



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Entrepreneurial skill acquisition and job creation in Afikpo local government area of Ebonyi state

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Abstract

The study examined Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition and Job Creation in Afikpo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The major objective of the study was to investigate the importance of entrepreneurial skills acquisition on job creation to ascertain the causes of unemployment among youths and graduates of Afikpo local government of Ebonyi State, to determine the effects of youth and graduate unemployment in Afikpo local government of Ebonyi State and find out the efforts of Ebonyi State government to end or reduce youths and graduates unemployment. The study was anchored on the theory of empowerment. The study employed descriptive research design. Primary data used for the study were generated through the use of questionnaire addressed in fivepoints likert scale format, while the secondary data were collected through published materials such as journals, textbooks and newspaper etc. The population of the study was made up of one hundred and fifty six thousand, six hundred and eleven (156,611) residents of Afikpo local government area. The sample size of the study was three hundred and ninety-nine (399) determined by the application of statistical formula of Taro Yamene $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$. Statistical analysis of the data was based on Chi-square thus, $X^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E}$. The study found out that entrepreneurial skill acquisition was an important antidote to youths and graduate unemployment in Afikpo, lack of skill acquisition was considered the major factor for youth and graduate unemployment in Afikpo and that graduate and youth unemployment made Afikpo youths to indulge in all kinds of crimes. The study recommended that entrepreneurship skill acquisition programmes should be taken as compulsory and more serviced by both the federal and state government, the programmed should be made compulsory at both primary and post-primary levels, individual, private spirited individual and non-governmental organizations should also key into this programme and help the government as a mark of social responsibilities.

Keyword: Entrepreneurs; Entrepreneurship; Job creation; Skill acquisition

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship skill acquisition has been described as the bedrock to economic development in view of its impact on job creation. It has been argued that entrepreneurship skill acquisition is the quickest way to create new jobs for the unemployed youths and graduates. These arguments have informed the introduction of vocational training and entrepreneurial skills acquisitions programs in school of higher learning across the country. Undoubtedly these programs will reduce or end the problem of youth and graduate unemployment in Nigeria. The problem of youth and graduate unemployment had become a serious cankerworm in the recent time across all states and local government of the federation. The problem of youth unemployment has been lightened since the recent economic meltdown in Nigeria, hence the government had been in search of the best policy to tackle the high rate of youth and graduate unemployment. It is believed that average Nigerian youth is confronted with this problem of unemployment which had undoubtedly put them on a hopeless future with highest fear of sustainability (Nwana, 2004).

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Commenting on the problem of youth and graduate unemployment in Nigeria, Duru (2011) posited that the major problem confronting youth and graduates today is that of joblessness. He argued that youths constitutes greater fraction to Nigeria's economically active population. The scholar opined that the problem of youth and graduate unemployment is compounded by the fact that a good number of organizations were closed down due to the insecurity challenges and infrastructural decay and unstable political environment.

According to Ayoade and Agwu (2016) youth Unemployment in Nigeria is evenly distributed amongst youths that are within the age bracket of 15-25 years. Nweze (2011) argued in support of Agwu that half of Nigerian population is characterized by youth under the age of 30yrs and that this signified that the Nigerian population is driven by youth. The scholar viewed that unemployment, financial inaccessibility, and lack of productivity are some of the global challenges facing the youths. Hence entrepreneurial skills are needed to create jobs and increase the growth of the economy.

Ayoade and Agwu (2016) further bemoans the unemployment situation in Nigeria and believed that youth in Nigeria suffers from the numerous problems of unemployment, poverty urbanization and lack of skills needed to create jobs and move Nigeria Forward. The scholars argued that these numerous youths problem has increased the level of insecurity, political instability, insurgency and kidnapping which has affected foreign and local investment in Nigeria. It is as a result of the above problems that the call for government at all levels to stem up its economic policies on entrepreneurship skills acquisition especially as it affected the youths. This is because it is believed that entrepreneurship is placed directly next with employment/job creation as it is seen as a unique project that establishes and enhances employment. In supporting entrepreneurial skills acquisition and job creation, Igwe (2013) argues that the continuous trend by poor economy is as a result of youth unemployment, lack of job creation and level of entrepreneurial skills, lack of financial accessibility.

