

Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts Education: A Panacea for Overcoming Security Challenges and Unemployment in Nigeria

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education has become a veritable tool for combating joblessness and insecurity in most countries of the world. The research on Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts Education: A Panacea for overcoming the Security Challenges and Unemployment in Nigeria is timely and a necessity in the face of insecurity experienced in the country today. A qualitative exploratory case study was used for the research. The researchers adopted face-to-face semi-structural and focus group interviews to collect primary data. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to explore the entrepreneurial strategies of graduates of fine and applied arts education requirements to become self-employed after graduation. The study also found the effect of security challenges on entrepreneurship development in northeastern Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of 30 participants. 20 graduates of Fine and Applied Arts self-employed, 5 other graduate participants in the focus group, and five (5) policymakers from the Ministry of Education and Youth Development were selected for the study. The instruments used for data collection were semi-structured and focus group interviews, an open-ended question was adopted because it was considered suitable since participants were not restricted to answering YES or NO. It was also recommended that the research work will serve as a preparatory ground for undergraduate students to make choices on fields they would want to engage in after graduation. It will as well go a long way in enlightening our youths (graduates) to find meaningful ways of engaging themselves than waiting for paid employment by the government.

Keywords: Concept of Entrepreneurship, Youth Unemployment, Insecurity, Fine and Applied Arts.

Introduction

Some decades ago, in Nigeria, anyone who had either a college, polytechnic, or university certificate was sure of securing one form of a paid job or the other. At that time, employers plainly would just march into the institutions to shop for middle-level manpower by placing adverts in different schools and faculties for various vacant positions. Galadima (2007) attests to it:

Then, for anybody acquiring an education, paid employment was the ultimate string of goodies that were attached to it: good salary, car loan within the first six months, and in

some cases, official quarters. This was how every graduate reached the enviable heights of self-fulfillment in the late 1970s (p. 12).

Today, the story is quite distinct owing to various factors that have militated against our economy. Most often, it is the case of “who you know” and “give and take” syndromes to get employment. Akwashiki (2013) also confirms this when he laments about his ordeals in search of a job:

So far, I noticed a challenge. For the Ministry of Interior where I applied, we later realized that those they wanted for the job had started working while we were busy applying. They never told us they have got the people they wanted (p. 33).

Nevertheless, as bad as this may portray, people with assorted skills and creative minds, especially in the field of arts, can find ways to scale through these hurdles of economic depression which has brought about the untold loss of jobs, unemployment, and poverty to many families.

Elbert Hubbard in a 1908 volume of ‘Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Teachers’ as cited by Popova (2012) opined that “Art is not a thing – it is a way.” Art generally, according to Ogumor (2002), is a way of life. It is the power of doing anything. It means any skill, trade, craft, or acquired expertise. Art is further described as a visual object or experience consciously created through an expression of skill or imagination (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010). Art builds creativity, and creative minds create. Artists create music, paintings, architecture, philosophy, books, movies, and computer design (Mike, 2011). It can as well be defined as “the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others” (Adeyemo, 2012:89). Wright in Popova (2012) posited that art is a discovery and development of elementary principles of nature into beautiful forms suitable for human use. No wonder Benedetto Croce in Emefie (1985) in Baskarada (2014) stated that ‘art is expression.’

From all these descriptions, it is evident that art is all-encompassing and a means of employing diverse skills and power of imagination to create/express beautiful visual images, knowledge of aesthetic worth, and or thought-provoking works and ideas that appeal to the human sense of beauty and reasoning such as in painting, sculpture, music, drama, writing and so on.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of unemployment in Nigeria requires a more radical approach than making promises of the provision of paid employment to the teeming youths that continue to flood the labour market. The main thrust of this research, therefore, is to provide the strategies for using entrepreneurial skills, required in Fine and Applied Arts education in overcoming security challenges and unemployment in Nigeria. With the foregoing, it is against this background that the researcher intends to examine Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Art Education: A Panacea for overcoming Security Challenges and Unemployment in Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Art Education: A Panacea for overcoming Security challenges and Unemployment in Nigeria; while the specific objectives are:

1. To determine the effect of security challenges on entrepreneurship development in North Eastern Nigeria.
2. To ascertain how much positive effect entrepreneurship in fine and applied art education has on youth employment generation in North Eastern Nigeria.
3. To examine the relationship between entrepreneurship development and crime reduction in North Eastern Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of security challenges on entrepreneurship development in North Eastern Nigeria?
2. How much positive effect entrepreneurship in fine and applied art education has on youth employment generation in North Eastern Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between entrepreneurship development and crime reduction in North Eastern Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following three null hypotheses were postulated to guide the study.

