

Skill Acquisition Programme and Entrepreneurial Development Among Youths in Anambra State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Skill acquisition programs and entrepreneurial development efforts for adolescents in Anambra State, Nigeria, seek to equip young individuals with practical skills and business knowledge to foster self-reliance, economic growth, and employment prospects. The research examined the impact of a skill acquisition program on entrepreneurial development among youth in Anambra State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was employed to perform the study. The entire population comprises 3,180 youths. The statistical formula developed by Taro Yamane in 1967 was utilized to ascertain a sample size of 355. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were conducted using Multiple Regression analysis and descriptive statistics facilitated by SPSS version 23, which determined the degree of link between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The findings indicated a substantial positive correlation between technical skills and youth empowerment in relation to entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria. The report advised that the government at all levels should enhance efforts to improve technical skill education and training in the state. This can be accomplished by establishing well-equipped skill training centres in the state, financed by a designated special intervention budget for the program.

Keywords: Skill Acquisition, Development, Empowerment, Entrepreneurial Development Youths, Programmes

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1. INTRODUCTION

Skill acquisition is a significant catalyst for wealth creation, enhancing the intellectual capacity of youth for entrepreneurial development in a competitive and business-oriented environment such as Nigeria. This program functions as a means for poverty alleviation, job development, corporate innovation, productivity enhancement, and risk-taking, among other objectives. The skills acquisition program aims to equip individuals with the capability to seize opportunities and establish enterprises, regardless of size, for both personal and societal developmental benefits (Olugunju, 2016). Oboreh (2019) described skill acquisition as the ability to perform valuable tasks via the investment of necessary time and effort, leading to financial and personal satisfaction and independence. Skills necessitate training that focusses on the acquisition and enhancement of relevant information and experience, empowering individuals to optimize the resources available to them within their capabilities. It also entails the efficient application of concepts, information, and data that aids a learner in cultivating the competencies essential for a commitment to a business career, including entrepreneurship, marketing, service provision, productivity, wealth creation, employment generation, and self-sufficiency, thereby contributing to national development.

Around the globe, skills acquisition programs implemented at educational institutions aim to furnish individuals with the requisite knowledge and abilities to capitalize on entrepreneurial opportunities that might facilitate a nation's economic development (Ojo, Abayomi & Odozi, 2014). Consequently, the government has implemented several skills acquisition programs, including the introduction of entrepreneurship courses and the construction of vocational and skills acquisition centres and departments in higher education institutions throughout the states. These programs seek to enhance youths' abilities, attitudes, aspirations, competencies, and inventiveness, specifically regarding their utilisation of microcredit to engage in entrepreneurship, establish self-employment, and contribute to job creation (Muhd, 2016).

The acquisition of skills is essential for enhancing the lives and economic conditions of youth through the promotion and development of entrepreneurship. The human capital present in youth is a crucial factor for a nation's long-term economic viability and sustainable growth, warranting significant investment. Ensuring that teenagers are equipped for their entrepreneurial aspirations is crucial for the advancement of entrepreneurial skill development and employment creation. Youth unemployment is a worldwide challenge that governments across are addressing. Consequently, there is a growing demand for training programs aimed at cultivating entrepreneurs globally (Aun et al 2018). Countries around are endeavouring to attract entrepreneurs capable of generating their own money to stimulate economic growth. The unemployment rate in Nigeria and economic distress appears to have persisted despite numerous strategies implemented by the government over the years (Anyu & Amadi, 2016).

The youth of any nation can be regarded as its foundational strength. They embody a nation's optimal opportunity for future success in most areas of economic development it aspires to attain. Young individuals constitute over 65% of Nigeria's work force and are projected to contribute around 73% to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (NDE, 2015). The entrepreneurial development of youth and their economic empowerment are crucial phases in life for the cultivation of human capital, enabling young individuals to acquire creativity, innovation, and to eliminate poverty and unemployment. Skill acquisition programs are crucial determinants of a nation's long-term growth potential. Moreover, ensuring that young individuals are adequately equipped for the future is essential for the advancement of entrepreneurial development in any nation. Isaac et al. (2018).

