

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES THROUGH ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received 31 July 2023</p> <p>Accepted 23 October 2023</p>	<p>Purpose: The study appraised youth empowerment programmes through entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-reliance in Ondo State, Nigeria.</p>
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>Youth Empowerment Programmes; Entrepreneurial Skills; Self -Reliance.</p>	<p>Theoretical framework: The conceptual framework was developed based on an extensive literature review to establish the relationship between youth empowerment, entrepreneurial skills acquisition and self-reliance. This framework serves as a guiding structure for the study, determining the way out of the virulent, devastating, torturing, and continuous menace of poverty and unemployment bedeviling the youths of Nigeria and proffer lasting solution through entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-reliance.</p>
	<p>Design/Methodology/Approach: The study adopted empirical research approach. Data was gathered from four hundred and fifty participants drawn from six Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centres in three Local Government Areas of Ondo State. The collection of data was by the means of a questionnaire that was structured and well-validated titled Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Job Creation Questionnaire. Descriptive and inductive statistics were used for the data analysis.</p> <p>Findings: The outcome revealed that many jobless school leavers and graduates in Ondo State were completely ignorant of training opportunities provided by Ondo State Government due to inadequate publicity of the programmes. The Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes were not sufficiently funded; most of the Centre buildings were dilapidated and poorly maintained; while the resource persons at the Centres were grossly inadequate and poorly motivated. The acquired entrepreneurial skills have been helping the recipients to set up small-scale business enterprises for self-employment and reliance.</p> <p>Research, Practical and Social implications: The study contributes immensely and shows that it is no more contestable that in Nigeria today, the acquirement of appropriate entrepreneurial skills will greatly assist the jobless school leavers and tertiary educational institutions graduates in ameliorating the problem of unemployment and poverty and also lessen the several crimes and social vices commonly committed by most youths of Nigeria. The Nigerian youths who have acquired entrepreneurial skills will undoubtedly decide properly on the business</p>

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enterprise to embark upon and how to seek initial financial assistance to put it in progress.

Originality/Value: The conceptual framework of the study, its empirical research approach, incomparable modality, and practical recommendations contribute to the existing body of knowledge on youth empowerment programmes through entrepreneurial skills acquisition which champions the reduction of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria. It as well providing valuable direction for stakeholders in building a supportive creativity in the educational system.

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PROGRAMAS DE CAPACITAÇÃO DE JOVENS ATRAVÉS DA AQUISIÇÃO DE HABILIDADES EMPREENDEDORAS PARA AUTOSUFICIÊNCIA NO ESTADO DE ONDO, NIGÉRIA: UMA AVALIAÇÃO

RESUMO

Objectivo: O estudo avaliou programas de capacitação de jovens através da aquisição de competências empreendedoras para a autossuficiência no estado de Ondo, na Nigéria.

Enquadramento teórico: O enquadramento conceptual foi desenvolvido com base numa extensa revisão da literatura para estabelecer a relação entre o empoderamento dos jovens, a aquisição de competências empreendedoras e a autossuficiência. Este quadro serve como estrutura orientadora para o estudo, determinando a saída da ameaça virulenta, devastadora, torturante e contínua da pobreza e do desemprego que atormenta os jovens da Nigéria e oferece uma solução duradoura através da aquisição de competências empreendedoras para a autossuficiência.

Desenho/Metodologia/Abordagem: O estudo adotou abordagem de pesquisa empírica. Os dados foram recolhidos de quatrocentos e cinquenta participantes provenientes de seis Centros de Aquisição de Competências Empreendedoras em três áreas do governo local do estado de Ondo. A coleta de dados foi realizada por meio de um questionário estruturado e bem validado intitulado Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Job Creation Questionnaire. Estatísticas descritivas e indutivas foram utilizadas para a análise dos dados.

Constatações: O resultado revelou que muitos desempregados que abandonaram a escola e diplomados no Estado de Ondo ignoravam completamente as oportunidades de formação oferecidas pelo Governo do Estado de Ondo devido à publicidade inadequada dos programas. Os Programas de Aquisição de Competências Empreendedoras não foram suficientemente financiados; a maioria dos edifícios do Centro estavam em ruínas e mal conservados; enquanto as pessoas-recurso nos Centros eram manifestamente inadequadas e pouco motivadas. As competências empreendedoras adquiridas têm ajudado os beneficiários a criar empresas de pequena escala para o auto-emprego e a dependência.

Pesquisa, Implicações práticas e Sociais: O estudo contribui imensamente e mostra que não é mais contestável que, hoje, na Nigéria, a aquisição de competências empreendedoras apropriadas ajudará enormemente os desempregados que abandonam a escola e os graduados em instituições de ensino superior a melhorar o problema do desemprego e da pobreza. e também diminuir os vários crimes e vícios sociais comumente cometidos pela maioria dos jovens da Nigéria. Os jovens nigerianos que adquiriram competências empreendedoras decidirão, sem dúvida, adequadamente sobre o empreendimento empresarial a iniciar e como procurar assistência financeira inicial para o colocar em andamento.

