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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Dimensions of Entrepreneurship Intention and Youth Employability: Evidence from Corps Members in Ikpoba Okha Local Government

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Abstract

This study assessed the role of experience and entrepreneurial education in youth employability among corps members in Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. The study specifically investigated two dimensions of entrepreneurship intention: experience and entrepreneurial education and how they influence youth employment. A sample of 154 corps members was surveyed using a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The findings revealed that experience and entrepreneurial education had significant positive relationships with youth employment. Entrepreneurial education emerged as the strongest predictors, while experience also significantly enhanced youth employment. Overall, the two dimensions of entrepreneurship intentions explained a substantial proportion of the variance in youth employability; among the respondents. The study concludes that experience and entrepreneurial education are key drivers of youth employment and recommends that policymakers, NYSC authorities, and educational institutions strengthen entrepreneurial education, provide experiential learning opportunities and promote supportive environments for corps members. The study contributes to knowledge by validating the Theory of Planned Behavior in explaining the link between entrepreneurial intentions and youth employment outcomes in Nigerian.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, intention, experience, youth employment and education

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1 | Introduction

Entrepreneurship is all about the ability to spot an opportunity, gather the necessary resources, organize them effectively, and adapt strategy to make the most of that opportunity (Mazzarol and Reboud, 2017). The education plays a crucial role in equipping with the knowledge, skills, and insights that can significantly boost the potential returns from seizing that opportunity. Not only does studying entrepreneurship enhance understanding and skills needed to pursue after opportunities, but it also gives the analytical tools and comprehension of the entrepreneurial journey that are essential for sharpening entrepreneurial judgment (Shepherd, et al 2017). The entrepreneurial experience and education incredibly important because they equip one with the knowledge, skills, and insights that can really enhance ones' chances of making the most out of opportunities. Studying entrepreneurship not only deepens understanding and enhances the skills necessary to pursue these opportunities, but it also provides with the analytical tools and insights into the entrepreneurial drive that are vital for refining judgment as an entrepreneur (Shepherd, et al, 2017).

Izedonmi (2010) posit that entrepreneurship the purposeful creation or revitalizations of a business with the intention of generating or creating value through the use of resources. Both the intentional creation of an organization and the intentional alteration of an existing organization are included in this phrase. It must be taught in order for the skills and information associated with it to be transferred from one specialist to another since it is a dynamic process that calls for imagination, foresight, and adaptability. Entrepreneurship entails putting one's energy and enthusiasm into starting a business. This includes having the courage to take measured risks, the ability to collaborate with others, the inventiveness to gather necessary resources, the basic ability to create a strong business plan, and, lastly, the vision to see opportunity where others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion (Ojogbo, 2022).

Entrepreneurs have a certain set of qualities that are essential for completing entrepreneurial undertakings successfully, regardless of whether they are young, old, graduates, students, or non-students. Different facets of these attributes may be the focus of the

researchers' interests. Drive, risk-taking, proactive, acceptance of uncertainty, creative potential, intensity, discipline and determination, adaptability, impulsive behavior, consciousness, leadership, skepticism and resilience, and a high tolerance for ambiguity are some of these traits (Nwibe and Ogbuanya, 2024). These characteristics have become the main focus of research for a number of scholars in recent years (Nwibe and Ogbuanya, 2024). Youths tend to have distinct personalities. Achieving a certain amount of power, autonomy, and independence for themselves is a top priority for them as they work to become entrepreneurs. They view change as an opportunity to reach their greatest potential and are willing to take some chances to do so. They have a good balance between their rational and intuitive thinking, and they can communicate with others.

Although there may not be a one, widely agreed-upon definition of entrepreneurship, scholars agreed that it is a process that involves identifying a need, seizing an opportunity to meet it, and then creating a company around it. The entrepreneurial intention would be the strongest indicator of this behavior (Ojogbo, et al, 2022). An essential component of engaging in entrepreneurial behavior is having an entrepreneurial intention. It is a mentality that leads and guides people's activities toward the creation and application of innovative business ideas. The individual's views toward a certain behavior, or whether engaging in that behavior is favorably or adversely valued, may be used to predict their intention to engage in that behavior. These attitudes interact with contextual elements to encourage or inhibit the launch of new firms (Boyd & Vozikiz, 2014). Several factors can positively influence a person's choice to launch a business. These include societal attitudes towards entrepreneurship, having role models to look up to, and prior exposure to entrepreneurial experiences. Additionally, the presence of role models plays a significant role in this decision-making process (Boyd & Vozikiz , 2014).

2 | Literature Review

Theoretical Development

The theory of planed behavior was developed by Ajzen's (1991) and several entrepreneurship researchers have built on it and expanded the theory (Kolvereid, 1996; Krueger et al. 2000; Liñán & Chen 2009). Theory of planned behavior maintains that individual's entrepreneurial intent is shaped by one's behavior which is indirectly related to his/her broad attitude and personality trait. This simply means, people attitudes and personality traits have an indirect effect on the entrepreneurial intentions (Solesvik 2013) People intentions are function of: perception towards the behavior, social norm, and apparent behavioral control. Perception towards behaviour explain the degree of judgment an individual place on the outcome, whether positive or negative before performing a behaviour, social norm explains the value we place on the opinion of those close to us such as family members, friends, and other associates and whether our behavour would approve or disapprove by them (Liñán and Chen 2006), apparent behavioral control explains the degree of ease or difficulty of displaying a behavior. The theory explains that individual entrepreneurial intent and ability to behave entrepreneurially is relative to perceive incentive or drive Ojiaku, et al (2018).