Skill acquisition has emerged as a crucial mechanism for enhancing self-employability and fostering entrepreneurial spirit among unemployed adolescents (Paul, 2017). Skill acquisition programs serve as an effective method that establishes a robust foundation for self-employability and entrepreneurial innovation in a multi-ethnic and densely populated society such as Nigeria. The government is unable to accommodate unemployed young, resulting in various social issues that diminish the nation's value and status in a worldwide context. Including kidnapping, armed banditry, Boko Haram, cybercrime, cultism, and armed robbery, among others. Skill acquisition serves as a practical solution to these issues by fostering and augmenting the entrepreneurial spirit among young, enabling self-employment, creativity, company concept development, innovation, and poverty alleviation. These assist youth in cultivating their enterprises, pursuing their aspirations constructively, and enhancing total productive capability and national development (Efe-Imafidon et al, 2017).

Skill acquisition is the process of obtaining knowledge and experience in abilities that improve the personal livelihood of youngsters through sustained engagement in business startups, which can subsequently increase employment opportunities and foster economic development and progress. This study aims to ascertain the degree of correlation between skills acquisition and entrepreneurial development among the numerous youths in Anambra State. It seeks to examine the imperative of equipping youth with practical and employable skills essential for fostering creativity, innovation, risk-taking, poverty alleviation, self-employment, and business management, rather than depending on traditional office or white-collar occupations.

The escalating decline in entrepreneurial spirit among Nigerian youth has led to a rising incidence of crime, as these individuals struggle for survival amidst pervasive social and economic challenges affecting the nation as a whole (Newo, Oladipo, Ayankoya & Olanrewaju, 2023). Steve (2018) asserts that when the numerous kids are not productively engaged in creative, imaginative, or rewarding employment within the private or public sectors, they become susceptible to criminal activities like as kidnapping, terrorism, rape, and ritualistic practices, which have emerged as prevalent issues among today's youth. The 2018 essay asserts that skills acquisition programs enable youngsters to become not only job creators but also wealth creators, facilitating wealth creation and significantly lowering youth unemployment.

The issue of unemployment is pronounced in Anambra state, attributable to the disparity between market demands and the skills possessed by the large population of unemployed young. The primary issue in Anambra state is documented as persistent unemployment and a significant increase in youth redundancy (Muhammed & Dandago, 2014). Bala (2020) observed that the levels of insecurity and unemployment appear to have persisted in rising, notwithstanding the entrepreneurial skill initiatives implemented by successive governments in Anambra State. Their potentials have not been properly cultivated to the extent of technical abilities that can foster creativity, innovation, and self-employment. The primary issue is the discrepancy between employment market demands and the skills training provided by Anambra state-owned skills acquisition institutes. The discrepancy is the primary issue hindering the employability of youngsters in the state. The state emphasizes basic and less appealing talents, but the market necessitates creative technical skills training that provides sustained employment and self-sufficiency advantages. Observations indicated that skills acquisition centres were operational with a relatively high number of participants; yet, redundancy persisted and crime rates remained elevated in the state. A significant proportion of graduates from various institutions remain unemployed. Despite the extensive efforts of the state government, a gap persists due to the pressing necessity to direct the attention of the government and stakeholders towards sustainable, technically orientated skills that will render the youth marketable, appealing, innovative, and self-sufficient.

Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the effect of skill acquisition programme on entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State. Specifically, the study will examine;

- a. The effect of technical skills on entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria
- b. The effect of youth empowerment on entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria

2. METHOD

The research utilized a descriptive survey methodology to reduce the likelihood of bias. The research was conducted in the Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. Awka South was chosen due to its central location in the town, accommodating a significant and diverse population, both local and non-local. This will provide an accurate portrayal of youth. The study population consists of youngsters in the Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State who have engaged in various skill acquisition programs organized by governmental and non-governmental entities and are registered with the youth leader. The entire population comprises 3,180 youths. The statistical formula developed by Taro Yamane in 1967 was utilized to ascertain a sample size of 355. A systematic questionnaire utilizing a five-point Likert scale—strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, and strongly disagree—to collect essential data from the sampled respondents. The study employed face and content validity, whereas Cronbach's Alpha was utilized for the reliability assessment. The produced data were presented through

descriptive statistics, while hypotheses were tested using the multiple regression method with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Data Presentation