Originalidade/Valor: A estrutura conceptual do estudo, a sua abordagem de investigação empírica, a modalidade incomparável e as recomendações práticas contribuem para o corpo de conhecimento existente sobre programas de capacitação dos jovens através da aquisição de competências empreendedoras que defendem a redução do desemprego e da pobreza na Nigéria. Também fornece orientações valiosas para as partes interessadas na construção de uma criatividade de apoio no sistema educacional.

Palavras-chave: Programas de Empoderamento Juvenil, Habilidades Empreendedoras, Autossuficiência.

PROGRAMAS DE EMPODERAMIENTO JUVENIL A TRAVÉS DE LA ADQUISICIÓN DE HABILIDADES EMPRESARIALES PARA LA AUTOSUFICIENCIA EN EL ESTADO DE ONDO, NIGERIA: UNA EVALUACIÓN

RESUMEN

Propósito: El estudio evaluó los programas de empoderamiento juvenil a través de la adquisición de habilidades empresariales para la autosuficiencia en el estado de Ondo, Nigeria.

Marco teórico: El marco conceptual se desarrolló sobre la base de una extensa revisión de la literatura para establecer la relación entre el empoderamiento de los jóvenes, la adquisición de habilidades empresariales y la

autosuficiencia. Este marco sirve como estructura rectora para el estudio, determinando la manera de salir de la amenaza virulenta, devastadora, torturadora y continua de la pobreza y el desempleo que aqueja a los jóvenes de Nigeria y ofrece una solución duradera mediante la adquisición de habilidades empresariales para la autosuficiencia.

Diseño/ Metodología/ Enfoque: El estudio adoptó un enfoque de investigación empírico. Se recopilaron datos de cuatrocientos cincuenta participantes procedentes de seis centros de adquisición de habilidades empresariales en tres áreas de gobierno local del estado de Ondo. La recolección de datos se realizó por medio de un cuestionario estructurado y validado titulado Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Job Creation Questionnaire. Para el análisis de los datos se utilizó estadística descriptiva e inductiva.

Hallazgos: El resultado reveló que muchos graduados y graduados desempleados en el estado de Ondo ignoraban por completo las oportunidades de capacitación brindadas por el gobierno del estado de Ondo debido a la publicidad inadecuada de los programas. Los programas de adquisición de capacidades empresariales no recibieron financiación suficiente; la mayoría de los edificios del Centro estaban en ruinas y en mal estado; mientras que los especialistas de los Centros eran tremendamente inadecuados y estaban poco motivados. Las habilidades empresariales adquiridas han ayudado a los beneficiarios a establecer pequeñas empresas para el autoempleo y la confianza.

Investigación, Implicaciones prácticas y Sociales: el estudio contribuye enormemente y muestra que no es más discutible que hoy en Nigeria, la adquisición de habilidades empresariales apropiadas ayudará en gran medida a los desempleados que abandonan la escuela y a los graduados de instituciones de educación terciaria a mejorar el problema del desempleo y la pobreza. y también disminuir los diversos delitos y vicios sociales comúnmente cometidos por la mayoría de los jóvenes de Nigeria. Los jóvenes nigerianos que hayan adquirido habilidades empresariales sin duda decidirán adecuadamente qué empresa emprenderán y cómo buscar asistencia financiera inicial para ponerla en marcha.

Originalidad/ Valor: El marco conceptual del estudio, su enfoque de investigación empírica, su modalidad incomparable y sus recomendaciones prácticas contribuyen al conjunto de conocimientos existente sobre programas de empoderamiento juvenil a través de la adquisición de habilidades empresariales que promueven la reducción del desempleo y la pobreza en Nigeria. También proporciona una dirección valiosa para las partes interesadas en la construcción de una creatividad solidaria en el sistema educativo.

Palabras clave: Programas de Empoderamiento Juvenil, Habilidades Empresariales, Autosuficiencia.

