

Youth Business Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Skills in Doguwa Local Government, Kano State, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study investigated about youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills in Doguwa local government. The study objective was to determine the relationship between youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills in Doguwa local government. This study used cross-sectional survey design. Target population was 22,628 youths. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table determined a sample size of 379 respondents. The response rate of 78% gave a final number of 294 respondents. The main research instrument was questionnaires. Data was analysed using frequency and percentage tables, mean and standard deviations; and Pearson linear correlation and regression analysis. The study found a positive, strong and significant relationship between youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills ($r=0.556$, $p<0.020$). The study concluded that, the youth should be supported in all aspects (i.e. entrepreneurship education and financial support) in order for them to develop adequate entrepreneurship skills such as technical skills, or management skills which will help them engage in entrepreneurial activities that can help them sustain themselves and reduce poverty and vulnerability in their households. The study recommended the need for the government of Nigeria to keep supporting the youth by providing them with grants, loans, entrepreneurial education and training which will enhance their capacity to self-sustenance and eventual poverty reduction in their households.

Key words: Youth Business Empowerment, Entrepreneurship skills, Doguwa Local government, Kano State, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

The Nigerian government recognized that in order to effectively empower young people (between the ages of 18 to 35); there was a need to formulate The National Policy on Youth Development, so it developed the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy 2 (NEEDS 2) aimed at transforming its economy and growing small businesses in the country. Youth have been mainstreamed into this strategy through the Youth Position Paper. Under the aspect of Youth Economic Empowerment, the following policy prescriptions were proposed: reserve 30% quota in the economy and policy development processes; engage youth as professionals and not as recipients of agendas; review all sector policies to accommodate the interests of young people and entrepreneurs; establish special funding skills to enable access to funding for young entrepreneurs; interests charges on sector scheme loans for young people should be reduced and subsidized, introduction of business and entrepreneurship education programs in secondary schools and tertiary institutions; and existing financial schemes should be tailored to support young entrepreneurs (The National Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy and Implementation Framework, 2009-2019).

Ideally, the scheme would have been a potent instrument for job creation and gradual reduction of youth unemployment rate but due to certain weakness which were empirically evaluated, which need to be corrected in order to sustain the efforts made by the government. Such weaknesses include poor youth financial management skills, poor marketing strategies, lack of good planning and good management, lack of will-power and determination, and lack of cooperative relations among youth beneficiaries. These weaknesses outlined are not unexpected, but only portray the missing link which is needed to compliment the skill acquisition schemes with entrepreneurship development programmes, in order to properly position youth for successful management of their small scale businesses (Akpoveta and Agboma, 2015).

2. Statement of the Problem

The highest composition of youth in Doguwa local government are unemployed and the unemployment rate stands at 83% and the education ratio of the educated to the uneducated stands at 56% to 44% respectively (National Bureau of Statistics, 2015). This implies that majority of the educated youth are not employed. Consequently, even those that try to start some small businesses often fail to make it succeed in the first or second year. According to Okoli (2013), most of the youth cannot get employment or maintain their business because of lack of entrepreneurial education and capital to start a business. However, the high level of youth unemployment has consequences.

According to Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010), the greatest challenge on youth unemployment is their use for political and military ends. Deprived off employment opportunity and livelihood, youths are actively mobilized by politicians and armed groups alike. Youth unemployment also has security implications for almost every country in Africa, since desperation often leads young people to fall prey to warlords, criminal gangs, or illegal migration syndicates. This study investigated if youth business empowerment through entrepreneurship education and financial support can build and sharpen their entrepreneurship skills such as technical and management skills

specifically for the youth of Doguwa local government, Kano State, Nigeria.

3. Objective of the Study

To determine the relationship between youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills in Doguwa local government

4. Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills in Doguwa local government.

5. Literature Review

5.1 Theoretical Perspective

This study was guided by Gibb's (2010) Alternative 'appropriate' Model which portrays the entrepreneur as dynamic with a range of behavioural attributes that need to be developed. According to Gibb, this model embraces a number of key characteristics as follows: Instilling empathy with entrepreneurial values and associated 'ways of thinking, doing, feeling, seeing, communicating, organising and learning things'; development of the capacity for strategic thinking and scenario planning and the practice of making intuitive decisions based upon judgement with limited information; creating a vision of, and empathy with, the way of life of the entrepreneurial person.

This theory is related to this study in a way that when the youth are business empowered through entrepreneurship education, they learn communication skills, financial management skills, customer relations skills, which helps them to be critical thinkers and risk takers even in daring business ventures. In other words, youth entrepreneurs who had the right entrepreneurship education and financial support can make intuitive business decisions based on their judgement even if they have limited information but as long as they have the enthusiasm.