H₁: There is no positive relationship between security challenges and entrepreneurship development in North Eastern Nigeria.

H₂: Entrepreneurship in fine and applied art education has no positive relationship with youths' employment generation in North Eastern Nigeria.

H₃: There is no positive relationship between entrepreneurship development and crime reduction in North Eastern Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

The study considered North Eastern Nigeria as the case study which consists of six states three states were selected out of the six namely Taraba, Adamawa, and Borno states. The study consists of 20 graduates of fine and applied arts education who are already self-employed and five policymakers from the Ministry of Education and Youth Development and another five (5) youth entrepreneurs for focus group interviews from the listed states. The total population for the study was 30.

Literature Review

Concept of Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment

Entrepreneurship is the ability and willingness of individuals to develop, organize and manage a business enterprise along with associated risks to make a profit. Henry (2003) views entrepreneurship as the engine driving the economy of nations, creating new

industries, young entrepreneurs, employment, and wealth. Agbionu (2008) opines that entrepreneurship involves a process aimed at creating wealth for growth, development of the environment, and eradication of unemployment for national sustainability.

The Concept of Insecurity

Divers views have emerged in academia on insecurity. Nevertheless, just a few of these perceptions that are strongly related to this discourse are briefly considered. According to Nwagboso (2012), insecurity is the danger that entrepreneurs and executives of business organizations exercise by relocating their business ventures from an insecure environment to a more secure one. This view applies to Igbo and Yoruba businessmen who relocated to their native lands in the wake of the Boko Haram Insurgency Sulieman, (2012), as cited in Adegbam (2013). The view is also applicable to many manufacturing companies that relocated from the Northeast geo-political zone of Nigeria to other countries due to the high level of insecurity occasioned by the Boko Haram Insurgency (Ajodo-Adebanjo and Okorie, 2014).

Why Study Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts Education?

According to Ikponmwosa and Ayuba (2009), Art is an indispensable daily human activity whose knowledge has resulted in the designs and production of fabrics. To them, the appreciation of aesthetic values is what results in people's urge for the best ornament to adorn the body. Fine and Applied Arts are valuable for enhancing the aesthetic quality of the environment.

Importance of Entrepreneurial Education Program

Ayeduso, Abubakar, Awoniyi, Ajinuyi, and Hassan (2014) listed the following as the importance of entrepreneurship education:

- a. Skill acquisition: helps the student form a base of knowledge about the function and operation of a business and develop some levels of familiarity and comfort with a business environment such as technological change, the macro enterprise, etc.
- b. Creation of employment: entrepreneurship education offers opportunities to students for job experience, investing, earning, and saving money at an earlier stage of life than their peers.
- c. The knowledge will promote entrepreneurship culture.
- d. There will be improved capital formation
- e. There will be decentralization and diversification of business
- f. Science and technology will be promoted
- g. There will be an effective utilization of local resources
- h. There will be a great reduction in the high rate of unemployment, particularly among graduates in Nigeria. Self-employment and business ownership will be appealing goals for students.

- i. Entrepreneurship education can serve a complementary role in developing occupational knowledge, job skills, and work experience among teachers and students.

Consequences of Youth Unemployment

When youths are unemployed, they are readily available for anti-social criminal activities that undermine the stability of society. An unstable society increases the risk of the market. This scares investors. If the youths are unemployed and underemployed, they are more vulnerable to conflicts and illegal activities (European Youth Forum, 2011).