INTRODUCTION

Of all the critical problems facing Nigeria not long ago, none is as virulent, devastating, torturing, and continual as the menace of poverty and unemployment that the youths of Nigeria are battling with (Akinola, 2023). The educational system in Nigeria for the past couple of decades has been producing graduates of secondary school. While there has been an annual astronomical turnout of tertiary educational institutions graduates from various zones in Nigeria (Onwumere, 2021, Duru, 2021). Ironically, these school leavers and graduates are certificated but jobless, as they have been trained to secure white-collar employment rather than being equipped and skilled for self-reliance by venturing into worthwhile economic activities (Akinola, Afolabi & Afolabi, 2022, Onwumere, 2021, Duru, 2021; Akinola, 2023). According to (Akinola, Afolabi & Afolabi, 2022, Akinola, 2023), numerous parents and guardians until now, sent their children and wards to schools to fulfill all righteousness of passing required examinations, for certification leading to securing well-paid jobs in the nearest future but ironically, these graduates and school leavers end up becoming frustrated when they could not secure white-collar jobs. As affirmed by Burhan, Turki & Alia (2023) that education and the

economy of nation are inseparable because the inextricable formation makes them, especially education to form the backbone of life in present-day societies even at the primitive stage of society as a result of its outcomes. No nation can progress without the impacts of education, especially in the field of science and knowledge, and any nation that is advanced in education will definitely enjoy a high position among nations and it will proof the strength of such economy, and as well creates strong weight politically and an place the nation on the lime-line for effective role in the international community.

According to (Erinsakin, Ibidapo & Akinola, 2017, Iheanacho, 2017; Oyekan, 2000), they stressed that every year, Nigerian tertiary educational institutions produce a multitude of graduates who joined the labour market as unemployed youths in an astronomical number. (Odewole, Erinsakin & Agun, 2021), asserted that "Nigeria is considered as one of the countries with incessant unemployment rates in the World and that the youths are mostly affected by the menace of unemployment". (Balogun, 2010), succinctly remarked that, unemployment among the youths in Nigeria has been giving serious concern due to its rapidly increasing pace as a result of the way jobs are disappearing in the public service and an estimated of about 120,000 graduates leaves the Nigerian Universities and Polytechnics to the labour market annually". (Anyadike, Emeh & Ukah,, 2012, Adetayo, 2017, Duru, 2017; Kucheli, Aminchi & Samaila, 2021), further remarked that, "the available jobs in Nigeria labour market are either vanishing or lessening, making the fewer available jobs competitive where more people are struggling for them.

Ondo State is a state with tremendous blessings and its richness in natural mineral resources which would have served as a means of transformation in the areas of economic growth, improvement in social integration, and better well-being of the citizens of the State. Among the resources the State is blessed with are: bitumen, granite, timber, glass, kaolin, forest, sand, and forest. Despite all the natural endowments of the State which should have enhanced the social and economic development and transformed the State from poverty-hit and reduce unemployment level of the State. It is disheartening that economic activities that should have put the State on the list of poor States in Nigeria, some factors like; social vices, redundancy in the economy poverty continue to rise in Ondo State. This grievous situation led to the wake-up of the Ondo State Government to gestate and make a rapid push on programmes that could positively change the narratives. With the training programmes to acquire skills and entrepreneurial development since the return of the country to civilian rule in 1999. The objectives of the programmes are as follows:

- (i) for the stimulation of youths' and adults' interests in Ondo State vocational trades,
- (ii) to encourage the participation of Ondo State people at the designated training centres,
- (iii) for the provision of micro-credit loan facility to participants that successfully graduates from the centres;
- (iv) to create an avenue of self-reliant through simple vocational training for unemployed youths;
- (v) to inculcate the rightful skills that promote productivity and management of the small business;
- (vi) to render assistance in the downstream industries' development;
- (vii) for the promotion of local technology adoption;
- (viii) to create the mind that discourages rural-urban migration;
- (ix) for the enhancement of social peace and stability (Ogunjobi, 2014, Erinsakin, 2014).

Based on these lofty objectives, it is quite apparent that the training leading to the acquisition of skills and programmes of entrepreneurial development introduced by the Ondo State Government generally has the direction of bridging the gap for industrial development and services where talents discovery and avenues to establish various trades where artisans would transform and utilize their talents and skills revolutionize industrial development in the State and for the promotion of employment from their acquired skills for self-reliance. As succinctly stated by Gunartin, Agung & Nurika (2023), if entrepreneurial skills are enhanced that are based on workable structure and focus, is notably believed to tackle social-vices and other menace that pose challenges to the society. Achieving the skills, will create jobs provide enormous potential of the population of the society or country to contribute to the economy through skills acquisition programmes that empowers. According to (Akinsuroju, 2012, Peter & Aderanti, 2021; Akinola, 2023), he averred that programmes that lead to the appropriate acquisition of skills serve as a paramount tool for the economic transformation of Ondo State since the foremost target is for eradication of poverty and to make people self-reliant. The programme anchored its focus on young school leavers, unemployed graduates of educational institutions, retirees, endangered widows, the downtrodden, and the physically challenged as the programmes' participants. To actualize the mandate of the skills acquisition programme, the Government of Ondo State spread its tentacles by establishing twenty-eight (28) Centres at strategic locations within the eighteen (18) Local Government Areas of Ondo State. These

centres were made functional for the participants and empowered the facilitators with adequate facilities and remuneration by the State Government to provide relevant training for youths in their desired vocations.

The entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes were managed by committed personnel of the Department of Investment Promotion and Management under the supervision of the Ondo State Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The skill acquisition centres provide a range of vocational programmes in fish farming, fashion designing, food processing, net-making, chalk-making, tie, and dye, soak making, and metal fabrication. The centres in the expansion of their scope provided training in woodwork, sewing, catering service, local cloth weaving, hairdressing, hat and beads making, block laying, and concreting. The training duration at the centres was one year while some vocations did not exceed six month period which each participant wants to acquire skills on. Ondo State Government believes that the vocational training programmes are catalysts for the development of the creation of little enterprises which would metamorphose into increased creation of jobs that will make them self-employed and have positive effects on their societies. The Government of the State in its encouraging methodology, made provision for supporting aid to the successfully graduated participants as a startup investment scheme loan ranging between the sum of fifty thousand Naira (N50, 000.00) and one hundred thousand Naira (N100, 000.00) depending on their chosen vocations. The study mostly appraises the magnitude at which the youth empowerment programmes being provided by Ondo State Government, through entrepreneurial skills acquisition have assisted the youths in job creation for self-reliance. It is the basis and why the state has not met with the necessary effects that should have been made in reducing the level of poverty and unemployment rate in the State, despite the agitation of the unemployed youths and the rich natural mineral resources; necessitated the appraisal of the youth empowerment programmes through entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-reliance in Ondo State, Nigeria. This will enable the determination of whether the programmes either they had met their intentions or not. Determining how these programmes have affected the lives of the citizens of the State serves as an important factor for this study.

It is on the basis and why the state have not met with the necessary effects that should have been made in reducing level of poverty and unemployment rate in the State, despite the agitation of the unemployed youths and the rich natural mineral resources; necessitated the appraisal of the youth empowerment programmes through entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-reliance in Ondo State, Nigeria. This will enable the determination of the programmes

either they had met its intentions or not. Determining how these programmes have affected lives of the citizens of the State serves as an important factor for this study. This paper utilizes a structured questionnaire to gather data for the study, descriptive and inductive statistics were made use of for the data analysis.

The main objective of the study appraises the youth empowerment programmes for job creation, poverty alleviation, and self-reliance through entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes of the Ondo State Government of Nigeria.

The particular objectives are to:

- (a) ascertain the youth's level of awareness of various Government organized youth empowerment programmes for self-reliance;
- (b) examine the extent to which the Government is involved in the youth empowerment programmes for job creation and poverty alleviation in Ondo State;
- (c) assess the degree of youth involvement in the various youth empowerment programmes of the Ondo State Government;
- (d) ascertain the extent to which the acquired entrepreneurial skills can be utilized for creation towards attaining self-reliance.

The following questions are raised to guide the investigation:

- (a) What is the level of youth awareness of the various Government organized youth empowerment programmes for self-reliance?
- (b) To what extent is Ondo State Government involved in the provision of and administration of youth empowerment programmes for job creation and poverty alleviation in Ondo State?
- (c) What is the level of youth involvement in the various youth empowerment programmes of the Ondo State Government?
- (d) To what extent could the acquired entrepreneurial skills be utilized for job creation towards attaining self-reliance?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The null hypotheses below provide direction to the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the gender and the level of youth awareness of the various Government organized youth empowerment programmes for self-reliance.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the participants on the extent of Government involvement in the provision and administration of youth empowerment programmes for job creation and the location of their Skills acquisition Centres.

Ho3: The academic qualifications of the youth are not significantly related to their involvement in various youth empowerment programmes of Ondo State.

Ho4: The age of the participants is not significantly related to their perception of the extent the acquired entrepreneurial skills could be utilized for job creation towards attaining self-reliance.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

a. **Youth Empowerment:** (Wilfred-Bonse & Sam-Ngwu, 2014, Afolabi, Akinola & Laosebikan, 2020), defined youth empowerment as efforts that are positive and taken deliberately towards improving the lives of young people. In confine of this study, the term youth empowerment refers to empowering with relevant skills and appropriate knowledge that prepares young ones through the process of teaching-learning which aids them in meeting the trends of challenges that are of local, national, and global for their competitiveness in the immediate society.

b. **Entrepreneurship Education:** According to (Akinola, 2019, Afolabi & Loto, 2011), considered entrepreneurship education is "the imbibing individuals with the articulation of saleable ideas, knowledge, attitudes, and entrepreneurial skills that aid the competitiveness of people in meaningful ways to meaningfully contribute to the development of the society that yields happy living and success". Therefore, with entrepreneurship education, the empowerment of individuals for being enterprising and endowed with production capabilities and orientations enhances the dignity of labour and builds the core desire for wealth creation. Also, skills acquisition thus refers to a well-planned method or process to acquire new skills and talent development to carry out particular functions.