An individual seeks to be self-employed because there exist a necessity or opportunity (Fitzsimmons & Douglas 2005 Buenstorf 2009). Individual ability to behave entrepreneurially is relative to perceive incentive or drive Ojiaku, et al, (2018). The entrepreneur represents society's model personality. His/her behaviour to act entrepreneurially depends upon three factors: (i) his/her own attitude towards his/her occupation, (ii) the role expectations held by the sanctioning groups, and (iii) the occupational requirements of the job (Fitzsimmons & Douglas 2005 Buenstorf 2009). However, theory fails to explain unintentional behaviour, The theory was criticized for failing to make a distinction between attitudes and norms, since attitudes reflect an individual's personal evaluation of a behavior, whereas norms represent the perceived social pressures or expectations from significant others regarding that behavior. Another limitation is the assumption that when someone forms an intention to act, they will be free to act without limitation.

The Objectives of the Study

The Specific Objectives Are to

1. assess the effect of entrepreneurship education on youth employment.
2. ascertain the influence of entrepreneurial experience has on youth employment.

Hypotheses Development

Entrepreneurial Intention and Youth Employment

Entrepreneurial intention is a person's intentional state of mind, desire, or commitment to start a new business venture in the future. It demonstrates a person's willingness and determination to launch their own business and work for oneself. Entrepreneurial intention is often influenced by a variety of factors, including personal attitude, perceived behavioral control, societal norms, education, and environmental support. Ajzen (1991) claims that since intention is seen as the direct antecedent of behavior, those who have great entrepreneurial aspirations are more likely to launch businesses. Similarly, entrepreneurship researchers argue that entrepreneurial purpose is a key predictor of entrepreneurial activity and firm development.

The issue of youth unemployment in Nigeria has been recognized as one that must be addressed through entrepreneurship. The Nigerian government has developed a number of policies and programs to encourage entrepreneurship among young people in light of the potential of entrepreneurship in providing job possibilities for young people (Ojiaku, et al, 2021). For instance, the Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program (YEDP) was introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in 2016 to give young entrepreneurs access to funding, mentorship, and training (Ayodele, 2021; Garba, et al, 2019)

The government has additionally established a number of organizations to encourage young people to start their own businesses and create jobs. For instance, the Bank of Industry (BOI) offers low-interest loans to business owners, while the small and medium-sized enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) supports and trains aspiring business owners (Buba, et al, 2022). In addition, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) offers young people entrepreneurial development programs and vocational training to help them launch and run small enterprises (Ayodele, 2021).

In Nigeria, encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation among young people requires a strong understanding of the idea of entrepreneurial intention. In order to provide work possibilities in the informal sector, which is a key employer of labor in the nation, young people's desire to launch and run enterprises is crucial. The connection between entrepreneurial intent and youth employment in Nigeria has been investigated in a number of studies (Ibidunni, et al, 2020).

For instance, research by Garba, et al (2019) concluded that youth employment was positively and significantly impacted by entrepreneurial intention. The authors hypothesized that encouraging young people to start their own businesses may lower Nigeria's high incidence of youth unemployment. Ezeh, et al (2020) looked at the correlations between entrepreneurial intent, financial accessibility, and youth employment in Nigeria in different research and found that access to financing had a favorable and substantial impact on entrepreneurial intention, which in turn had a favorable and significant impact on youth employment. According to the authors, giving young entrepreneurs in Nigeria access to financing might boost their entrepreneurial aspirations and improve the number of work prospects for young people.

Although entrepreneurship has the potential to help Nigeria's youth unemployment problem, a number of obstacles prevent young people in the nation from becoming more successful entrepreneurs (Mahmoud & Garba, 2019). These difficulties include a weak business ecosystem, poor infrastructure, significant regulatory burdens, and restricted access to capital. In order to encourage entrepreneurship and expand job prospects for young people in Nigeria, it is essential to address these issues (Izedonmi, 2010).

The issue of young unemployment in Nigeria has been recognized as one that must be addressed through entrepreneurship. In order to provide work possibilities in the informal sector, which is a key employer of labor in the nation, it is crucial to encourage young people's entrepreneurial intent. The Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program, the Bank of Industry, and the National Directorate of Employment are just a few of the policies and programs that the Nigerian government has put into place to encourage young people to become entrepreneurs (Gujrati, 2019; Magaji, 2019).

Nigeria has one of the worst rates of youth unemployment in the world, thus the issue of youth employment is quite important to policymakers there (International Labour Organization, 2023) The Nigerian government is aware of how crucial young employment is to ensuring social stability, poverty reduction, and economic prosperity. Young Entrepreneurship Support (YES) program, Youth Employment and Social Support Operation (YESSO), and Youth Employment and Job Creation Program (YEJC) are just a few of the latest attempts to support youth employment (Ojogbo, et al, 2022).