Table 1. Returned and Unreturned Questionnaire

	Frequency	Percentage
Questionnaire returned and are valid	286	80.56
Questionnaire returned but are invalid	21	5.92
Questionnaire not returned	48	13.52
Total	355	100

Table 2. Demographic of the Respondents

Variables		Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Female	118	41.3
	Male	168	58.7
Age	18-23	39	13.6
	24-29	54	18.9
	30-35	90	31.5
	36-39	63	22
	40-and above	40	14
Educational Status	Educated	226	79
	None Educated	60	21

Table 1.1 indicates that the majority of respondents in this survey are male (58.7%), whereas females constitute 41.3%. The age group of 36-39 years predominates among the respondents, and the educational status indicates that 226 respondents, constituting 79% of the population, are educated.

Table 3. To what extent does technical skill training affect entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra state, Nigeria

SN	Variable	SA	A	I	D	SD	Remarks
1	Youths love to participate in technical skill acquisition training in Anambra state	138 (58.7%)	35 (38.7%)	22 (6.0%)	-	-	Agreement
2	The aim and purposes of technical skill acquisition training is to promote self-reliance and enhance productivity.	145 (61.7%)	50 (38.3%)	-	-	-	Agreement
3	Training in technical skill acquisition is essential for economic development among the youth in Anambra State.	40 (36.2%)	115 (48.9%)	20 (2.6%)	15 (10.6%)	5 (1.7%)	Agreement
4	The negative perception of parents regarding technical and vocational education (TVE) has	110 (57.9%)	61 (32.8%)	10 (3.8%)	9 (3.4%)	5 (2.1%)	Agreement

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young people.

The responses presented in table 1.1 reflect the respondents' general decisions about each question item (row) in the table. Young individuals in Anambra State are enthusiastic about engaging in entrepreneurial activity. The respondents said that the goals and objectives of technical skill acquisition foster self-reliance and enhance productivity. The majority of young people stated that technical skill acquisition is essential for economic empowerment among young people in Anambra State. The youths contended that parental negativity towards technical and vocational education (TVE) has facilitated business development among young individuals in Anambra State.

Table 4. To what extent does youth empowerment affect entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra state, Nigeria

SN	Variable	SA	A	I	D	SD	Remarks
5	Youth empowerment refers to the process of equipping and training young individuals to become proficient in the production of specific goods.	126 (53.6%)	50 (41.3%)	19 (5.1%)	-	-	Agreement
6	The role of youth empowerment involves training students with expertise in the manufacture of specific commodities.	109 (63.4%)	74 (31.5%)	12 (5.1%)	-	-	Agreement
7	Youth empowerment may significantly alleviate poverty among young individuals by providing employable opportunities.	90 (54.5%)	70 (34.9%)	25 (6.4%)	10 (4.3%)	-	Agreement
8	Youth empowerment entails a methodical exploration of opportunity analysis.	95 (57.9%)	91 (38.7%)	9 (3.8%)	-	-	Agreement

Table 1.1 indicates that teens believe youth empowerment involves equipping students with expertise in the manufacture of specific commodities. The study elucidated that the role of youth empowerment involves training students with expertise in the creation of specific commodities. Furthermore, it is evident that youth empowerment may significantly contribute to alleviating poverty among young individuals by providing employable opportunities. Moreover, the respondents stated that youth empowerment entails a methodical exploration of opportunity analysis.

3.2. Analysis of Data (Hypotheses Testing)

Regression analysis was employed to evaluate the proposed hypotheses. The hypotheses test results were interpreted accordingly.

