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Entrepreneurship Education And Self-Efficacy: Strategies For Reducing Unemployment Problem Among Nigerian Graduates

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Abstract: This paper considered entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy as strategies for reducing unemployment problems among Nigerian graduates. Based on a survey of 180 Unemployed graduates seeking employment through Integrated Corporate Services Limited (ICSL) and Vic Lawrence & Associates Limited (VLA) recruiting firms, this paper analyzes graduates' unemployment level and its influencing factors (i.e. Entrepreneurship education and Self-efficacy). Two hypotheses were raised and regression was used to analyse the data collected. The research result shows that entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy are important factors in determining the intention to entrepreneurship therefore reducing the level of unemployment in Nigeria. There is an urgent need for all tertiary institutions in Nigeria to comply with the presidential directives to the effect that entrepreneurship education be made compulsory for all students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, irrespective of their areas of specialization. The findings also indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship among entrepreneurship education, self-efficacy and unemployment problem. It was found that the acquisition of skills, ideas and abilities management necessary for job creation involve strong entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy which can promote employment rather than seeking for an employment. It was recommended among others that the scope of the entrepreneurship education should be extended to include technical, managerial and business skills.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Education, Self-Efficacy, Unemployment, Graduates

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I. INTRODUCTION

Government and policy makers in Nigeria are faced with different social-economic problems. One of the most pressing challenges facing Nigeria especially in the face of economy recession is unemployment problem among the graduates. The underlying problem is that there is an increasing number of graduates from Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities that are seeking opportunities in the labour market every year. As the graduates cannot always depend on the public and private sectors in providing job opportunities, entrepreneurship is tend to be the alternative solution for their unemployment [1]. Their ability to start their own business, being self-employed, and being self-confidence that the business will thrive in the face of difficult and challenging situation is the focus of this study. The important role entrepreneurs play in the growth and development of an economy can never be over-emphasized. Entrepreneurs' role in the social and economic growth and development is one of the major causes of entrepreneurial behaviours, such as having positive attitudes and entrepreneurial intent. Entrepreneurship has been observed to be an important and beneficial activity at the level of firms, industries, regions, and nations [2]; [3]; [4] & [5]. Therefore, government, policy makers and academic researchers had considered the promotion of entrepreneurship an essential factor to social-economic development. For instance academic researchers have attempted to investigate the effects of different educational policies on the development of entrepreneurial intent within targeted populations [6].

Since the age of globalization entrepreneurship has become crucial to every country be it developed, developing and under-developed. The growth of entrepreneurial activities will help in creating jobs for the society and reducing the unemployment rate [7] which proved that entrepreneurship is vital in creating and fulfilling a healthy economy [8] and [9] opines that the growth of entrepreneurship is significant to a country's economy.

Education is an essential tool for sustainability, the key to national development and the potential of the citizen can only be unlocked by education. It also empowers and equips individuals in the society to participate and benefit from their national economy by facilitating economic development and provides the basis for transformation.

The phenomenon “entrepreneurship education” is not new to the Nigerian populace, it has always been an age-long tradition, a culture that has consistently been transferred from one generation to another within the diverse ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. Entrepreneurial mind-set is prevalent in Yoruba land in Western Nigeria, Hausa land in the Northern Nigeria and among the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria [10]. The acquisition of skills, ideas and abilities management necessary for job creation involve strong entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy which can promotes employment rather than seeking for an employment.

Entrepreneurial education is the incorporation into the student syllabus steps involved in starting a new business based on a recognized business opportunity as well as operating and maintaining that business. The belief of some people is that entrepreneurship education does not need to be taught and therefore, an entrepreneur is born to be so. It should however, be noted that for one to be a successful entrepreneur, he/she needs to learn the skills [10] & [11].

Entrepreneurial education is designed to teach the skills and education that is needed to be known before embarking on a new business venture. This would enhance necessary identification and avoidance of many pitfalls awaiting the less well trained and vigilant contemporaries. The training in entrepreneurial education may initially be perceived as a cost in terms of time and money but it would eventually be appreciated. [12] examined the origin and performance of indigenous entrepreneurs. He identified two broad categories of factors that affected entrepreneurs. These were the environmental factors and the personal level factors. His conclusion was that the problems that were confronting the indigenous entrepreneurs in Nigeria could only be partly explained by the economic factors.