Ekpe and Mat (2012) posit that there are a number of factors that affect young people's employment in Nigeria and these factors are strongly correlated with the economic, political, and social setting of the nation. Education is one of the key factors. Higher degrees of education boost young people's chances of getting job, particularly in formal industries, according to studies. However, the caliber of education is equally crucial, and the absence of necessary training and skills continues to be a major obstacle for young employment in Nigeria. The macroeconomic environment, which includes governmental policies and the status of the economy, is another factor affecting young employment. With little prospects in the official sector, Nigeria's young graduate are employed most frequently in the informal economy. Youth employment therefore depends on policies that encourage the development of the informal sector, such as access to financing and training (Nwibe & Ogbuanya, 2024; Omoju et al., 2023.; Ofor-Douglas, 2022).

Additionally, research indicates that the sociocultural context is a further factor influencing juvenile employment. Cultural expectations and social standards can have an impact on young people's employment options and possibilities, especially for women. For instance, women are expected to put marriage and having children before their job goals in many areas of Nigeria (Buba, 2022). The evidence also implies that entrepreneurship may be a crucial route to young employment. A key factor in economic development and job creation has been identified as entrepreneurship, and youth entrepreneurship is now widely acknowledged as a strategy for reducing young unemployment in Nigeria.

However, there are a number of obstacles facing young entrepreneurs, such as a lack of access to capital, education, and market information (Magaji, 2019; Ojogbo, 2022). Youth employment is an important factor in determining entrepreneurial intention in Nigeria. The economic, political, and social environment in Nigeria significantly influences youth employment opportunities, while several government and institutional programmes have been introduced to promote entrepreneurship and reduce unemployment (Nwibe & Ogbuanya, 2024; Omoju et al., 2023). Youth entrepreneurship may be a crucial route to employment, and policies that encourage it can be a key component of tackling youth unemployment in Nigeria (Ofor-Douglas, 2022).

Entrepreneurial Education and Youth Employment

Entrepreneurship education/training has been acknowledged as a critical instrument for increasing youth employment and lowering unemployment rates (Ojogbo, et al, 2022). First of all, entrepreneurship education may improve young people's abilities and knowledge and give them the resources they need to launch and expand their own firms. Entrepreneurial education facilitates young people in becoming more successful business owners and in creating their own jobs by offering training in areas such as business planning, marketing, finance, and leadership (Izedonmi, 2010).

Furthermore, entrepreneurship education promotes an innovative and entrepreneurial culture, which may result in the emergence of new businesses and employment prospects. It encourages and inspires young people to pursue entrepreneurial professions by exposing them to successful entrepreneurs and giving them the chance to create their own business ideas (Gujrati, et al 2019). Subsequently, entrepreneurship education improves young people's employability by giving them transferrable skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Employers place a high value on these talents, which may aid young people in finding employment across a range of sectors and industries (Ojogbo, 2022). Moreover, by providing alternate routes to work, it helps solve the issues of youth unemployment and underemployment. Entrepreneurship education reduces the strain on the traditional job market and open up new career prospects for young people by enticing them to start their own businesses and work for themselves (Ayodele, 2021; Garba, 2019).

The effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in promoting youth employment, on the other hand, is dependent on a number of factors, including the quality and relevance of the training, the availability of financing and support services for young entrepreneurs, and the broader economic and regulatory environment. Furthermore, while entrepreneurship education can be a significant tool for increasing youth employment, it is not a panacea for all of the problems that young people face in the labor market (Magaji, 2019). In Nigeria and other developing nations, entrepreneurship education has the potential to be a significant instrument for promoting youth employment and lowering unemployment rates. Yet, effective entrepreneurship education programs involve careful consideration of the local environment as well as a complete strategy that tackles the numerous hurdles and problems that youths encounter in the employment market (Mahmoud & Garba, 2019).

A systematic and well-designed entrepreneurship programs raise entrepreneurial knowledge, self-efficacy, and, in many contexts, intention to start businesses; several longitudinal evaluations also link training to higher rates of venture creation and improved early-stage firm performance—though effect sizes vary widely (Deng and Wang 2023). They are two dimensions of entrepreneurship education that stand out. First, experiential, problem-based, and mentoring approaches (incubation, project work, live client problems) outperform purely classroom-based instruction in promoting applied skills and market orientation. Second, curricula that explicitly incorporate opportunity recognition exercises, risk management simulations, and network building produce stronger behavioral outcomes than generic business-plan courses. At the policy level, evidence supports targeted entrepreneurship training for marginalized populations (women, youth, rural entrepreneurs) but flags the need to pair training with access to finance and markets for sustained impact (Zhang et al 2022; Montes et al 2023; Deng and Wang 2023).

Entrepreneurial education and training in Nigerian higher education have expanded rapidly since the early 2000s, and the literature provides both encouragement and critique. National policy (NUC mandates) has led to compulsory entrepreneurship modules across many universities, and a growing number of universities now host entrepreneurship development centres, competitions, and incubators. Empirical evaluations (including mixed-methods studies across multiple Nigerian institutions) report consistent gains in entrepreneurial knowledge, self-efficacy, and intention after exposure to entrepreneurship courses. Furthermore, literature is unanimous in stressing heterogeneity in program quality: classroom-only, and theory-based modules deliver limited behavioral change, while experiential, mentor-led, project-based programs (incubators, live client projects, seed competitions) show superior outcomes.