5.2 Youth Business Empowerment

A youth is any individual within the age of eighteen and thirty five years irrespective of

gender or sex (Uzochukwu, 2016). For the purpose of execution of Nigeria's National Youth Development Policy; the youth comprises all young persons of age 18-35 who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This category represents the most culture, the most volatile and yet the most vulnerable segment of the population, socio-economically, emotionally and in other respect.

Youth empowerment is an altitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people, including youths and adults (Sasaki, 2013). Empowering youth in this context means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others. These enabling conditions includes, economic and social base, political will, adequate resources allocation and supportive legal and administrative frameworks, a stable environment of equality, peace and democracy, and access to knowledge, information and skills and a positive value system.

To be a youth is good but empowering the youth is better. Empowerment can be defined as the means of encouraging or assisting somebody (Uzochukwu, 2016). In a nutshell, youth empowerment is the means through which the youths of any country are assisted to succeed in life. It is shameful that when youth empowerment is mentioned, people think that it is only the function of the government to empower the youths. This is not so as you, as an individual, can empower the young people around you.

Several mechanisms have been used to empower the youth, however, in this study, youth business empowerment was limited to entrepreneurship education and financial support.

5.3 Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship Education means many things to many people. Nwabuama (2014) view entrepreneurship education as the identification of the general characteristics of entrepreneurs and how potential entrepreneurs can be trained in management techniques needed for effective performance of persons for long time survival of

an organization after the acquisition of occupational skills. Olawolu and Kaegon (2012) confirms that entrepreneurship education prepares youths to be responsible and entering individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by exposing them in real life learning experiences where they will be required to think, take risks, manage circumstances and incidentally learn from the outcome. Ememe (2010) observes that entrepreneurship education enables youths to seek for success in ventures through one's effort. Also, Alberti, et al (2014) define entrepreneurship education as "the structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurship competencies which in turn refers to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth oriented ventures. Another view of entrepreneurship education is the term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities (Omolayo, 2011).

5.4 Financial Support

Although there exist various financial support programmes and products within the Nigerian government, both national and provincial targeting all forms of businesses, nonetheless, a few of these have mainstreamed the youth. In this regard, mainstreaming means that the aforesaid programmes should have set out clearly youth as primary beneficiaries, formulate funding criteria that take cognisance of the challenges facing the youth, provide clear targets/quotas for young people to be implemented, monitored, reviewed and reported accordingly (The National Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy and Implementation Framework, 2009-2019).

For example, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) is envisaged to play a leading role in the provision of financial products and programmes targeting youth enterprises. In addition to the support provided by the NYDA, all national, provincial and municipal finance departments are called upon to ensure that all their funding programmes and products (i.e. enterprise and industrial development finance) mainstream and benefit youth enterprises (The National Youth Economic Empowerment

Strategy and Implementation Framework, 2009-2019).

Despite government efforts to establish various institutions and programmes for business development services/programmes in Nigeria, many young people still have not accessed and/or benefited from these institutions and programmes. This is demonstrated by lack of clear targets/quotas and criteria as well as monitoring, review and reporting progress on youth support in their respective programmes (The National Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy and Implementation Framework, 2009-2019).

5.5 Entrepreneurship Skills

According to Hayton (2015), entrepreneurship skills are associated with competence in the process of opportunity identification (and/or creation), the ability to capitalise on identified opportunities and a range of skills associated with developing and implementing business plans to enable such opportunities to be realised. The term 'entrepreneurship skills' implies that competences can be identified that are associated with (successful) entrepreneurship and may be distinguished from attributes and behaviours that are typically associated with entrepreneurs (Henry et al. 2015).

Entrepreneurship is considered to be a key factor in promoting economic development, innovation, competitiveness and job creation, yet little is known about the skills required for successful entrepreneurship. Research and policy has focused upon the conditions necessary for entrepreneurship - typically defined in terms of the creation of new ventures - to flourish. 'Entrepreneurship skills' issues have been addressed primarily in relation to the education system (Kelley, Bosma and Amorós, 2010).

5.6 The Relationship Between Youth Business Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Skills in Doguwa Local Government

A study by Ogundele, et al (2012) on entrepreneurship training and education as strategic tools for poverty alleviation in Nigeria confirmed that entrepreneurship training and education were significantly related to the youth

empowerment and social welfare services. Furthermore, youth empowerment was found to be influenced by acquired technical skill. The study recommended that effective technical education, youth empowerment, and social welfare service as a catalyst for poverty alleviation.