At our various local government levels especially Afikpo North Local Government, the consequence of youth unemployment has been pronounced as most of these youths are seen idle more on the streets of our villages smoking Indian hemp and constitute themselves to all forms of crimes and serious threats to the communities.

In Afikpo Local Government, go to the market and village squares in the evenings to see these idle youths who gather in the name of cultism and practice all forms of social ills that constitute serious threat to the development and progress of the community. In view of these problems, Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnics which is the only federal institution in this local government has introduced many entrepreneurial skills acquisition programs to its curriculum to help the youth to establish their own business and create jobs for themselves after graduation. There is need for Ebonyi State government to collaborate and establish entrepreneur skill acquisition programs and centres in Afikpo local government headquarter to reduce youth unemployment in the local government.

If this is done, the youth would be able to harness the abundant natural resources in Afikpo local government to establish business of their own applying the entrepreneurial skills they have acquired. This will help to provide more jobs for the rural dwellers and bring forth rural products for the benefits of urban inhabitants and manufacturing industries.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

How has entrepreneurial skill acquisition make laudable contributions towards job and employment creation in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State. It is argued that the Ebonyi State has not made reasonable efforts to provide entrepreneurship skill acquisition programs in Afikpo local government Area towards alleviating the problem. It is believed that to harness the full potential input of entrepreneur skill acquisition programs in Afikpo local government Area, there should be combined efforts of higher institutions, state governments and local governments to formulate economic entrepreneurship policies to increase job creation at local government levels as it is believed that employment/job creation can be linked to entrepreneurial skill acquisition and vocational training programs. Thus, this study investigated the impact of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to determine the impact of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State. However, the study will focus on the following specifics;

- To investigate the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation to the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

- To ascertain the causes of unemployment among youths and graduates of Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.
- To determine the effects of youths and graduates unemployment in Afikpo local government Area.
- To find out the efforts of Ebonyi State government to end or reduce youths and graduates unemployment.

1.2. Research Questions

- What are the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation to youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State?
- What are the causes of unemployment among youths and graduates of Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State?
- What are the effects of youths and graduates unemployment in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State?
- What are the efforts of Ebonyi State government to end or reduce youths and graduates unemployment?

1.3. Statement of Hypothesis

The study developed the following hypothesis to achieve the objective of the study and answer the research questions.

1.3.1. Hypothesis One

Ho: Entrepreneurship skill acquisition is not important to job creation to the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

1.3.2. Hypothesis Two

Ho: Lack of vocational training, entrepreneurship skill acquisition and financial accessibility are not some of the identified causes of unemployment among the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

1.3.3. Hypothesis Three

Ho: Cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, armed robbery and kidnapping are not among the consequences of unemployment in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

1.4. Significance of the Study

- The importance of this research to Afikpo local government, the youths and the society cannot be overemphasized.
- The significance of this study focuses under two perspectives-the empirical and theoretical.
- From the empirical point of view, the study will be a guide to the Nigerian governments at national, state and local levels.

The theoretical foundation findings and recommendation of the study will provide sound basics as regards formulating policies to the solution of the problems of unemployment in the country:

The study will benefit policy makers championing the war against unemployment in Nigeria especially the minister and commissioners involved in the search for the solution to end youth unemployment in Nigeria.

The study will also benefit the masses including youths to understand their various roles to end youth unemployment in Nigeria. it will also help Nigerians investing abroad that investment in entrepreneurial skill acquisition at home will help to create more jobs and end unemployment.

Theoretically, the study will add to existing body of quantitative and qualitative knowledge on the issue of youth and graduate unemployment. It will serve as a source of knowledge reference and building block for future researchers in the subject area of this study. Above all, the study will be of immense significance to the researchers of this work as it will accord them a sense of accomplishment and served as their contribution towards ending the current youth and graduate unemployment in Nigeria.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study is concerned with entrepreneurial skill acquisition and job creation in Afikpo local government Area. There are many variables associated with this topics, but the major areas to be addressed here include the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition to job creation to unemployed youth and graduates, causes of unemployment and its consequences to unemployed youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

This study covers the Twenty-Two (22) villages/Communities in Afikpo local government Area. The period covered by the study is between 2018 to 2020. The researcher believed that the findings discovered during this period could help us to understand the impact of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation on the youth and graduate in Afikpo local government Area.