Moreover, national and philanthropic initiatives (for example, large pan-African programs that support student and youth entrepreneurs) amplify university efforts by providing mentorship and seed funding, though rigorous long-term impact evaluation is still patchy. Policy and institutional priorities emerging from Nigeria's research agenda emphasize aligning curricula with local value chains, strengthening university-industry linkages, and pairing training with market and finance access to turn intentions into sustained start-ups (Deng and Wang 2023; TEF annual report 2023).

Oyinlola et al, (2024) argue that an effective entrepreneurship education develops from the interplay of five constructs. First, experience, training, and social support are mutually reinforcing: practical experience amplifies the returns to entrepreneurial education, and institutional support networks translate student alertness into tested ventures. Second, risk propensity among students is malleable in practice (students become more willing to experiment when they can pilot low-cost prototypes or access micro-grants) which suggests that curriculum designers should embed safe-to-fail experimentation into learning sequences. Third, opportunity recognition is a social as well as cognitive process: feedback from industry partners, mentors, and potential customers accelerates the discovery (validation cycle for student founders. Finally, the Nigerian evidence underscores the need for system approaches) bundling pedagogy, mentorship, seed funding, and market linkages rather than assuming any single input will produce sustainable student ventures (Oyinlola et al, 2024)

Successful entrepreneurial outcomes may not necessarily follow from entrepreneurship education and training. Rather, psychological and contextual elements including thinking, opportunity recognition, and environmental support frequently moderate its effects. According to Chen et al. (2024), entrepreneurial education by itself does not ensure venture success until it is translated into an entrepreneurial attitude and practical implementation. Similarly, research suggests that conventional entrepreneurship training may be overly theoretical and insufficiently flexible in the actual world, which would limit its efficacy in fast-paced company settings (Chen et al., 2024). These results cast doubt on its direct impact on the success of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial Experience and Youth Employment

Entrepreneurial experience is widely recognized as a central human-capital resource that shapes how founders interpret information, mobilize resources, and manage emerging ventures. Recent empirical studies emphasize that entrepreneurial experience should not merely be measured by years of practice, but also by the quality and relevance of learning acquired through

managerial, functional, and industry-specific exposure. Research indicates that prior entrepreneurial and managerial experience improves venture survival, resource utilization, innovation, and market entry, although the benefits may vary depending on context and environmental conditions (Grežo & Hanák, 2024; Stošić Panić, 2024).

Furthermore, scholars argue that experience obtained in unrelated industries or under different institutional settings may have limited transferability and may sometimes lead to cognitive rigidity that constrains innovation and strategic flexibility. Contemporary literature therefore stresses that the relevance and applicability of entrepreneurial experience are more important than the mere duration of experience. This human-capital perspective is further supported by studies linking specific forms of managerial and entrepreneurial experience to improved venture performance, while also recognizing that the relationship between experience and business success is influenced by environmental uncertainty and task novelty (Sinha & Osiyevskyy, 2023)

Entrepreneurial experience among university students in Nigeria is best understood as a mix of formal placements, extracurricular ventures, and early micro-business exposure rather than long managerial tenure. Recent Nigerian studies emphasize that experience acquired during study — through SIWES internships, industry-linked projects, hackathons, and student clubs — confers practical skills, market awareness, and credibility that increase students' readiness to found ventures. However, several Nigeria-focused empirical papers and qualitative studies note that these experiences often lack depth and continuity: many university initiatives are one-off events or "tick-box" modules that do not systematically develop transferable entrepreneurial routines. As a result, while prior small-scale business activity or applied industry exposure improves students' opportunity recognition and self-efficacy, its impact on sustained venture creation is contingent on the quality of supervision, access to mentors, and linkages to markets and finance (Deng and Wang 2023).

The term "entrepreneurial experience" describes the practical knowledge, abilities, and skills gained via prior commercial endeavors, employment, exposure to management, and involvement in entrepreneurial endeavors. It is commonly recognized as a crucial part of human capital that affects corporate success, employment generation, and entrepreneurial intention. People can acquire the problem-solving, opportunity-recognition, decision-making, and risk-management skills necessary for venture success through entrepreneurial experience.

Human Capital Theory states that experience increases a person's ability to be productive by enhancing their knowledge and proficiency in managing entrepreneurial tasks. Compared to inexperienced people, entrepreneurs with past commercial or managerial experience are more likely to spot lucrative possibilities, deploy resources efficiently, and handle uncertainty. According to recent research, entrepreneurial experience has a beneficial impact on firm growth, innovation, and venture survival. For example, Grežo and Hanák (2024) found that prior entrepreneurial experience enhances operational efficiency and strategic decision-making, which greatly adds to business success. In a similar vein, Stošić Panić (2024) discovered that prior managerial experience improves entrepreneurs' performance and strengthens their capacity to adjust to shifting market conditions.

Youths' employability and entrepreneurial intention are significantly influenced by their entrepreneurial experience. People can gain the necessary business knowledge and self-assurance for self-employment by being exposed to real-world business operations through internships, vocational programs, mentorship, and prior work engagements. According to Sinha and Osiyevskyy (2023), entrepreneurial experience enhances the quality and application of human capital, which in turn increases venture performance. The authors also underlined that ambient factors, task difficulty, and the applicability of past experience all influence the association between experience and entrepreneurial success.

