very log-time (Akwara *et al* 2013). According to Udu and Agu (2005), unemployment is a situation in which a person capable of working is unable to find work. According to International Labour Organization (ILO 2007). Unemployed workers are those who are currently not working but are willing to work for a pay available and have actively searched for work. According to Homby (2010), defines unemployment as the number of people who are not having a job, the number of people without a job, Nigeria does not have credible data on the rate of unemployment (Udu and Agu 2005), because no institution has been able to produce accurate figure showing the current rate of unemployment (Udu and Agu 2005). The great need for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria today more than ever is necessitated by the rate.

**2.3 Causes of Youth Unemployment in Nigeria**

The rapid population growth is one of the causes of unemployment in Nigeria. The 2006 census in Nigeria, the nation’s population was put at 140,431,790 and projections for the future indicate that the population could be over 180 million by the year 2020, given the annual growth rate of 3.2 percent (National Population Commission and ICF Macro, 2009). With this population, Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa. It is argued that the high population growth rate has resulted in the rapid growth of the labour force, which is far outstripping the supply of jobs. The accelerated growth of population on Nigeria’s unemployment problem is multifaceted. It affects the supply side through a high and rapid increase in the labour force relative to the absorptive capacity of the economy.

The cause of youth unemployment in Nigeria is caused by the total number of graduate turned out by the higher institution in Nigeria which were 73,339 and rose to 131,016. The causes of youth unemployment is tide of youth unemployment in Nigeria has made them vulnerable to the manipulation of agent as evidence in the increasing cause of violent crimes like Yahoo, kidnapping, assassination and different manifestation of organized crimes such as drug and human trafficking.

**2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The process of entrepreneurship activity reducing unemployment situation in the economy is termed “Schumpeter effect”. This study found out that unemployment negatively related to new-firm startups, that is, as new businesses are established employ ability is stimulated and unemployment reduces substantially. The high unemployment in the society is associated with a low degree of entrepreneurial activities, that is, where propensity to setup enterprises is low; the rate of unemployment would be very high. The implications of the above assertion is that those who are unemployed tend to remain so because they possess lower endowments of human capital and entrepreneurial talents required to start and sustain new firms to keep them going. A low rate of entrepreneurship culture and skills in any society maybe a consequence of the low economic growth, which also reflects higher level of unemployment (Audretsch, 1995 & Oladele, 2011).

**2.5 EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Prior studies on entrepreneurial development among scholars presented varied perspectives and findings. Taiwo (2014) carried out an empirical research on impact of entrepreneurship development on job creation in Nigeria. He found out that in any giving economy, entrepreneurship development always give birth to job creation which will force people to do something that will better their lives and the country at large. He evaluated the relationship between job creation and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. It was clear from his observation that job creation or employment opportunity in an economy can be traceable to entrepreneurship training and development.

Anyadike, Emeh and Ukah (2012), they took a study on Nigeria’s growing unemployment situation and how it increasingly dwindles the potentials of the country, especially following official figures from the Bureau of statistics that puts the figure at about 40 million Nigerian youths captured in World Bank statistics in 2009 are unemployed. Having utilized the secondary source data, the paper remained extensively on current articles from ardent scholars on entrepreneurship development and government statistical documentations. The authors concluded that government should make entrepreneurship sellable to the people by inculcating it into the educational curriculum at every state of the educational sector and also utilize a re-modeled NYSC scheme educate the youths more on the importance, essences and need for entrepreneurship development.

Akanwaa *et al* (2012) examined the need for promoting employment in Nigeria through the development of entrepreneurship. The work relies mostly on secondary data from scholars/ authors in the field. They concluded that, government and it’s agencies should deliberately encourage entrepreneurial culture and skill in Nigeria in order to attack and eventually reduce the high level of unemployment situation in the country so that the nation will boost its economic development.

Bandal (2010), carried out empirical study on leveraging the relationship between entrepreneurship and job creation. He found out that individual talent, attitude, skills and knowledge along with several contextual variables such as social capital, access to credit, role of government technology and infrastructure, access to information and access to markets work together to drive entrepreneurial activity.