H₀₁: Technical Skill acquisition has no significant effect on entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra state, Nigeria

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.259 ^a	.211	.303	3.67231

a. Predictors: (Constant), Technical skill acquisition

The model summary table indicates a R value of .259, a R square of .211, an adjusted R square of .303, and a standard error of the estimate of 3.67231. The R square value of .211 suggests a weak relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	177.612	1	177.612	34.871	.000 ^b
	Residual	664.135	194	7.141		
	Total	841.747	195			

a. Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Technical skill acquisition

The ANOVA table indicates a F value of 34.871 and a significance level of .000, which is less than .05, the threshold for probability. This indicates that technical skill acquisition substantially influences business development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.296	.926		7.721	.000
	factor that hinder	.531	.106	.459	5.987	.000

a. Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial development

The coefficient table above indicates that the t statistic is significant, with a t value of 4.987 and a significance level of .000. This indicates a substantial influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

H₂: Youth empowerment does not affect entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra state, Nigeria

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.062 ^a	.004	-.007	5.00447

a. Predictors: (Constant), youth empowerment

The table above indicates that R is .062, R squared is .004, Adjusted R squared is -.007, and the standard error of the estimate is 5.00447. This indicates that an R-squared value of 0.004 is not a strong predictor of the independent variable's influence on the dependent variable.

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	2.252	1	2.252	4.549	.000 ^b
	Residual	839.495	194	9.027		
	Total	841.747	195			

a. Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial development

b. Predictors: (Constant), youth empowerment.

The ANOVA table indicates a F statistic of 4.549 and a significance level of .000, which is less than the threshold of .05. Consequently, youth empowerment influences business development among young individuals in Anambra State, Nigeria. The null hypothesis has been rejected. The coefficient table indicates a t value of 8.209 and a significance value of .000. This

indicates that the independent variable has a substantial effect on the dependent variable. Anambra State.

3.3 Discussion of Findings

The finding indicated that skill acquisition significantly influences entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Akinyele, Esther, and Jaiyeola (2019), which explored entrepreneurial skill acquisition in soap manufacture in Abeokuta, Nigeria, aiming to assess the correlation between skill acquisition and the productivity of SMEs in the region. Their study demonstrated a substantial correlation between skill acquisition and employment generation. The study indicated that entrepreneurship empowerment influences entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria. This corresponds with Gabriel's (2019) research, which examined the acquisition of entrepreneurial and scientific skills for youth self-sustainability and job creation, aiming to assess the impact of these skills on national development in Nigeria. The research indicated that the acquisition of skills, along with entrepreneurial and scientific competencies, impacts youth sustainability and job creation in Nigeria.

3.4 Summary of Findings

The major findings are presented below:

- a. Skill acquisition has significant effect on entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra state Nigeria. The acquisition of skills plays a crucial and transformative role in fostering entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria. By equipping young individuals with practical knowledge, technical expertise, and problem-solving capabilities, skill acquisition serves as a catalyst for innovation, business creation, and economic empowerment. This dynamic relationship not only enhances the entrepreneurial mindset but also builds resilience, self-sufficiency, and competitiveness among youths, ultimately contributing to sustainable economic growth and community development in the region.
- b. Entrepreneurship empowerment affects entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra state Nigeria. Entrepreneurship empowerment plays a pivotal role in driving entrepreneurial development among youth in Anambra State, Nigeria, by equipping them with the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities to innovate, create, and sustain business ventures.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The unemployment rate among Nigerian graduates has undermined the national economy, as individuals are unable to make contributions to it. Nigeria has had economic stagnation in the past, leading to a decline in white-collar employment. The challenges of excessive unemployment and underemployment will be significantly alleviated by the incorporation of entrepreneurial courses across all disciplines. Skill acquisition is acknowledged as a catalyst for enhancing employment chances, since it exposes and encourages adolescents to initiate firms and augment their entrepreneurial potential. A viable approach to enhance the indigenous private sector and mitigate unemployment among Nigerian graduates is via skill acquisition. The study sought to determine the impact of skill acquisition on entrepreneurial development among youth in Anambra State. The inferential statistical analysis demonstrated the existence of correlations among the variables. The study concludes that skill acquisition significantly impacts entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, that youth empowerment influences entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, and that infrastructural development significantly affects entrepreneurial development among youths in Anambra State, Nigeria.

The study proposed the following recommendations

- a. The government should organize and carry out sustainable awareness campaign to promote technical skill training in all parts of the country with sincerity and objectivity, devoid of

political interest so as to motivate the youths towards becoming job providers instead of job seekers.

- b. There should be adequate empowerment for youths that have acquired the necessary skills

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