Additionally, resilience and creativity are enhanced by entrepreneurial experience. Stronger coping strategies and more confidence in managing risks and uncertainties are frequently developed by entrepreneurs who have experienced both business successes and disappointments. Experience teaches useful lessons that enhance flexibility and smart thinking. However, academics warn that because institutional and environmental differences might restrict the transferability of information and skills, expertise gained in unrelated industries may not always convert into entrepreneurial success.

In Nigeria, the value of entrepreneurial experience has increased due to rising youth unemployment and the growing need for self-employment opportunities. For young people to be exposed to real-world business experiences that can improve employability and business creation, industrial attachment programs, vocational training, and entrepreneurship development programs are essential. Consequently, venture performance, entrepreneurial talent, and sustained economic growth are all heavily influenced by entrepreneurial experience.

Though current research contends that its impact is not necessarily central or linear in explaining entrepreneurial success, entrepreneurial experience is frequently seen as a type of human capital that improves venture outcomes. Research indicates that when environmental factors, cognitive bias, and contextual variations are taken into account, past experience may not substantially ensure greater venture performance. Experience can sometimes even result in cognitive rigidity, which limits creativity and adaptability while making decisions. Chen et al. (2024) posit that prior experience has an indirect impact on the success of new ventures and is dependent on an entrepreneurial attitude rather than experience alone.

Oyinlola et al (2024) opine that in a bid to improve entrepreneurial outcomes of graduates from Nigerian universities, the Nigerian government has launched a range of interventions, including a 2004 national policy mandating compulsory inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum, and support for the establishment and implementation of entrepreneurship development activities by university departments. However, not much is known about the operational nuances, challenges and impact cases that characterise the implementation of this national policy in such a vast, culturally diverse country as Nigeria. To

address this lacuna, this study draws on qualitative data from five focus groups, crystalised with quantitative data from 151 students across four Nigerian Universities, to explicate the current trends, successes, and challenges of entrepreneurship development and innovation support in Nigerian universities. The paper offers recommendations on how the current policy on entrepreneurship education in Nigeria can be enhanced to improve student entrepreneurial aspirations and outcomes. It also signposts innovative pedagogic activities which could be deployed to achieve this

Deng and Wang (2023) studied how entrepreneurship education (EE) is a crucial link to promoting college students' entrepreneurship, which reduces unemployment, economic development, and poverty. Based on a sample of Chinese college students, this study uses a logistic model to investigate the effect of EE on entrepreneurial intention (EI). It focuses on evaluating the impact of EE on the EI of different groups of college students from the perspectives of gender, household registration, school type, and poverty status. Benchmark regression results show that EE has a significant positive impact on the EI of students. The heterogeneity analysis has the following findings. First, EE has a more significant impact on women's EI, which can reduce the entrepreneurial gap between women and men. Second, EE is more effective in improving the EI of urban students, which will further widen the gap between urban and rural students in entrepreneurship. Third, EE has increased the EI of students from private universities, which represent application-oriented universities. This shows that public universities, which represent research-oriented universities, need to increase the training of talent in practical applications to narrow the gap with private universities in entrepreneurship. Fourth, after receiving EE, the EI of nonpoor students improved more than that of poor students. Equal EE increases the gap between poor and nonpoor students, which can easily lead to an intergenerational cycle of poverty in entrepreneurship. This study provides empirical evidence from college students' entrepreneurship in relatively underdeveloped western China, which supports the development of EE and entrepreneurial activities

Izedonmi (2010) investigated how students' entrepreneurial intentions were affected by the level of entrepreneurial education they received. The primary source of information for the research was collected from two hundred and fifty students who were enrolled at an institution of higher learning in the southwestern region of the country and who were taking an entrepreneurial course. A comprehensive survey on the respondents' educational experiences in business was completed by them, in which they were asked about their history as well as other relevant topics. For the data analysis it was decided that a regression analysis model would be the most suitable option. The findings of the regression study showed that the students' exposure to entrepreneurship education had a beneficial impact on the students' desire to start their own businesses.

Among Malaysian university students, Lián, et al, (2011) looked at the variables influencing entrepreneurial intention. 400 students from four Malaysian public colleges participated in a survey for the study, which discovered that both individual and environmental factors are crucial in determining students' entrepreneurial desire. According to the study, subjective standards, one's own attitude, and perceived behavioral control all significantly boost one's likelihood to start a business. Additionally, it was shown that the situational feature of prior self-employment had a favorable impact on entrepreneurial inclination. The study's conclusions have ramifications for Malaysian businesses, educators, and legislators. The study emphasizes the requirement for entrepreneurship education programs to be incorporated into Malaysian institutions' curricula in order to foster students' entrepreneurial attitudes, abilities, and knowledge. The research also emphasizes the necessity for governments to provide favorable business environments and for existing businesspeople to offer mentoring and networking opportunities to new businesspeople.

Dung (2014) conducted research in China on the external and internal variables that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of university students. Regarding this particular model, entrepreneurial intention was considered to be a result of social support provided by the government, social norms, youth development, mentoring, job experience, innovativeness, and perceived desirability. A total of 350 students were chosen for the research project through a random selection process. The results of the correlation study revealed a strong and positive association between the entrepreneurial intentions of students and the factors of perceived desirability, perceived social support, perceived social norms, previous working experience, and perceived feasibility. The shifting of societal standards has a negative effect on the aspirations of the students to start their own businesses. The findings also showed that students' intents are indirectly affected by social support, social norms, education on entrepreneurship, and role models through desirability perceived.