Limitations of the Study

The study was faced with some challenges like every other human and academic endeavours or quest.

The most outstanding problem encountered is the reluctant attitude of the respondents. Again, many respondents did not return their copies of the questionnaire as agreed and some claimed that their copies could not be located where they kept them. Some of the respondents did not take the filling of the questionnaire serious. All these affected the early completion of this work. however, the researcher printed more copies and re-distributed to the respondents who claimed that there were either lost or not properly filled resulting to additional cost and time to the researcher.

In all these challenges, the researcher remained focused and applied extra efforts to overcome the challenges. The researcher work no doubt presents a quality applicable and reliable result.

2. Literature Review

The literature review of this study is divided into two: theoretical and empirical literature. These can be seen as follows:

2.1. Theoretical Review

This section of literature review examines the theoretical explanation of the subject of the study. It reviews the relevant theories of the study. The following are the major theoretical basis of the study. This study is anchored on the theory of empowerment. The theory was first formulated by Zimmerman(1995) and later popularized by the same author Zimmerman (2000). The empowerment throphy was modified thereafter by Sazama and Young (2006) and Reischl et al (2011). The theory views that empowerment and entrepreneurship development is based on service of actions that makes youths to participate in entrepreneurial activities, improve their quality control of decision and bring about opportunities where learning practice and skills of youth could be enhanced (Zimmerman, 1995,2000). It also stressed that making youths to be involved in pro-social, worth while and community based activities established and controlled by the youths and that it enable them to acquire important skills, abilities and confidence that would help them to be more productive, healthy and independent (Reichl et al, 2011). This theory forms the theoretical underpinning of this study and it has very important implications for the study on the following grounds:

One, from this theory, it would be understood that creating and implementing empowerment programs with regard to entrepreneurship development would enhance youth development and raise their entrepreneurial skills, and assts and motivate them to effectively apply the skills and knowledge so acquired to become positive agents of change in their communities and country at large (Leadford & Lucas, 2013).

Two, it would make the youth to build more assets through their entrepreneurial activities and as such engage in community development service that lead to speedy growth and development of the Nigerian economy.

Finally, it will make the youths to be gainfully employed based on the entrepreneurial skills acquired.

Another theoretical underpin of this study is Human Capital Theory (Simpeh, 2011). This theory opines that education, creativity and experience leads to entrepreneurial development and employment generation. It is further argued here that Human Capital engages the ability to recognize and exploit opportunities to be used to the advantages of the entrepreneur. Another theoretical basis of this study is the Need for Achievement Theory. According to Simpeh (2011), this theory is based on the achievement motivation. According to Mcland (1961) who developed the theory, he views that people engaged in entrepreneurial activities when they are motivated by the need to achieve something.

2.2. Empirical Review

The empirical review of this research is derived from the previous studies supporting the subject of this study.

Ayoade and Agwu (2016) in a study captioned Employment generation and entrepreneurial development, the Nigeria experience. The study utilized annual times series data and descriptive statistics to find that many government intervention programs failed to produce the expected results because of some bottlenecks such as corruption, bureaucratic bottleneck relating to inconsistencies in government policies, political instability, and lack of entrepreneurial skill by many unemployed citizens. The study recommended that there should be combined efforts of governments at all levels in developing entrepreneurship through the provision of enabling environment and infrastructures, introduction of relevant entrepreneurial educational programs in all institutions of learning, development of entrepreneurial skills, and making available reasonable start-up loans without interest to youths.

Okoye et. al (2014) in a study titled the impact of entrepreneurship on youth unemployment in Nigeria. The study did not use any data rather empirical literature review method was adopted. The study found that policy initiatives of governments have affected the “transformation Question” as a result of increase in corruption, inadequate and insufficient infrastructural facilities, and mal-administration. The study therefore recommended that countries with entrepreneurship enormously have job creation, innovation, and diversity, hence governments should strive to provide enabling and secured environment for youths to gain employment or sustained economic growth and development.

In a study titled entrepreneurship education and sustainable youths empowerment in Nigeria. Ogbondah and Nwogu (2017) discovered that youth empowerment is not sustainable in Nigeria and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is very slow. The study therefore recommended that school curriculum should be redesigned to make empowerment of the youth realizable and sustainable.