A study by Adebayo and Nassar (2014) on the impact of micro and small business entrepreneurship on poverty reduction in Ibadan Metropolis, South Western Nigeria revealed a significant impact on small business entrepreneurship on poverty reduction. In addition to that, the study found that the impact could have been more pronounced but for some socio-economic, infrastructural and management challenges, poverty reduction could not be substantively achieved. The recommended strengthening of youth entrepreneurship, increased publicity of government Business Development and Support Services, liberalization of access to and usage of business premises, reduction in cost of production, improvement of infrastructural facilities among others.

6. Methodology

This study used cross-sectional survey design because it allows for the study of the population at one specific time and the difference between the individual groups within the population to be compared. The researcher also employed a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to the young entrepreneurs to gain information about aspects of their entrepreneurship skills and business empowerment (Creswell, 2009). The target population was 22,628 beneficiaries from National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy 2 (NEEDS 2). A sample size of 379 respondents was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. Simple random sampling was used to select the youth because it gives equal opportunity for participation. The main research instrument was questionnaires. Validity was determined using Content validity Index (CVI) and it had a value of 0.783 while reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha and it had an alpha value of

0.832 for youth business empowerment, and 0.857 for entrepreneurship skills respectively. According to Amin (2005), if the CVI is ≥ 0.700 , the instrument is considered valid; and according to Downing (2004), if the alpha value is ≥ 0.700 , the internal consistency is said to be

acceptable. Data was analysed using Pearson’s linear correlation coefficient and regression model to determine the extent to which the independent (youth empowerment) variable predicts the variation in the dependent variable (entrepreneurship skills).

7. Findings

Table 1: The Relationship between Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Skills in Doguwa Local Government, Kano State, Nigeria

		Youth empowerment	Entrepreneurship skills
Youth empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1	.556
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.020
	N	9	9
Entrepreneurship skills	Pearson Correlation	.556	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	
	N	9	15

Level of Significance=0.05

The findings presented in table 1 revealed a strong and positive relationship between youth empowerment and entrepreneurship skills ($r=0.556$, $p<0.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected since there was a significant relationship.

Table 2: Regression Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.556 ^a	.309	.211	.38489	.309	3.134	1	7	.020
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.		
	B	Std. Error	Beta						
1 (Constant)	.874	.239		.228	.016				
Entrepreneurship education	.719	.675	.693	.547	.038				
Financial support	.245	3.869	.307	.063	.046				

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship skills

The findings presented in table 2 revealed that youth business empowerment altogether is responsible for the creation of entrepreneurship skills among the youth by up to 21.1% (Adjusted R Square=0.211). However, entrepreneurship education alone contributes up to 69.3% youth entrepreneurship skills (Beta=0.693), while financial support has the potential of sharpening youth entrepreneurship skills by up to 30.7% (Beta=0.307).

8. Discussions

The study found a positive, strong and significant relationship between youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills

($r=0.556$, $p<0.05$). This implies that empowering the youth by engaging them in entrepreneurship education and providing with financial support sharpens their business skills hence making their businesses to thrive, survive and succeed.

This study agrees with that of Ogundele, et al (2012) who also confirmed that entrepreneurship training and education were significantly associated with youth empowerment and social welfare services. Similarly, a study by Ibitoye, et al (2015) found that a positive and significant relationship exists between youth empowerment and poverty reduction.

9. Conclusion

The study concluded that the youth should be supported in all aspects (i.e. entrepreneurship education and financial support) in order for them to develop adequate entrepreneurship skills such as technical skills, or management skills which will help them engage in entrepreneurial activities that can help them sustain themselves and reduce poverty and vulnerability in their households.

10. Recommendations

There is need for the government of Nigeria to emphasize youth participation in entrepreneurship to reduce their level of vulnerability and help them to be more productive in life. This can be achieved by encouraging the youth to join vocational training institutes that have hands-on training and life skills. The government can accomplish this by financially supporting youth with tuitions and offering them bursaries. This would help the youth to be equipped with the necessary skills that can help them to start and manage their own businesses.

Furthermore, the local leaders should engage the youth in productive business oriented ventures such as participation in youth business forums, business tours and establishment of business projects which are supported and sponsored by the local leaders themselves. This would help fight unemployment and poverty vulnerability among the youth.

Last but not least, the government of Nigeria should emphasize innovation among the youth. This can be done by supporting, sponsoring, and promoting innovation among the youth through competitions. This would help the youth to come up with creative ideas that are business oriented and which can benefit their community and eventually reduce poverty in their households.

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