Therefore, there is a need to embrace this type of education and provide all the necessary resources needed to make it functional. Quality entrepreneurship education could be used as a tool to fight the war against poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. Education is said to be qualitative when the input such as students, teachers, finance, facilities and equipment and all these are converted through teaching and learning (theory and practical) and produce a desirable output. The output is better equipped to serve themselves and the society. The quality of input influences to a large extent the quality of output. In other words, the quality of the input of entrepreneurship education such as teachers, students and the infrastructural facilities will influence greatly, the input of the output [13].

Bandura a cognitive psychologist who has contributed to various fields of psychology coined the theory of self-efficacy. The theory has been, and still very influential in modern psychology. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations [14]. The development of self-efficacy belief seems to be more influenced by mastery experiences than information formed by social comparisons. Individual self-perceptions of his skills and abilities at a given point in time in a given situation is referred to as self-efficacy or self-confidence[15]. This concept reflects an individual's innermost thoughts on whether they have the abilities perceived as important to task performance, as well as the belief that they will be able to effectively convert those skills into a chosen outcome [16]. As one group of researchers has noted, we are motivated throughout our lives by perceived self-efficacy, rather than by objective ability and our perceptions deeply affect both our affective states and our behaviours. The development of self-efficacy beliefs seems to be more influenced by mastery experiences than information formed by social comparisons[17], [18] & [19].

Self-Efficacy influences the development of both entrepreneurial career intentions and subsequent actions individuals with higher degrees of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in the early stages of career development will have higher entrepreneurial intentions, and that those with both higher self-efficacy and higher intentions will have a higher probability of being involved in entrepreneurial activity later in life [20]& [21]. Researchers have focused on creating and testing scales for entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and have been successful in demonstrating that these have good predictive value in differentiating those with entrepreneurial intentions from those who do not [22].

It is believed that employment of Nigerian graduates either part-time or full-time can be said to have eluded Nigerian youths with Nigeria said to have one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the unindustrialized world. Despite strong economic growth, youth’s full-time unemployment rate for 2006 – 2008 in Nigeria was put at 55.9 % while countries like Japan, China, India, Korea, have joined community of industrialized nations by strengthening their small scale industries. [23]

The unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 14.2 percent in the last quarter of 2016 from 10.4 percent a year earlier. It is the highest jobless rate since 2009 as the number of unemployed went up by 3.5 million to 11.549 million while employment rose at a slower 680.8 thousand to 69.6 million. The labour force increased by 4.194 million to 81.151 million and those detached from it declined by 625.7 thousand to 27.439 million. The unemployment rate was higher for persons between 15-24 years old (25.2 percent), women (16.3 percent) and in rural areas (25.8 percent). In the previous quarter, the jobless rate was 13.9 percent. Unemployment Rate in Nigeria averaged 9.76 percent from 2006 until 2016, reaching an all-time high of 19.70 percent in the fourth quarter of 2009 and a record low of 5.10 percent in the fourth quarter of 2010 [24].

Sources: Tradingeconomic.com/National Bureau of Statistics. Nigeria



Therefore the broad objective of this study is to investigate the role entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy play in the reduction of unemployment problems among graduates in Nigeria.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The roles played by entrepreneurship in developed economies has shown that the importance of entrepreneurship cannot be overemphasized especially among the developing countries. Entrepreneurship has been referred to as a major source of employment generation so as to highlight its significance in relation to the growth and development of a given economy, serious concern has been raised by government, policy makers and academicians in curbing the issue of unemployment among Nigeria graduates. Despite the fact that many Nigerian fresh graduates possess the education and skill that are essential for starting-up own business, only few of them choose to be self-employed immediately after graduating. It may be due to lack of proper understanding of the concept, lack of self-confidence or lack of encouragement or reassurance. Entrepreneurship is not the function that might be outcome of simple efforts. It requires a regular and permanent attitude as part of personality. Thus an in-depth education of entrepreneurship and self-efficacy on the part of fresh graduates will serve as a leeway in changing their orientation and intention towards entrepreneurship therefore not having to wait for a white collar job to earn a living.

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- H0₁: There is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurship education and Unemployment problem in Nigeria.
- H0₂: There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Unemployment Problem in Nigeria.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A survey design was adopted for the study where questionnaire was the instrument used to elicit information from 180 Unemployed graduates seeking employment through Integrated Corporate Services Limited (ICSL) and Vic Lawrence & Associates Limited (VLA) recruiting firms, Nigeria. A convenience sampling technique was used to select the respondents based on gender and age. The age range of the respondents is between 21-50 years. Two (2) modified and adapted instruments on self-efficacy by [25] and entrepreneurship education scale of [26] were used for data collection. Product moment correlation and multiple regression analyses were used in analyzing the data collected.