Ndubuisi Okolo et al (2015) used Robert (1991) human capital theory and secondary data to empirically examine how, entrepreneurship education can assist in nation building and the problems militating against its success. The study therefore discovered that youth abandoned their country for greener pastures abroad in search of white collar jobs. It was recommended that entrepreneurship education should be incorporated into curriculum of secondary schools, collages of education, polytechnics and universities.

In another study captioned “Tackling unemployment problems through skill acquisition in Akwa Ibom. Ekon and Ekon (2016) used survey data and annual time series data between 1987 to 2012 to carry out the study. The study also used descriptive survey statistics to assert that there is a positive link between skill acquisition and unemployment reduction in Akwa Ibom State. The study recommended that there is need to spread more of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) training centres to all the local governments Area of the states.

In a study titled youth entrepreneurship skill and economic growth and development, Mtenga (2013) used survey data gathered from 145 trained youth in Makangarawe to demonstrate how empowering the youths through entrepreneurship skills training can bring about economic growth and development. The study used descriptive statistical and pair-wise ranking correlation to discover that majority of the youth in Makangarawe do not have entrepreneurial culture and skills and hence spend most of their time loitering and indulging in promiscuous activities. The study therefore recommended that there is need for capacity building programs to help to empower the youths on the value of reorientation and create more awareness on entrepreneurial development for their self development.

United Nation (2020) carried out a study on the title Social entrepreneurship and job creation. The study used time data series from World Bank and World development indicators and descriptive statistics to discover that unexploited youth potentials are greater in –yet-to develop countries that labour market restrictions were not favourable to youths to engage in entrepreneurships and formal job in those countries.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This aspect of the research explained a detailed outline of how the study was conducted, how data was collected, what instrument was employed and how it was used and the method of data analysis. The researcher applied a descriptive research design. This method gives a true picture of a situation or population of the study. The study involves members/residents of the various Twenty-Two (22) villages that make up Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State. The data used for the study were collected through two major sources namely, primary and secondary sources.

The primary data used for the study were obtained through the use of questionnaires only and the questionnaires was addressed in five points Likert Scale format: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (UD), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD) with regards to the subject of the research which is “Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition and Job Creation in Afikpo Local Government Area.”

The secondary data were sourced from published materials such as journals, textbooks newspapers etc. the researchers also made use of unpublished works. The researchers also visited many libraries, bookshops and internet sites to collect data for secondary data.

3.2. Location of the Study (Study Area)

The study took place in Afikpo Local Government Area specifically, at the Twenty-Two villages in Afikpo Local Government Area.

Afikpo town is the second largest town in Ebonyi State and the headquarters of Afikpo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Afikpo local government is made up of Twenty-Two (22) villages of various sizes namely;

- Amachara
- Amachi
- Amangwu
- Amaizu
- Amangbala
- Amankwo
- Amaobolobo
- Amuro
- Amuzu
- Amuku
- Egeburu
- Enioha-Itim
- Enohia-Nkanu
- Evuma
- Itim village
- Kpoghirikpo
- Ngbom
- Ngodo
- Nkpoghoru
- Ohaizu
- Ubaru
- Ugwu-Egu

Afikpo spans/cover an area approximately 164kmz and it is located on 6 degree North latitude. The population of Afikpo Local government is estimated at 233,300/2022 projection. However, according to census of 2006 the population of Afikpo local government was 156,611 (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki>) for the purpose of this study, the 2006 population census figure was used for the study. The research covered the Twenty-Two (22) villages in Afikpo Local government Area.

3.3. Population of the Study

A research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of scientific enquiry. Therefore, the population of this research was made up of all the residents individuals of the Twenty-Two (22) villages that made-up Afikpo Local government. Hence the population of this study is added up to one hundred and Fifty Six thousand, Six hundred and eleven (156,611).

3.4. Sample Size determination

Due the limitations in the resources used the need to avoid error associated with large population, this study did not undertake complete enumeration. The option was to limit our study to some of the members selected from the population with a view to extending our findings to the entire population. This method of selection is known as

sampling. The ultimate aim of sampling was to make reference to the whole population by studying only part or fraction of the whole.