METHODOLOGY

The study focuses on the appraisal of youth empowerment programmes through entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-reliance in Ondo State. The adopted research design for the study was a descriptive survey. The study was carried out in Ondo State. All participants in entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes in Ondo State, Nigeria constituted the target population for the study, who are mainly youths, unemployed graduates, artisans, and others. In the political structure of the State, Ondo Central, Ondo South, and Ondo North forms the Senatorial Districts with six equal Local Government Areas, totaling eighteen Local Government Areas respectively. The study was carried out in three of the Local Government Areas, selected randomly from each of the three Senatorial Districts. One hundred and fifty participants were selected for the study in each sample Local Government, making a total of four hundred and fifty (450) participants for the study. A structured questionnaire was the means used for data collection for the study entitled "Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Job Creation Questionnaire". Validity is the accuracy or fidelity with which an instrument measures what it is to measure. In the research, while using the questionnaire as a data-gathering device, Content validity was considered an important quality. Content validity is the representativeness or sampling adequacy of the content, the substance, the matter, and the topics of a measuring instrument. Content validity is guided by the question: "Is the substance or content of the measure representative of the content or the universe of the content of the property being measured". A content matter expert review was adopted to assess the content validity. Instruments (quantitative and qualitative) were subjected to the criticism of experts in Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition from Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria, and experts in Tests and Measurements at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria, and determined the face and content validity of the instrument. While Reliability is the accuracy or precision of a measuring instrument in producing the same result consistently. In other words, it is the consistency with which an instrument measures what it claims or purports to measure. The reliability of the instrument was done using internal consistency reliability. Cronbach alpha was used to check internal consistency reliability which is considered to be a measure of scale reliability. For this study, a test-retest technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument at two (2) weeks intervals. The three (3) forms of the questionnaires were administered to selected respondents, collected, and analyzed. Two (2) weeks later a second administration of the questionnaires to the same subject was done. The duly completed questionnaires were analyzed. The scores obtained from the initial test and re-

test were correlated, using inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation – PPMC) formula to get the correlation coefficient; to confirm, whether the instrument is reliable or not. The correlation coefficient of 0.85 obtained indicated that the research instrument was quite reliable for data collection. which therefore indicated that the research instrument was quite reliable for data collection. Out of 450 questionnaires administered to the respondents, 400 representing 89% of questionnaires were duly completed and retrieved from the respondents. The data analysis was based on 400 duly completed questionnaires. Descriptive and inductive statistics were both used for the analysis. The null hypotheses that were generated for the study were therefore tested with the use of a chi-square statistical tool at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

This study collected data through primary sources using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results are presented using custom tables, mean and standard deviation. The implication of the results of this study concerning the research objectives, research questions, and hypothesis is further discussed

Table 1. t-test on Participants' Gender and Their Responses on Provision and Administration of Entrepreneurial Skills acquisition Programmes for Youths.

Provision and Entrepreneurial Programmes	Administration of Skills acquisition	Male [N = 234]		Female [N = 166]		Calculated t- value	Critical t- value	Remark
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD			
There is high level of youth awareness of Government organised youth empowerment programmes		2.44	0.92	2.28	1.04	1.59	1.960	Not Significant
Government shows high commitment to the provision and administration of youth empowerment programmes through effective funding		2.30	0.94	2.36	0.94	0.55	1.960	Not Significant
Facilities provided in Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centres are grossly inadequate		2.45	0.95	2.42	1.05	0.33	1.960	Not Significant
Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centres have sufficient well motivated resource personnel		2.49	1.00	2.45	0.98	0.57	1.960	Not Significant
There is high level of youth patronage of the Entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes		2.38	1.00	2.48	0.98	1.27	1.960	Not Significant
The acquired Entrepreneurial skills are being utilized by the youths in setting up small scale business enterprises		2.59	0.93	2.56	0.94	0.21	1.960	Not Significant

Source: Prepared by the authors themselves.

As distinctly indicated in Table 1, the calculated t-value for each of the items is lower than the critical t-value [1.960], at a 0.05 level of significance, and with 398 degrees of freedom. Thus, there is no significant difference in the responses of the male and female participants to the Government provision and administration of Entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes for the youths which is in agreement with the study carried out by Erinsakin, Ibidapo & Akinola, (2017). Taking a mean of 2.50 as the index of a group majority agreement to a statement. It is therefore quite manifest in Table 1, that bulk of the male and female participants are of the view that they had low awareness of the Government organized entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes. Also, the youth empowerment programmes were not sufficiently funded; the facilities provided at the Skills Acquisition Centres were grossly inadequate; the resource persons were not well motivated; and the programmes have been attracting low patronage of youths. However, the majority of the participants declared that the acquired entrepreneurial skills have been helping the youths set up small-scale business enterprises.