Nwachukwu and Ogbo (2012) carried out empirical research on the role of entrepreneurship in economic development: The Nigerian perspective. The aim of the paper is to develop and analyses the contributions of entrepreneurship in the economic development through SME development in Nigeria. A total of 1000 SMES were randomly selected from a cross section of a population of all SMES spread around some states of Nigeria. The hypotheses of this research which were tested at 0.05 level of significance using chi-square statistics hinged on identifying the greatest problem which SMES face in Nigeria. The researcher found out that SMES have played and continue to play significant roles in the growth, development and industrialization of many economics the world over. They concluded that promoters of SMES should thus ensure the availability or possessions of managerial capacity and acumen before pursuing financial resources for the development of the respective enterprise

Baba (2018) carried out research work on the challenges of Entrepreneurship development in Nigeria and way forward. He is of the view that in this era of shrinking economic activities, government should endeavour to provide the necessary infrastructures required for skills acquisition among its citizenry because without technological skills, entrepreneurial spirit which drives economic development through job creation will be lacking. He concluded that entrepreneurship is essential for rapid and sustained economic growth but there is urgent need to change the mind-set of the average Nigerian especially the youths towards embracing selfemployment and de-emphasize the search for white collar jobs that are non-existent.

Okoye *et al* (2014) carried out research on the extent to which entrepreneurship in Nigeria has helped to reduce youth unemployment. The study revealed that government policies and initiative has affected the “transformation question”. This is due to the increase of corruption, inadequate and maladministration. They concludes that entrepreneurship country is an engine for job creation, innovation and diversity and that Nigeria’s entrepreneurs have a long way to go before they can effectively drive changes in the economy. They recommend that government should genuinely recognize the essence of entrepreneurship to economic development by providing the enabling environment for the youth to be gainful employed for economic development.

**3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted descriptive research design through the use of questionnaire and conduct of interview to various stakeholders where necessary. The populations consist of about 6, 200 students registered in the institution for 2018/2019 academic session. However, Taro Yamane was adopted to select sample size of 390 students proportionately allocated to each 5 schools in which the institution was divided, in which 380 questionnaire were returned and found useful for the study. That is, School of Management Studies, School of Pure and Applied Sciences, School of Engineering, School of Environmental Studies and School of Communication and Information Technology. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistical methods such as frequency distribution table and percentage.

**4.1 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

Table 4.1 presented the analysis of responses used to test the effect of entrepreneurship education on the reduction of youth unemployment in Nigeria, using the federal polytechnic Ilaro as case study.

**Table 4.1: Effect of Entrepreneurship Education in Reducing Youth Unemployment in Nigeria using the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun State.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Questions** | **SA** |  | **A** |  | **D** |  | **SD** |  | **Total** |  |
|  |  | **F** | **%** | **F** | **%** | **F** | **%** | **F** | **%** | **F** | **%** |
| 1 | Unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solve through Entrepreneuship Development | 308 | 81.1 | 44 | 11.6 | 28 | 7.4 | 0 | 0.0 | 380 | 100 |
| 2 | Entrepreneurship Education facilities is the use of local raw material and other resources | 168 | 44.2 | 168 | 44.2 | 36 | 9.5 | 8 | 2.1 | 380 | 100 |
| 3 | Entrepreneurship Education promotes interdependent of business in Nigeria. | 220 | 57.9 | 64 | 16.8 | 88 | 23.2 | 8 | 2.1 | 380 | 100 |
| 4 | Entrepreneurship Education programme of government will be able to lessen unemployment problem in Nigeria | 164 | 43.2 | 96 | 25.3 | 104 | 27.4 | 16 | 4.2 | 380 | 100 |
| 5 | Entrepreneruship programmes is designed to ensure graudates are employer of labour, not just self employed | 40 | 10.5 | 176 | 46.3 | 116 | 30.5 | 48 | 12.6 | 380 | 100 |