Thus, in determining the sample size of this study, the researchers noted that the population of one hundred and Fifty Six thousand, Six hundred and eleven (156,611) was considered large. The researchers then applied Taro Yamene (1964:280) statistical formula to reduce the population to a researchable size. The formula was applied as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

n=sample size

N= population size

e=error margin allowed

1=constant

The researchers choose five percent (5%) or (0.05) as error margin allowed and translation of the formula is shown below;

$$n = \frac{156,611}{1 + 156,611(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{156,611}{1 + 156,611(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{156,611}{1 + 391.5275}$$

$$n = \frac{156,611}{392.5275}$$

$$n = 399$$

Therefore, the sample size for the study is three hundred and ninety-nine (399). But the sample size for each of the villages fixed at Eighteen (18) and was to be judgmentally selected from each village.

3.5. Sampling Techniques

The sampling techniques used to select the sample size from each village are the non probability judgmental sampling method. Under this technique, the selection sample is not random, but rather at the discretion of the researcher to select the category of male and female youth from each village who fell within the range required for the study. Each researcher was required to choose the respondents at will within his/her quota characteristics until he/she gets the number (quota) he/she needed from each village, Eighteen (18).

3.6. Instrument of Data Collection

The questionnaire is the major instrument used for this study. The questionnaire was based on the objective and research questions and hypothesis developed for the study. The researchers developed and distributed the questionnaire through the research assistants to all the twenty-two (22) villages in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis used for this study was on the basis of the responses and usable number of the data collected. The researchers believed that the findings would be fair if analyzed and interpreted using tables and simple percentages. The analysis of the data collected was done sequentially according to research questions and the hypothesis were tested with statistical tool of Chi-square (X^2).

Data collected were presented in tables and analysed using simple percentages and chi-square formula.

$$\text{Thus: } X^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where;
 X^2 = Chi-square
 E= Expected frequency
 O = Observed frequency
 Σ = Summation of figures
 Level of significance = 5%
 Degree of freedom =(df) =1

Chi-square is about the most popular statistical method employed in the social sciences.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher engaged the chi-square to measure the association of the normal variables involved in this study, ie, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and job creation

4. Results

The researchers administered a total number of Three hundred and ninety-nine (399) questionnaire to the twenty-two villages and was successfully retrieved. Therefore, the analysis is based on all the questionnaire administered to male and female youth in the 22 villages who were selected based on judgmental sampling techniques.

The table below shows the summary of questionnaires distribution and retrieved.

Table 1 Summary of questionnaire Distributed

Respondents	No. of Questionnaire Distributed	No. retrieved	Percentage %
Male	201	201	50.4
Female	198	198	49.6
Total	399	399	100

Source: Field survey 2023

The above table shows that three hundred and ninety-nine (399) questionnaires were distributed to both male and female youth in the twenty-two villages of Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

Two hundred and one (201) questionnaires representing 50.4% were distributed to male youths in all the villages and all the whole were retrieved, while one hundred and ninety eight (198) representing 49.6% were administered to female youths out of which the whole were retrieved.

This result shows one hundred performance as non of the questionnaire were not retrieved. Therefore, the data analysis is based on the entire three hundred and ninety-nine (399) questionnaire distributed.

Table 2 Responses to Research Question number 1

Question 1: Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is importance to the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area		
Response	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents %
Strongly Agree (SA)	205	51.3%
Agree (A)	162	40.6%
Undecided (UD)	7	1.7%
Disagree(DA)	10	2.5%
Strongly Disagree (SD)	15	3.7%
Total	399	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the above table, 205 respondents representing 51.3% Strongly Agreed that entrepreneurial skill acquisition is important to the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area, 162 respondents representing 40.6% indicates that entrepreneurial skill acquisition is important to job creation to the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area, 7 respondents representing 1.7% were undecided, 10 respondents representing 2.5% Disagreed, with the statement while 15 respondents representing 3.7% strongly disagreed that entrepreneurial skill acquisition is importance to job creation in Afikpo local government Area with the above statement.

Therefore, the implication of the above responses shows that entrepreneurial skill acquisition is very relevant to job creation as majority of respondents (205 (50.3%) supported the question.