Testing of Null Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the gender and the level of youth awareness of the various Government organized youth empowerment programmes for self-reliance.

Table 2. Chi-square Analysis on the level of Awareness of Government Organised Youth. empowerment programmes and their Gender.

Participants	Low Awareness			Total	Degree of Freedom (df)	Calculated Chi-square value ($\chi^2 c$)	Chi-square Table value ($\chi^2 t$)	Level of significance	Remarks
	High Awareness	Low Awareness	Unaware						
Male	76 *[73]	113 *[115]	45 [46]	234	2	30.75	5.991	0.05	Not significance
Female	56 *[53]	98 *[100]	12 *[13]	166					
Total	132	211	57	400					

* Figures in Parentheses are the expected values.
Source: Prepared by the authors themselves.

As indicated vividly in Table 2, the calculated chi-square value [$\chi^2 c$] is 3,0675, while the chi-square table value [$\chi^2 t$] is 5.991 at a 0.05 level of significance and with two degrees of freedom (df). The result indicates that there is no significant difference between the level of youth awareness of the Government organized youth empowerment programmes and their

gender. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. As indicated in Table 2, the majority of the male 113 (48.3%) and females 98 (59.0%), affirmed that they only had low awareness of the youth empowerment programmes. This position is in agreement with the study of (Akinlo, 2021, Akinola, 2019).

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the perception of the participants on the extent of Government involvement in the provision and administration of youth empowerment programmes for job creation and the location of their Skills Acquisition Centres.

Table 3. Chi-square Analysis on Relationship between the Location of the Participants of the Skills Acquisition Centres and their Responses on extent of Government involvement in the Provision and Administration of the Empowerment Programmes.

Location	Government's level of Commitment in terms of funding, provision of facilities and Resources Persons			Total	Degree of Freedom (df)	Calculated Chi-square value (x^2c)	Chi-square table value (x^2t)	Level of significance	Remarks
	Highly Committed	Low commitment	Not committed						
Urban	40 *[37]	118 [120]	202 [203]	360	2	4.081	5.991	0.05	Not significance
Rural	2 *[1]	6 [4]	32 *[35]	40					
Total	42	124	234	400					

* Figures in Parentheses are the expected values.
Source: Prepared by the authors themselves.

As vividly presented in Table 3, the calculated chi-square value [x^2c] is 4.08, while the chi-square table value [x^2t] is 5.991 at a 0.05 level of significance and with two degrees of freedom (df). The result indicates that there is no significant difference between the perception of participants in urban and rural areas and the extent of Government commitment to the provision and administration of youth empowerment programmes. The hypothesis is therefore accepted. As indicated in Table 3, the majority of the participants 234 (58.5%) held the view that the Government did not show much commitment in the area of funding, provision of adequate modern facilities, and recruitment of high-quality and well-motivated resource persons for the youth empowerment programme.

Ho3: The academic qualifications of the youths are not significantly related to their involvement in various youth empowerment programmes of the Ondo State Government.

Table 4. Chi-square Analysis showing the Relationship between the Participants' Academic Qualifications and their involvement in Youth Empowerment Programmes.

Academic Qualifications of Participants	Extent of Participants' involvement in Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Programmes		Degree of Freedom (df)	Total	Calculated Chi-square (χ^2c)	Chi-square Table value (χ^2t)	Level of significance	Remarks
	Agree	Disagree						
SSCE	5 *[12]	17 [10]	22					Significant
NCE/OND	96 *[88]	60 [68]	156					
HND	7 *[6]	3 [4]	10					
BA/BSC/B. Ed	-	-		4	18.9	9.49	0.05	
PGDE/MA/MED/MSc	34 *[49]	49 *[36]	83					
Total	324	76	400					

* Figures in Parentheses are the expected values.

Source: Prepared by the authors themselves.

As indicated in Table 4, the calculated chi-square value [χ^2c] is 18.9, while the chi-square table value [χ^2t] is 9.49 at a 0.05 level of significance and with four degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the participants' academic qualifications and their involvement in youth entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Ho4: The age of the participants is not significantly related to their perception of the extent to which the acquired entrepreneurial skills could be utilized for job creation towards attaining self-reliance.

Table 5. Chi-square Analysis showing the Relationship between the Age of the Participants' and their Responses on the Extent of Utilizing the Acquired Entrepreneurial Skills for Job Creation.