**Source: Fieldwork, 2019**

The table above shows that 81% of the total sampled respondents strongly agree that unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solve through entrepreneurial development, 11.6% agree that unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solve through entrepreneurial development and 7.4% disagree that unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solve through entrepreneurial development. The second variable shows that 44.2% of the total sampled respondents strongly agree that entrepreneurship facilities is the use of local raw materials and other resources, 44.2% of the total sampled respondents agree that entrepreneurship facilities is the use of local raw materials and other resources, 9.5% of the total sampled respondents disagreed that entrepreneurship facilities is the use of local raw materials and other resources, and 2.1% of the total sampled respondents strongly disagreed that entrepreneurship facilities is the use of local raw materials and other resources. The third variable shows that 57.9% of the total sampled respondents strongly agree that Entrepreneurship Education promotes interdependent of business in Nigeria, 16.8% of the total sampled respondents agree that entrepreneurship education promotes interdependent of business in Nigeria, 23.2% of the total sampled respondents disagreed that entrepreneurship education promotes interdependent of business in Nigeria and 2.1% of the total sampled respondents strongly disagree that entrepreneurship education promotes interdependent of business in Nigeria.

The fourth variable shows that 43.2% of the total sampled respondents strongly agree that entrepreneurship education programme of government will be able to lessen the unemployment problems in Nigeria, 25.3% of the total sampled respondents agree that entrepreneurship education programme of government will be able to lessen the unemployment problems in Nigeria, 27.4% of the total sampled respondents disgareed that entrepreneurship education programme of government will be able to lessen the unemployment problems in Nigeria, 4.2% of the total sampled respondents strongly disagree that entrepreneurship education programme of government will be able to lessen the unemployment problems in Nigeria. The fifth variable shows that 10.5% of the total sampled respondents strongly agree that Entrepreneruship programmes is designed to ensure graduates are employer of labour, not just self employed, 46.3% of the total sampled respondents agree that Entrepreneruship programmes is designed to ensure graduates are employer of labour, not just self employed, 30.5% of the total sampled respondents disagree that Entrepreneruship programmes is designed to ensure graduates are employer of labour, not just self employed, 12.6% of the total sampled respondents strongly disagree that Entrepreneruship programmes is designed to ensure graduates are employer of labour, not just self employed.

**4.2 Discussion of Findings**

The responses to questionnaire administered to the students of each schools in Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro reveals that entrepreneurship education is a key strategy for reducing youth unemployment in Nigeria. The research also ascertains that there are roles entrepreneurial skills or business play in employment of youths in Nigeria through entrepreneurial development. Furthermore, if also shows that youths can be given basic training on how best to mobilize savings for growth and development of business enterprise in local communities within the state and it also goes ahead to reveal that different entrepreneurial development programmes can be able to lessen the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

**5.1 CONCLUSION**

The challenges of fighting the rising state of unemployment in Nigeria are the major task of policy makers and economic managers alike. The consequences of growing unemployment rates are such damning that no economy can afford to despise. Such implications are glaring in the economy of Nigeria where many negative developments are traceable to the no availability of jobs for the teaming population of energetic youths. Therefore, the need to aptly address this ugly development becomes paramount. While the government takes the leading role in the task of employment generation by providing the necessary enabling environment for economic activities, it is necessary to note that the battle against unemployment in Nigeria is like war that is too important to be left for the Generals alone. Therefore, the only strategy in salvaging this ugly situation is through incorporation of entrepreneurship in the development of youths. This strategy could come in form of training of the youths, developing of entrepreneur traits, among others. The evidence suggested that when designed appropriately government programmes can have significant impact on increasing the existing rate of young people from unemployment with reasonable result on value for public money.

**5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research findings, the study will be incomplete without the following recommendations:

* Government should genuinely recognize the essence of entrepreneurship training, job   
  creation and innovation to unemployment reduction by providing the enabling environment for the youths to be gainful empowered.
* The scope of the training programme should be extended to include technical skills,   
  managerial skills and business skills.
* Unemployed youths in Nigeria should be strengthened to embrace entrepreneurship devoid the imitation and vocational inclinations.
* Adequate financial, physical and human resources should be provided by various stakeholders not only for potential but also for existing entrepreneurs.
* Government should strive to reduce the cost of doing business in Nigeria, to the benefit of both entrepreneurial firms and other small businesses.
* Government must also exigently attend to the nagging issue of infrastructural deficits in the country especially that of power supply. The national economy need a strategic   
  diversification from oil and gas to agriculture, aviation, tourism, manufacturing and   
  these should become the real engine of growth of the economy.

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