V. RESULTS

Table 1: Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	112	62.2	62.2	62.2
Valid Female	68	37.8	37.8	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows the sex distribution of the respondents used during the survey. 116 males out of 180 respondents responded to the questionnaire while 68 were female.

Table 2: Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
21– 30	92	51.1	51.1	51.1
Valid 31 – 40	65	36.1	36.1	87.2
41 – 50	23	12.8	12.8	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows the age distribution of the respondents used during the survey. The table revealed that most of the respondents are middle age people.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.996 ^a	.984	.994	.64219

a. Predictors: (Constant), ESE, ENTREDU

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	9054.566	4	2263.2415	11015.435	.000 ^b
Residual	35.757	174	.2055		
Total	9090.322	178			

a. Dependent Variable: UNEMPL

b. Predictors: (Constant), ESE, ENTREDU

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.581	.527		2.050	.043
1 ENTREDU	.995	.009	.984	116.532	.000
ESE	.521	.007	.024	2.813	.006

Dependent Variable: UNEMPPROB

The model summary shows the joint contributions of entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy to unemployment problem in Nigeria, the correlation coefficient is 0.996 which indicates a very strong positive correlation between joint effect of entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy to unemployment problem. Also the R- square adjusted value of 0.996. The R-square value is 0.984, which indicates that about 98.4% variation in unemployment situation can be attributed to the two variables (entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy).

The ANOVA table above with F-value of 11015.435 having p-value of 0.000 indicates that the model derived is significant; hence the model is adequate in relating unemployment problem to entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy.

However, from the coefficients table below, the model is: $UNEMPPROB = 1.581 + 0.995ENTREDU + 0.521ESE$. The two variables entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy are significant with p-values of 0.000 and 0.006 respectively. It also indicates that entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy contributes about 99.5% and 52.1% in reducing unemployment problem and self-efficacy 52.1% contribution to employment. It can be deduce that, both entrepreneurship education and self-education play paramount role in reducing the rate of unemployment in Nigeria.

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

First hypothesis revealed that entrepreneurship education is directly and positively related to unemployment problem in Nigeria. It was discovered that entrepreneurship education will increased the ability, capability and intention of graduate to embrace entrepreneurship. This finding is in support of an earlier finding by [12] Entrepreneurial education is the incorporation into the student syllabus steps involved in starting a new business based on a recognized business opportunity as well as operating and maintaining that business. The belief of some people is that entrepreneurship education does not need to be taught and therefore, an entrepreneur is born to be so. It should however be noted that for one to be a successful entrepreneur, he/she needs to learn the skills. The underlying problem is that an increasing number of graduates from colleges of education, polytechnic and universities are seeking opportunities in the labour market every year. As the graduates cannot always depend on the public and private sector in providing job opportunities, entrepreneurship is tend to be the alternative solution for their unemployment [1].

The data elicited by hypothesis two indicates that unemployment problem in Nigeria is related to and determined by self-efficacy. This finding is supported by [21] when they explained that self-efficacy influences the development of both entrepreneurial career intentions and subsequent actions Individuals with higher degrees of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in the early stages of career development will have higher entrepreneurial intentions, and that those with both higher self-efficacy and higher intentions will have a higher probability of being involved in entrepreneurial activity later in life The acquisition of skills, ideas and abilities management necessary for job creation involve strong entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy which can promotes employment rather than seeking for an employment.

VII. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy are important factors in determining the intention to entrepreneurship therefore reducing the level of unemployment in Nigeria. There is an urgent need for all higher educational institutions in Nigeria to comply with the presidential directives to the effect that entrepreneurship education be made compulsory for all students of higher education institutions in Nigeria, irrespective of their areas of specialization. This policy decision was based on government awareness of the crucial role of entrepreneurship education and training in fostering employment generation among the teaming youths, economic growth, and wealth creation. Entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy plays a significant contribution to the reduction of unemployment problem in Nigeria. On the other hand, entrepreneurship education was found to be the most potent factor to deal with unemployment problem facing Nigerian graduate in the face of economy recession while self-efficacy was found to be the second potent factor.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

- ❖ 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 the country 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.
- ❖ The scope of the entrepreneurship education should be extended to include technical skills, managerial skills and business skills.
- ❖ 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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