Age Group of Participants	Extent of Utilisation of acquired Entrepreneurial Skills		Total	Degree of Freedom (df)	Calculated Chi-square value (χ^2c)	Chi-square table value (χ^2t)	Level of significance	Remarks
	Frequently	Occasionally						
Below 19 years	47 *[43]	86 *[90]	133					Significant
20 – 29 years	74 *[77]	63 *[60]	137	3	6.78	7.815	0.05	
30 – 39 years	58	5						

	*[35]	*[28]	63
Over 40 years	56 *[38]	11 *[29]	67
Total	224	176	400

* Figures in Parentheses are the expected values.

Source: Prepared by the authors themselves.

As presented in Table 5, the calculated Chi-square table value [xc^2] is 6.78, while the Chi-square table value [xt^2] is 7.815, at a 0.05 level of significance and with three degrees of freedom (df). There is a significant relationship between the age of the participants and their perception of the extent to which the trainees utilized their acquired entrepreneurial skills in job creation, for self-reliance. The majority of the participants whose ages are above 20 years affirmed that the acquired entrepreneurial skills are frequently utilized for job creation, towards sustaining self-reliance, while those below 19 years held a contrary view.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In line with Table 2 above, the result indicates that there is no significant difference between the level of youth awareness of the Government organized youth empowerment programmes and their gender. As indicated in Table 2, the majority of the male 113 (48.3%) and females 98 (59.0%), affirmed that they only had low awareness of the youth empowerment programmes. This position is in agreement with the study of (Akinlo, 2021, Akinola, 2019). Based on the outcome of the findings, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Despite the laudable intention of the Ondo State Government to bail out the teeming youth population in the State from the problem of unemployment and poverty, by empowering the youths through entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes, it is, however, disheartening that, these lofty programmes were not given adequate publicity on mass media, as many youths in the State affirmed that they were completely ignorant of such entrepreneurial training programmes. Most of the participants interviewed declared that they were aware of the Government training programmes through their friends.

As indicated in Table 3 above, the result from the findings indicates that there is no significant difference between the perception of participants in urban and rural areas and the extent of Government commitment to the provision and administration of youth empowerment programmes. With this outcome, it justifies that the hypothesis is therefore accepted. [Erinsakin, Ibidapo & Akinola, 2017, Afolabi & Loto, 2011), remarked that "unemployment

has been one of the most persistent, virulent and agonizing problems facing many school leavers and Nigeria tertiary educational institutions graduates, in the two decades". Also, (Fatoki, 2019), maintained that "youth empowerment programmes have been considered worthy by Ondo State Government as a way of developing the youths and usefully empower and engage the teeming jobless youths of the State". Buttressing further, the importance of youth empowerment, (Sule, 2014), succinctly remarked that "The foremost cardinal point for the strategic macro-economic framework is empowering the Nigerian people towards employment generation, wealth creation, poverty reduction, and value re-orientation". It, therefore, becomes highly imperative for Ondo State Government to give wide publicity to these entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes to attract high patronage of many jobless and poverty-ridden youths in the State.

With the indication in Table 4 above, the calculated chi-square value [$\chi^2 c$] is 18.9, while the chi-square table value [$\chi^2 t$] is 9.49 at a 0.05 level of significance and with four degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the participants' academic qualifications and their involvement in youth entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.. it is discovered that the academic achievement of participants did not determine their involvement in entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes but their interest matters.

The various Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centres in Ondo State were not sufficiently funded. Some buildings at some Centres were dilapidated and poorly maintained. While modern instructional facilities were either non-existent or inadequately provided. Commenting on education finance, the affirmation of (Ogunu, 2000), was corroborated by [Kucheli, Aminchi & Samaila, 2021), that "paramount direction to the success of any system of education is nothing less than adequate financial input because other factors to the success of the system are the provision of facilities and equipment, procurement of materials, remuneration of personnel both teaching and non-teaching which the determining factor is the availability of fund".

About achieving the objectives of the Entrepreneurial Skills acquisition programmes in the State, the Federal Government of Nigeria has been assisting Ondo State by supplying vital tools and equipment to the State, which were later distributed to the Skills Acquisition Centres. As indicated in (Ondo State Government, 2021), the Federal Government changed the modality of supplying tools and equipment, by giving funds to the State Government for the procurement of equipment. The required equipment was provided by Ondo State Government and distributed

to the beneficiaries of the Youth Empowerment Programmes. Also, the (World Bank, 2017), noted the need to empower the youths of Ondo State, after discovering that the available Skills Acquisition Centres in the State, did not have enough equipment after the appraisal was made. Thus, the State Government in partnership requested the support of the World Bank.