Table 3 Responses to Research Question number 2

Question 2: Lack of vocational training, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and financial accessibility are some of the identified causes of unemployment among the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government.		
Response	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents %
Strongly Agree (SA)	261	65.4%
Agree (A)	41	10.2%
Undecided (UD)	11	2.7%
Disagree(DA)	25	6.2%
Strongly Disagree (SD)	61	15.2%
Total	399	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The above analysis shows that, 261 respondents representing 65.4% Strongly Agreed that lack of vocational training, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and financial accessibility are some of the identified causes of unemployment among the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area, 41 respondents representing 10.2% agreed to the question, 11 respondents representing 2.7% were undecided to the statement and 25 respondents representing 5.2% Disagreed with the opinion while 61 respondents representing 15.2% strongly disagreed to the statement.

The implication of the above responses being that lack of vocational training, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and financial accessibility are some of the identified causes of unemployment among the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

Table 4 Responses to Research Question number 3

Question 3: Cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, armed robbery and kidnapping are some of the identified consequences of unemployment among youth and graduates in Afikpo local government.		
Response	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents %
Strongly Agree (SA)	218	54.6%
Agree (A)	126	31.5%
Undecided (UD)	10	2.5%
Disagree(DA)	20	5.0%
Strongly Disagree (SD)	25	6.2%
Total	399	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the above analysis, 218 respondents representing 54.6% Strongly Agreed that Cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, armed robbery and kidnapping are some of the identified consequences of unemployment among youth and graduates in Afikpo local government, 126 respondents representing 31.5% agreed to this opinion, 10 respondents representing 2.5% remained silent to the question, and 20 respondents representing 5.0% disagreed with the question, while 25

respondents representing 6.2% strongly disagreed with the opinion. Based on the majority opinion above, 218(54.6),the conclusion is that Cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, armed robbery and kidnapping are some of the identified consequences of unemployment among youth and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

Table 5 Responses to Research Question number 4

Question 4: Introduction of entrepreneurial skill acquisition and vocational training into higher school curriculum are some of the efforts of the government to end or reduce unemployment among youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area		
Response	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents %
Strongly Agree (SA)	210	52.6%
Agree (A)	109	27.3%
Undecided (UD)	49	12.2%
Disagree(DA)	20	5.0%
Strongly Disagree (SD)	11	2.7%
Total	399	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The above table shows that,210 respondents representing 52.6% views that Introduction of entrepreneurial skill acquisition and vocational training into higher school curriculum are some of the efforts of the government to end or reduce unemployment among youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

4.1. Test of Hypothesis

The Chi-square (X²) test of statistical was used to test the hypothesis formulated in this study.

$$\text{The statistical formula is Thus: } X^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

- Where;
- X² = Chi-square
- O = Observed frequency
- E= Expected frequency
- ∑ = Summation of all items

4.1.1. Test of hypothesis One

In testing this hypothesis, the data in table 2 question 1 is used: Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is not important to job creation to the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

Table 6 Test of hypothesis one

O	E	O-E	(O-E)²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
205	79.8	125.2	15675.04	196.4
162	79.8	82.2	6,756.84	84
7	79.8	72.8	5,299.84	66.4
10	79.8	69.8	4,872.04	61.0
15	79.8	64.8	4,199.04	52.6
Total				461

Source: Generated from table 2

Therefore, $X^2 = 461$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Degree of freedom (DOF)} &= (R - 1) (C - 1) \\ &= (5-1) (5-1) \\ &= 4 \times 4 \\ &= 16 \end{aligned}$$

On the chi-square distribution table, the value of 16 at 0.05 level of significance = 26.2962

The calculated value of $X^2 = 461$

The table or critical value of $X^2 = 26.2962$

Decision Rule

Since the calculated value (461) is greater than the table or critical value (26.2962), we will reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis.

The implication of this is that we accept the alternate hypothesis which state that “Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is very relevant to job creation to the youth and graduates in Afikpo local government Area of Ebonyi State.

4.1.2. Test of hypothesis two

In testing this hypothesis, the data in table 3 question 2 is used: Lack of vocational training, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and financial accessibility are not some of the identified causes of unemployment among the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government.