Unemployment among youths could lead to unhappiness and mental health problems. Not having a job can cause economic, cultural, and social isolation. Youth unemployment is associated with an increase in drug and alcohol use as well as higher levels of crime among young people (Nedeljkovic, 2014). High youth unemployment hurts economic growth and productivity. There is a risk of loss of talent and skills since a great number of university graduates are unable to find a job and put their knowledge and capabilities into producing innovation and contributing to economic growth. Moreover, having a large share of the young workforce unemployed, not only leads to reduced productivity and gross domestic product (GDP) but also increases the economic costs for the state, since there is more money to be paid on social benefits and less money coming in from taxes (European Youth Forum, 2013).

Research Design

The researchers adopted a qualitative exploratory case study. Yin (2014) opined that qualitative research questions answer the why and how of research questions, while quantitative research deals with data operations, data management, data corroboration, and data reporting and testing. In this study, the researchers involved adopting face-to-face semi-structured and focus group interviews to collect primary data in line with the postulations of Saunders and Rojon (2014).

The Population of the Study

The population of the study was 20 graduates of fine and applied arts education who are already self-employed, 5 other graduate participants for the focus group, and five policymakers from the Ministry of Education and Youth Development all in the selected areas of study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study adopted purposeful sampling in identifying the participants. The research adopted inclusion and exclusion criteria in selecting participants. Graduates who are already self-employed were eligible for inclusion in the study, while those without self-employment were ineligible. The researcher interviewed 20 participants to ensure saturation and to obtain enough data. Other sources of data were five policymakers and a

focus group of five new and distinct participants. The total number of participants was thirty (30). The sample is large enough to achieve the result. Creswell (2013) postulated that the primary component of sample size in qualitative research is to obtain an in-depth look at the participants and verify the information.

Research Instruments

The two data collection tools were semi-structured and focus group interviews. Twenty (20) youths who are already entrepreneurs served as participants. Another group of participants was five policymakers who are in the Ministry of Education and Youth Development; the third group was five distinct participants for focus group interviews. The semi-structured interview process enabled the interviewer to ask follow-up questions (Paine, 2015). It necessitated the interviewees' avail of in-depth meaning in their responses (Yin, 2014).

Methods of Data Analysis

The objective of data analysis in qualitative research is to help understand the phenomenon under study (Baskarada, 2014). The researchers performed data analysis on the data collected from the semi-structured and focused group interviews. Data analysis began with the review of pieces of data and then with categorization (Ayidin, 2013). Using the NVivo software program requires creating a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with rows and columns, and assigning tabs for each interview question. Hand-coding was equally necessary for allocating themes and codes. Data organization tools such as NVivo were also pertinent in interviews like semi-structured and focus groups. The raw data was collected in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with rows and columns.

Data Analysis and Results

Detailed research data, findings, and conclusions based on the results. Equally contains the result of the interview with the 20 youth entrepreneurs, the five-member focus group, and five policymakers.

Table 1: Demographic Overview of the Five Policymakers

Participants	Highest Education	Length of Service (years)	Position
Participant 1	PhD	33	Director, youth development
Participant 2	PhD	34	Director, education development
Participant 3	PhD	32	Director, mass education
Participant 4	PhD	35	Director, vocational education
Participant 5	PhD	29	

Table 2: Demography for Five-Member Focus Group

Participants	Gender	Age (years)	Education	Type of business
5 participants	2 females	25-29	Bachelor's degree	Production of bead
	3 males	25-29	Bachelor's degree	Fish farming

Data Analysis

Table 3: Codes used to categorize the major and minor themes emerging from the semi-structured interview of twenty youth entrepreneur

Code	Major Themes	Minor Themes
Source of entrepreneurship skills	Mentorship, and	Ad-hoc programs
Nature of enterprise	Vocational training	Manufacturing
Influence on choice	Service	
Nature of enterprise	Satisfaction of human needs, and	Ad-hoc programs
Influence on choice	Passion for the enterprise Knowing about business, socio-economic networking, and self-employment.	Change in strategy and use of the effective team.
Meaning of entrepreneurship	Mentorship, satisfaction	-
An effective method of acquiring the skills motivation	Assistance from family and friends.	High human population
Source of start-up capital.	Human needs and self-employment.	High in commercial activities.
Challenges and difficulties	Insufficient capital	Risks of self-employment
Overcoming the challenges	Mustering will-power to remain in business	Change in strategy and use of the effective team.
Prospects	Rewarding enterprise sectors	

In Table 3, the major themes are on the second column while the minor themes are on column.