The findings in Table 5 above, revealed that there is a significant relationship between the age of the participants and their perception of the extent to which the trainees utilized their acquired entrepreneurial skills in job creation, for self-reliance. The majority of the participants whose ages are above 20 years affirmed that the acquired entrepreneurial skills are frequently utilized for job creation, towards sustaining self-reliance, while those below 19 years held a contrary view. It is on this basis that age is not a determining factor for the perception of the participants and the utilization of acquired skills for job creation. The acquisition of skills, attitude, and cognitive development of desirable habits through entrepreneurial activities helps the recipients of those elements to become impressive entrepreneurs who in no doubt can hire other necessary factors of production which are; capital, land, and labour that can aid the creation of utilities, wealth and income, that is helpful to self-reliance and employment generation. The Federal Government, after the training, empowers the youths by the provision of funds to deserving beneficiaries to start a business. The fund ranges between the sum of one hundred thousand Naira (N100,000.00) to one hundred and fifty thousand Naira (N 150,000.00) through the Federal Youth Development Centre (Ondo State Government, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

It is no more contestable that in Nigeria today, the acquirement of appropriate entrepreneurial skills will greatly assist the jobless school leavers and tertiary educational institutions graduates in ameliorating the problem of unemployment and poverty and also lessen the several crimes and social vices commonly committed by most youths of Nigeria. The Nigerian youths who have acquired entrepreneurial skills will undoubtedly decide properly on the business enterprise to embark upon and how to seek initial financial assistance to put it in progress.

As the problem of serial unemployment among graduates, school leavers in Nigeria, and other classes of people seriously require robust, relevant comprehensive, and practical-based entrepreneurship education, prominent attention should be given to the provision and proper administration of entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes by all the stakeholders of education. The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills assists the Nigerian youths to become

impressive and active entrepreneurs, who can hire other factors of production which are: capital, land, and labour for job creation, and income generation through gainful employment, which ultimately pave the way to employment generation, poverty eradication, and self-reliance.

Furthermore, Gender is not a factor to determine the level of awareness of the various Government organized youth empowerment programmes for self-reliance. In view of this, sources of information differs as it is not limited to the conventional way of getting information for Government organized youth empowerment programmes. Also, there is no significant difference between the perception of participants in urban and rural areas and the extent of Government commitment in the provision and administration of youth empowerment programmes. Location of participants is not in anyway factor for not enjoying Governments presence for youth empowerment.

As part of contributions to knowledge, level of academic serve as factor for involvement is developmental programmes because level of education provides good knowledge. Like the saying: 'knowledge is wealth', this indicates that as educated one is, makes him or her contribute better and learn better through empowerment programmes and have meaningful contributions to the society through the skills acquired.

For the age factor, youthful stage assists easily to better learning and guides in job creation because their understanding channels about skills acquisition builds self-reliance principles in them as their strengths provide enough energies to actualize their dreams for self-reliance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the outcomes of the study, recommendations for improvement are made as follows.

The funding of entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes in Ondo State in particular and in Nigeria at large, should not be limited to various tiers of Government but a collective responsibility, that will involve the household, communities, voluntary agencies, private individuals, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

As entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes are geared towards providing the youths with the application of practical-based skills that will aid the production of creative and innovative craftsmen, technicians, and skilled personnel and brings constructive difference by becoming enterprising and self-reliant, the programmes should be given wide publicity in all mass media, to create youths' awareness of the training opportunities. Also, all three tiers of Government

should map out effective strategies on how to assist the school leavers, graduates, and other Nigerian youths who have completed their entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes with the take-off capital for their business enterprise.

It is highly expedient to make the curricula of educational institutions at all levels in Nigeria more realistic and to consist of built-in job training programmes which will enable all students to acquire relevant innovative and creative entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment, wealth creation, and self-reliance. Also, every tertiary educational institution in Nigeria must have an adequate spacious, aesthetically pleasing, and well-equipped Entrepreneurial Education Centre.

Entrepreneurial skills are also useful in Government establishments and parastatals. The three tiers of Government in Nigeria, Federal, State, and Local Government should widen their industrial base; diversify their economy and the productive sector towards absorbing school leavers and graduates into gainful employment.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study was limited to Ondo State Nigeria and was carried out in three of the Local Government Areas, selected randomly from each of the three Senatorial Districts. One hundred and fifty

participants were selected for the study in each sample Local Government, making a total of four hundred and fifty (450) participants for the study. It, therefore, did not provide a generalized view

for other programmes in Ondo State, Nigeria. Rigid protocol of some of the programme's operators affected easy access to some agencies whereby the researcher visited some places severally before access could be gained and delayed the data collection process of this study leading to more costs on the part of the researchers. The location of some respondents was very difficult to get which led to more cost on the part of the researcher. The responsiveness of some leadership of the centres to the questionnaire survey was not encouraging but the research was a success. This led the researcher to examine a sizeable number of these programmes

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