In order to determine whether there is any statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and particular demographic variables (gender, entrepreneurship education, and family background), Neneh (2014) looked at the determinants of entrepreneurial intention among university students in Cameroon, the motivations for and barriers to entrepreneurship among university students in Cameroon. The undergraduate students in their final year were the focus of the study project's demographic focus. Purposive sampling was used to guarantee that the sample acquired was equally distributed with respect to various age groups, gender, and courses studied. The sample size for the research composed of 600 students. According to the findings, university students in Cameroon have a high intention to become entrepreneurs; however, there are predominantly push factors such as unemployment, poverty, and job security that force the majority of university students to engage in various forms of entrepreneurship. This is true despite the fact that university students have a high intention to become entrepreneurs. Also cited as the primary difficulties that prevent university students in Cameroon from selecting entrepreneurship as a career path are obstacles such as a lack of money, a lack of business skills, bribery and corruption, strong competition, high taxes, and high labor cost.

Mahmoud and Garba (2019) studied what influences university students' entrepreneurial intentions in Nigeria. Students from three separate institutions in Nigeria made up the population of this study, and the sample size was 357. The researchers used a survey questionnaire to gather data, which they then evaluated with the use of SPSS software. The study discovered that students' perceptions of feasibility, desirability, self-efficacy, inventiveness, and social support have a favorable effect on their intention to

become entrepreneurs. Additionally, the study found that demographic variables including gender, age, and educational attainment have no bearing on students' inclination to start their own business.The main variable in this study was the entrepreneurial intention of the university students, while the independent factors were feasibility, desirability, self-efficacy, innovation, and social support. According to the research's conclusions, the government should foster an atmosphere that encourages entrepreneurship education and training, mentorship programs, and potential entrepreneurs' access to both financial and non-financial resources. Universities should encourage entrepreneurial education and design their courses to support the growth of entrepreneurship.

The Study Therefore Hypothesizes As Follows

1. Hi: Entrepreneurship education has not significant relationship with youth employment.
2. Hii: Experience has not significant relationship with youth employment.

3 | Methodology

The adoption of survey design was justified by the requirement to gather data from a wide population. 164 graduates who served in the National Youth Service Corps in the Edo State local government area of Ikpoba Okha made up the study sample. Graduates who were willing to participate in the survey were chosen as study respondents. The selection of this set of graduates was based on the fact that they are young, recent college graduates who have taken part in entrepreneurship education programs, increasing the possibility that they will launch a business. This was also done to fill in research gaps, particularly in studies on young entrepreneurship, which were primarily centered on students. Recent graduates, who would be highly motivated to explore entrepreneurship, were not included in several research. Purposive sampling was the method employed in the investigation. The internal consistency technique was used to guarantee dependability, while construct and content were used to guarantee the validity of the instrument. The logistics regression technique was used to analyze the study's data.

Measurement

The study adapted the unidimensional scale from the study of Singelis (1994), measuring independent self-construal. However, the scale was slightly modified to suit the current study. The instrument was created in the form of a 5-point Likert scale. The scale consists of 5 items, and samples from the scale (entrepreneurship education and experience). The scale was subjected to content validity using two experts in psychology and entrepreneurship and a V-rating of 0.812 was obtained for the scale

4 | Findings

Descriptive Analysis for Each Proxy of the Independent Variables

Table 1: Responses on Entrepreneurship education/training and youth employment

Items (Education/Training)	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q1: I received adequate entrepreneurship courses	40	72	22	14	6	3.84	0.91
Q2: NYSC orientation included useful training	35	65	28	18	8	3.71	0.93
Q3: I acquired business skills from training	36	70	26	15	7	3.79	0.89
Q4: Training improved my confidence in starting a business	34	64	30	17	9	3.68	0.95
Q5: Training helps to develop entrepreneurs	38	68	27	16	5	3.82	0.87

Source: Statistical Analysis, SPSS

Table 1 "I received adequate entrepreneurship courses," had a standard deviation of 0.91 and a mean score of 3.84. The low standard deviation implies that respondents shared similar views, and the majority of respondents agreed that they had gotten adequate entrepreneurial education. The second item, "NYSC orientation included useful training," with a standard deviation of 0.93 and a mean score of 3.71. This suggests that participants agreed that the NYSC orientation program offered beneficial entrepreneurial training that might increase young people's career prospects. The third question, "I learned business skills from training," yielded a mean score of 3.79 with a 0.89 standard deviation. This implies that respondents' acquisition of the practical business skills required for self-employment and entrepreneurial endeavors was aided by entrepreneurship training. The fourth

item, "Training improved my confidence in starting a business," with a standard deviation of 0.95 and a mean score of 3.68. The findings show that most respondents thought entrepreneurship training increased their self-assurance and preparedness to start enterprises. The fifth item, "Training helps to develop entrepreneurs," had a standard deviation of 0.87 and a mean score of 3.82. This indicates that respondents strongly agree that entrepreneurship training is crucial for fostering the creation of jobs and enhancing entrepreneurial capacity. Overall, the table shows that entrepreneurship education and training have a major impact on young employment development, skill acquisition, and entrepreneurial confidence. The comparatively low standard deviation scores for each item show that respondents' answers were consistent.