Three themes emerged as a result of question 1 of the semi-structured interview. They include mentorship, vocational training, and ad-hoc programs. While mentorship was at the center of discussion by participants, a significant number of them cited other sources of acquiring entrepreneurship skills. Entrepreneurship education is the process of providing individuals with the concepts and skills to recognize opportunities that others did not see

and to have the insight, self-worth, and knowledge to act where others have hesitated (Gwija, Eresia-Eke & Iwu, 2014).

Table 4: To ascertain how much positive effect entrepreneurship in fine and applied art education has on youth employment generation in North Eastern Nigeria.

Code	Major Themes	Minor Themes
Sources of entrepreneurial skills	Vocational training and Mentorship	Subsidiary school program
Meaning of entrepreneurial skills	Knowing the business and socio-economic networks, self-employment	Self-training
Motivation	Satisfaction of human needs and passion for the enterprise	Self-training
Sources of start-up capital	Saving from under-employment, assistance from the family, NYSC allowance	
Challenges	Insufficient capital, irregular electricity, high collateral demands, and risks of self-employment.	Unstable government policy
Overcoming challenges	Mustering willpower to remain in business.	Challenges in business strategy
Recurring resources constraint	Insufficient capital	Advocacy for Capital
Advice to future	Focus and determination	Discipline and responsibility

The second column of Table 4 lists the major themes which emerged from the focus group interview.

At the focus group level of the interview, three themes emerged. Mentorship and vocational training are major themes while subsidiary school programs emerged as the minor theme.

Table 5: To examine the relationship between entrepreneurship development and crime reduction in North Eastern Nigeria.

Code	Major Themes	Minor Themes
Form of Youth Intervention	Curriculum review and development, liaison for vocational and entrepreneurial skills, giving advice and sending materials to train centers local and Global Curriculum	
Intervention in youth formal education.	Contacts with universities and employers	Youth technical exchange programs
Intervention in youth skills acquisition	Training within formal programs facilitates opportunities for vocational training.	
Supporting strategies for skill acquisition challenges	Series of ad-hoc platforms	Facilitation of technical exchange programs.
Challenges	Start-up capital and irregular electricity.	Multiple taxations, high bank collateral, and bureaucratic bottlenecks.
Prospect	High in commercial and industrial activities	
Feedback techniques	Ad-hoc programs and medium of youth liaison teams.	

Major themes from policy makers' interviews are in column 2 of Table 6. The third column of the table lists the minor themes.

Policy Makers

Form of youth intervention in the reduction of Crime in North Eastern Nigeria

Three major themes emerged. These are curriculum review and development, liaison for vocational and enterprise skills, and giving advice and materials to training centers.

Intervention in youth formal education

Two major themes and one minor theme emerged. They include local and global curriculum contents and universities and employers contact as major themes, and youth technical exchange programs as the minor theme.

Summary of Findings

This chapter detailed the organization of data and presentation of the result I obtained for this qualitative exploratory case study. The results are the views expressed by participants

in response to the central research question: To determine the effect of security challenges on entrepreneurship development in North Eastern Nigeria, to ascertain how much positive effect entrepreneurship in fine and applied art education has on youth employment generation in North Eastern Nigeria and to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship development and crime reduction in North Eastern Nigeria.

The interviews that produced the results occurred at three levels for triangulation of data. The levels include semi-structured interviews (entrepreneurs & Policymakers), and focus groups. The chapter includes the findings about the setting, demographic variable, and interview conversations (7th December 20th December 2022) which bothers on the central research questions.

The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and organized for the thematic analysis which followed through the aid of NVivo version 11 software. The technology was very useful in helping me bring order, structure, and meaning to the mass of data I collected.