Table 7 Test of hypothesis two

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
261	79.8	181.2	32,833.4	411.4
41	79.8	38.8	1,505.4	18.8
11	79.8	68.8	4,733.4	59.3
25	79.8	54.8	3,003.4	37.6
61	79.8	18.8	353.44	4.4
Total				531.5

Source: Generated from table 3

Therefore, $X^2 = 531.5$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Degree of freedom (DOF)} &= (R - 1) (C - 1) \\ &= (5-1) (5-1) \\ &= 4 \times 4 \\ &= 16 \end{aligned}$$

On the chi-square distribution table, the value of 16 at 0.05 level of significance = 26.2962

Thus, the calculated value of $X^2 = 531.5$

While the table or critical value of $X^2 = 26.2962$

Decision Rule

Since the calculated value of Chi=quare (531.5) is greater than the table value or critical value (26.2962), we will reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis.

The implication of this is that we accept the alternate hypothesis which state that “Lack of vocational training, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and financial accessibility are some of the identified causes of unemployment among the youths and graduates in Afikpo local government.

4.1.3. Test of hypothesis three

In testing this hypothesis, the data in table 4 question 3 is used: Cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, armed robbery and kidnapping are not among the consequences of unemployment among youth and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

Table 8 Test of hypothesis three

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
218	79.8	138.2	19,099.24	239.3
126	79.8	46.2	2,134.44	26.7
1	79.8	69.8	4,872.04	61.0
20	79.8	59.8	3,576.04	44.8
25	79.8	54.8	3003.04	37.6
Total				409.4

Source: Generated from table 4Therefore, $X^2 = 404.9$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Degree of freedom (DOF)} &= (R - 1) (C - 1) \\
 &= (5-1) (5-1) \\
 &= 4 \times 4 \\
 &= 16
 \end{aligned}$$

On the chi-square distribution table, the value of 16 at 0.05 level of significance = 26.2962

The calculated value of $X^2 = 409.4$

While the table or critical value of $X^2 = 26.2962$

Decision Rule

Since the calculated value of Chi=quare (409.9) is greater than the table value or critical value (26.2962), we will reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis.

The implication of this is that we accept the alternate hypothesis which state that “Cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, armed robbery and kidnapping are among the identified consequences of unemployment among youth and graduates in Afikpo local government Area.

5. Discussion

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition has been considered very important in this research as a necessary antidote to the evidence problem of youth and graduate unemployment in Afikpo local government of Ebonyi State. The study argued

that following the introduction of entrepreneurial skill acquisition programmes into our universities, polytechnics and other higher institutions the youths in Afikpo local government are trained and explored the various opportunities in Afikpo environment instead of staying ideal and wait for white collar jobs that are nowhere to be found.

The study is of the opinion that the introduction of entrepreneurial skill acquisition programmes will help the youths more especially in job and employment generation, create further opportunities for the young people to develop their enterprising skills and make them to be job creators and not job seekers.

The study believed that the acquisition of entrepreneurial skill will equip youths and graduate the critical skills and knowledge to increase outputs in the various Afikpo localities, and also generate income and wealth to themselves and the community at large.

Recommendations

The study examined entrepreneurial skill acquisition and job creation in Afikpo local government of Ebonyi State. The youths and graduates are considered to be unemployed because of lack of entrepreneurial skill acquisition. The study therefore, recommends as follows:

- There should be adequate funding of entrepreneurial skill acquisition programmes by both the federal and state government.
- Acquisition of entrepreneurial skill should be made compulsory at primary and post-primary institutions.
- Separate private individual, companies, and non-governmental organizations should key into the sponsorship of entrepreneurial skill acquisition in our schools as a mark of social responsibilities.
- The government should provide a conducive business environment that empowers the youths into business enterprising activities after school.

6. Conclusion

From the above study, the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition to the solution of the unemployment among our youths and young graduates in the rural communities like Afikpo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State cannot be over-emphasized. The benefits of equipping laudable entrepreneurial skills and /or vocational training programmes to our youths to prevent them from engaging on all forms of social ills that are inimical to development and progress to our communities has been emphasized. The way forward is that the government should be more proactive in sponsoring entrepreneurship and vocational training programmes in our schools and NGOs should also venture into these areas in collaboration with the government.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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