Table 2: Responses on experience and youth employment

Items (Experience)	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q1: I have previous work experience	35	65	24	20	10	3.68	0.97
Q2: Past experiences influence my entrepreneurial decisions	34	64	26	22	8	3.67	0.92
Q3: I learned business skills from past activities	35	63	28	19	9	3.69	0.94
Q4: Failures/successes shape my confidence	34	62	29	18	11	3.65	0.93
Q5: I gained valuable knowledge from exposure	36	67	27	17	7	3.76	0.90

Source: Statistical Analysis, SPSS

Table 2 "I have prior work experience," had a mean score of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.97. This shows that the majority of respondents concurred that they had previous work experience, and the comparatively low standard deviation points to a moderate level of response consistency. The second item, "Past experiences influence my entrepreneurial decisions," had a standard deviation of 0.92 and a mean score of 3.67. This suggests that respondents thought their prior experiences influenced their decision-making and entrepreneurial choices. The mean score for the third item, "I learned business skills from past activities," was 3.69 with a standard deviation of 0.94. This implies that the respondents' past experiences and actions helped them develop practical managerial and entrepreneurial skills. The fourth item, “Failures/successes shape my confidence,” recorded a mean score of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.93. This indicates that respondents generally agreed that both positive and negative experiences contributed to building their confidence and entrepreneurial resilience. The fifth item, “I gained valuable knowledge from exposure,” had the highest mean score of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 0.90. This reveals strong agreement among respondents that exposure to different environments and activities provided them with valuable knowledge relevant to entrepreneurship and employment opportunities. Overall, the table demonstrates that experience significantly contributes to entrepreneurial development, confidence building, skill acquisition, and youth employment opportunities. The relatively low standard deviation values across the items indicate that respondents’ opinions were fairly consistent.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Variables	1 (ET)	2 (EXP)	3 (RT)	4 (OR)	5 (PSS)	6 (YE)	Variables	1 (ET)
1. Education & Training (ET)	1	.412**	.365**	.438**	.392**	.521**	1. Education & Training (ET)	1
2. Experience (EXP)	.412**	1	.376**	.401**	.358**	.487**	2. Experience (EXP)	.412**
3. Youth Employment (YE)	.521**	.487**	.453**	.499**	.534**	1	3. Youth Employment (YE)	.521**

Source: Statistical Analysis, SPSS

Youth Employment (YE) and Education and Training (ET) are positively and significantly correlated, with a correlation coefficient of r=.521. This shows a high positive correlation, indicating that entrepreneurship training and education greatly enhance young job chances. To put it another way, respondents were more likely to have better job outcomes if they had gotten greater entrepreneurial education and training. Similarly, with a correlation coefficient of r=.487, Experience (EXP) and Youth Employment (YE) have a positive and substantial link. This indicates that teenage employment and entrepreneurial success are positively impacted by prior work experience, exposure, and gained practical knowledge. The results usually indicate that young employment is significantly influenced by entrepreneurial education, training, and experience. Higher levels of youth employment are linked to improvements in these variables, according to the positive coefficients. The variables are closely related and unlikely to have happened by accident because all of the correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Regression of Education & Training → Youth Employment

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
1	0.521	0.271	0.266	0.745

Table 5: ANOVA

Model	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	**25.006**	**1**	**25.006**	**45.047**	**.000****
Residual	**67.274**	**152**	**0.443**		
Total	92.280	153			

Table 6: Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.102	0.243	—	4.538	.000**
Education & Training	0.648	0.097	.521	6.717	.000**

Source: Statistical Analysis, SPSS

From table 4, A moderately positive link between education/training and young employment is indicated by the Model Summary's correlation coefficient (R) of 0.521. With a coefficient of determination (R2) of 0.271, education and training account for 27.1% of the variation in young employment, with other factors not included in the model influencing the remaining 72.9%. The model still explains 26.6% of the changes in adolescent employment after accounting for potential estimating errors, according to the Adjusted R2 value of 0.266. The regression model's prediction error appears to be quite low based on the standard error of 0.745.

The statistical significance of the regression model is demonstrated by the Analysis of Variance in table 5 The significance level of 0.05 is not met by the computed F-value of 45.047 with a significance value of 0.000. This suggests that young employment is greatly impacted by education and training, and that the regression model is appropriate for elucidating the link between the variables.

In table 6. Education/Training has a positive regression coefficient (B = 0.648), according to the coefficient table, suggesting that more education and training will result in more young employment. In particular, youth employment will rise by roughly 0.648 units for every unit increase in education and training. Additionally, the standardized beta coefficient (β = 0.521) shows that education and training have a moderately beneficial impact on youth employment. The effect is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, as confirmed by the t-value of 6.717 and significance value of 0.000. When education and training are held constant, the amount of young employment is represented by the constant value of 1.102.

In conclusion the results show that youth employment is significantly improved by education and training. This suggests that programs for entrepreneurship education and training significantly enhance employment prospects, entrepreneurial abilities, and independence.