The Codes emerged from the mass of data that adhered to large chunks of words, phrases, descriptive, and sentences. The emerging themes include (1) mentorship, (2) vocational training, (3) knowing business and socio-economic network, (4) self-employment, (5) satisfaction of human needs, (6) passion for the enterprise, (7) savings from under employments, (8) assistance from family and friends, (9) NYSC allowances, (10) insufficient capital, (11) Risks of self-employment, (12) high commercial and industrial activities, (13) mustering will-power to remain in business, (14) focus and determination, (15) irregular electricity, and (16) high collateral demand by banks.

Constructs and descriptive within the interview transcripts that did not garner significant recurrence from the interview conversations (7th December 2022 - 20th December 2022) were reported in the initial percentage-based statistical analysis but did not form part of the major themes.

Discussion

The researcher gathered data through semi-structured, (one-on-one interviews), and focus groups. The basis for the focus group is to compare its data information with the one generated during a one-on-one interview to achieve triangulation. Semi-structured is the most popular form of data collection method in qualitative research because it gives the researcher enough information. It is in-depth and therefore allows participants to answer the present and open-ended questions. The researcher used NVivo software to organize the data for coding and theme formation.

The findings came from responses of 20 youth entrepreneurs through semi-structured interviews, five policymakers through a semi-structured interview, and another set of five new youth entrepreneurs for the focus group interview.

Summary

This exploratory case study identified a gap in the literature where there is no guide on strategies young adults in North Eastern Nigeria could adopt to acquire the

entrepreneurship characteristics that would make them self-employed and overcome security challenges. The central research on examining Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Art Education: A Panacea for overcoming Security Challenges and Unemployment in Nigeria was instructive in guiding the study. An appropriate data collection method helped administer interview questions to 20 graduate entrepreneurs, five policymakers, and a five-member focus group. The interview questions included 15 for graduate entrepreneurs, nine for a focus group, and eight for policymakers.

The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and entered into NVivo qualitative software for analysis. NVivo software enabled me to discover tendencies, recognize themes and drive conclusions from the transcript interviews.

The results were organized in tables and presented in Chapter 4. The analysis and interpretation of the results in chapter five answered the central research question. The findings were useful in the recommendation and identifying the positive social change components.

Conclusion

Graduates in North Eastern Nigeria could obtain information on entrepreneurial characteristics to become self-employed after leaving universities through school programs, ad hoc programs, self-training, vocational training, and mentorship. The most effective methods are mentorship and vocational training. These methods of learning and training incorporate hands-on activities for a long duration. These strategies are achievable concurrently.

The influence on the choice of enterprise and motivation for entrepreneurship is due to the opportunity to become self-employed and contribute to the solution of insecurity in the Country. Saving the start-up capital is mostly possible from low-paying jobs graduate youths engaged during periods of waiting for gainful employment. Youth from middle and upper-class families do receive a contribution to their business start-up capital from families and friends.

Entrepreneurship holds the key to the economic liberation of any developing society; hence Nigeria should encourage entrepreneurs by providing electricity, good roads, access to funding, the rule of law, and good policies. Once these essentials are in place, entrepreneurship thrives, and then the economy booms.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are instructive.

1. The government, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders should come together to find lasting solutions to graduate unemployment challenges by creating opportunities for them to acquire entrepreneurship skills through mentorship programs and vocational education. This positioning is because governments owe youth entrepreneurs the responsibility of providing both financial and infrastructural support (Adeola & Ezenwafor, 2016). This support should include

business-friendly policies that encourage youth entrepreneurs. As Boateng (2014) stated that though entrepreneurship is a multifaceted and multi-layered phenomenon and is affected by culture and social traditions, however, it contributes to the development of an economy.

2. North Eastern Nigeria should direct its policy toward youth-based sectors for development. It is a good choice concentrating on Agric-business, ICT, entertainment, and Hospitality which appear more popular. Agriculture and Agric-business employ a large population of youth in North Eastern Nigeria and contribute to the GDP. There is a need for the provision of incentives such as support in irrigation, fertilizer, and extension services.
3. Tertiary and vocational education should be made more relevant to the market through industry linkages and joint ventures. Skill training must be incorporated in all aspects of education at all levels so that the graduates will be equipped for employment or be able to seek alternatives in business and entrepreneurship.

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