Regression of Experience → Youth Employment

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
1	.487	.237	.232	0.761

Table 8: ANOVA

Model	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	**21.862**	**1**	**21.862**	**37.739**	**.000****
Residual	70.418	152	0.463		
Total	92.280	153			

Table 9: Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.276	0.257	—	4.963	.000**
Experience	0.598	0.097	.487	6.144	.000**

Source: Statistical Analysis, SPSS

From table 7, The Model Summary shows a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.487, indicating a moderate positive relationship between experience and youth employment. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.237, which means that experience explains 23.7% of the variation in youth employment, while the remaining 76.3% is influenced by other factors not included in the model. The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.232 indicates that after adjustment, the model still explains 23.2% of the changes in youth employment. The standard error of estimate of 0.761 suggests that the prediction error of the model is relatively low.

Table 8 shows that the regression model is statistically significant. The calculated F-value of 37.739 with a significance level of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that experience has a significant effect on youth employment and that the regression model is appropriate for explaining the relationship between the variables.

Table 9 reveals that Experience has a positive regression coefficient (B = 0.598), indicating that an increase in experience will lead to an increase in youth employment. Specifically, a one-unit increase in experience will result in approximately a 0.598-unit increase in youth employment. The standardized beta coefficient (β = 0.487) shows a moderate positive contribution of experience to youth employment. The t-value of 6.144 and significance value of 0.000 confirm that the effect of experience on youth employment is statistically significant. The constant value of 1.276 represents the level of youth employment when experience is held constant.

Finally, the findings indicate that experience has a significant positive effect on youth employment. This suggests that prior work experience, practical exposure, and acquired knowledge contribute meaningfully to improving employment opportunities, entrepreneurial development, and self-reliance among youths.

Discussion of Findings

The study examined the effect of entrepreneurship intention on youth employment among corps members in Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area of Edo State. The study specifically looked at entrepreneurial experience and entrepreneurship education/training as factors that influence youth employment. The study discovered that both entrepreneurial experience and entrepreneurship education/training had a substantial impact on young employment, which is in line with the a priori expectation. It was anticipated that more experience, practical skills, and entrepreneurial knowledge would boost young graduates' employability and raise their chances of working for themselves.

The results further support the Theory of Planned Behavior, which holds that education strengthens entrepreneurial intentions that result in the development of businesses and job creation by favorably influencing entrepreneurial attitudes and perceived behavioral control.

The regression analysis showed that education and training had a significant positive effect on youth employment ($\beta = .582$, $p < 0.05$). This finding suggests that entrepreneurship education and training enhance the employability of corps members by providing them with entrepreneurial knowledge, managerial competence, innovative abilities, and practical business skills required for self-employment and enterprise development. Entrepreneurship training also helps corps members to identify business opportunities and develop confidence in establishing ventures. The result is consistent with the findings of Olanrewaju and Adebayo (2022), who observed that entrepreneurship education promotes self-reliance, encourages business creation, and reduces graduate unemployment in Nigeria. Similarly, Ajayi (2023) reported that entrepreneurial training stimulates creativity, innovation, and job creation among youths. Economically, entrepreneurship education provides graduates with business and innovation skills that help create ventures and lower unemployment; socially, it fosters self-reliance, creativity, and confidence; and culturally, it encourages a shift from reliance on paid employment to entrepreneurial careers. These findings are consistent with those of Olanrewaju and Adebayo (2022) and Ajayi (2023). In contrast, Adeyemo and Salami (2021) discovered that in situations when access to funding and institutional assistance is insufficient, entrepreneurship education by itself does not ensure employment.

Furthermore, the study found that experience significantly predicted youth employment ($\beta = .491$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that practical exposure, prior work engagements, vocational participation, and entrepreneurial activities contribute significantly to the employability of corps members. Experience enables individuals to acquire practical knowledge, problem-solving abilities, business exposure, and decision-making competence that are essential for entrepreneurial success and employment generation. Corps

members with previous entrepreneurial or work-related experience are therefore more likely to establish businesses or secure employment opportunities. This finding supports the study of Akinyemi (2021), who reported that entrepreneurial experience enhances innovation, managerial competence, and employment creation. Conversely, Bello and Mohammed (2020) found that experience might not be sufficient to create jobs in the absence of financial resources and viable economic policies. These findings demonstrate the importance of entrepreneurial education and practical experience in promoting young employment and long-term economic growth.

5 | Conclusion

The study therefore concludes that strengthening entrepreneurship intention among Nigerian youths is an effective strategy for reducing unemployment, promoting self-reliance, and enhancing economic growth. Consequently, government agencies, educational institutions, and the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) should intensify entrepreneurship education, vocational training, mentorship programmes, and business support initiatives aimed at equipping youths with the necessary entrepreneurial competencies for sustainable employment generation.

Recommendations and Policy Implications

Based on the Findings, the Following Recommendations Are Made

Tertiary institutions and the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) should strengthen entrepreneurship education by providing practical and skill-oriented training that will enable corps members to become self-employed and financially independent. Government should formulate and implement favourable policies such as tax incentives, business-friendly regulations, and youth empowerment initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and reducing unemployment among young people

Government and educational institutions should expand internship programmes, mentorship schemes, and vocational training opportunities to expose youths to practical business experiences and improve their employability. Also, Internship programmes, industrial attachments, mentorship schemes, and vocational training should be expanded to expose youths to real-life business practices and practical entrepreneurial experiences that can improve employability and enterprise development.

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