

Full Length Research Paper

Curbing the unemployment problem in Nigeria through entrepreneurial development

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This study is on curbing the Unemployment problem in Nigeria through entrepreneurial development. The study is motivated by the fact that unemployment problem like corrupt practices in Nigeria is a hydra headed problem and thus require the collective effort of all. The study made use of primary data sourced from 220 respondents in Kogi State through administering of questionnaire. Their responses were tested using appropriate statistical tools like the simple percentage and the Chi-square research techniques; our study revealed that the unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solved through entrepreneurial development and that government effort in this regard is not sufficient given the magnitude of the unemployed in Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommended that solving the unemployment problem should not be left in the hands of the government alone rather we should employed the public private partnership approach so as to allow the involvement of private individuals in helping to establish entrepreneurial development centres as well.

Key words: Curbing, unemployment, entrepreneurial, development.

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment, both of the educated and the uneducated manpower, has become one of the most topical and thorny issues in contemporary Nigeria. The unemployment situation has changed from previous position marked by prolonged period of unemployment and misemployment, to one in which graduates of tertiary institutions have to normally wait for a long time before getting a first job – if at all.

At the beginning of this millennium, employment crises have emerged as the most challenging issues confronting many world economies. The continuing global economic slowdown and uncertain economic prospects have resulted in a grim global economic landscape. This plunged many economies into deep recession, the ripple effects of which have affected the job markets. These effects are more pronounced in the developing and underdeveloped countries of the world, with increased

unemployment being the outcome.

Nigeria has one of the highest levels of youth unemployment in the world (60-65%) (Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity Report, 2008). These are mostly young adults that have graduated from universities and polytechnics or institutions of higher learning. Available estimate shows that about 1.6 million persons, mostly young adult, graduate annually. In addition to this number, about 3.8 million others are certificate carrying youths that have no formal education, or have completed primary or secondary school, or dropped out from tertiary institutions all of which are annually poured into an already saturated labour market (Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity Report, 2008).

Many of the youths are not productive and have actually been reduced to petty traders and smugglers; in many instances, the growth in the phenomenon of

trafficking in persons and child labor can be attributed to poverty and joblessness among the youths. For a few who are able to find their way out of the country to work in other countries, their departure has contributed to depleting the quality of human capital resources in the country. This paper has come as a wakeup call to appropriate authorities to look in the direction of entrepreneurial development initiatives in the quest to solving unemployment problem in Nigeria.

Statement of problem

Diverse economic, social and political problems at different magnitudes facing nations of the world exist and the third world countries are not excluded. It is possible that these diverse economic, social and political problems might have adversely affected the sustainable development of these countries, including the high unemployment rate they are currently facing (Williams and Michael, 2012). Unemployment problem in Nigeria is a hydra headed phenomena going by its many-sided nature. Though unemployment has become a global phenomenon of the 21st century, the problem is becoming more gargantuan each passing year in Nigeria. Unemployment, underemployment and unmitigated rural-urban migration have come to characterize the Nigerian labour market. This has been compounded by frightening number of joiners as schools, polytechnics and universities churn out leavers in a geometric progression. This has impacted on the rate of social vices like robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, human trafficking, child abuse and unfair labour practices experienced mostly by the unemployed youths, which are other noticeable dimensions to the complexities of contemporary Nigerian employment dynamics.

According to the National Manpower Board, (2009) the Nigeria labour market could barely absorb 10% of the over 3.8 million persons turned out by the Nigeria educational system on a yearly basis. In brief, the employment trends in Nigeria indicate that, without a concerted effort to tackle the problems of unemployment and underemployment the situation could get worse.

Many scholars have written widely on entrepreneurship and its potency to generate employment, thus, underscoring the quintessence, significance and relevance of this sub-sector in the development of any given economy. The experiences of developed economies in relation to the roles played by entrepreneurship buttresses the fact that the importance of entrepreneurship cannot be over-emphasized especially among the developing countries. In order to highlight its significance in relation to the growth and development of a given economy, entrepreneurship has been variously referred to as a "source of employment generation". This is because entrepreneurial activities have been found to be capable of making

positive impacts on the economy of a nation and the quality of life of the people (Adejumo, 2000). Studies have established its positive relationship with stimulation of economic growth; employment generation; and empowerment of the disadvantaged segment of the population, which include women and the poor (Oluremi and Gbenga, 2011; Mueller and Thomas, 2000; Reynolds, 1987).

The question is; what is the level of knowledge of entrepreneurship skills by the owners of small scale enterprises? What are the respective influences of entrepreneurship development programmes on the poverty level of the citizens?

It is in the wake of the above that this study aimed at examining the possibility of reducing/curbing the unemployment problem in Nigeria through entrepreneurship development.

Objectives of study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the possibility of curbing the unemployment problem in Nigeria through Entrepreneurial Development.
2. To also examine the extent to which different entrepreneurial development programmes have been able to lessen the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

Research hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study:

Hypothesis I

H₀: Unemployment problem in Nigeria cannot be solved through entrepreneurial development.

H₁: Unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solved through entrepreneurial development.

Hypothesis II

H₀: Entrepreneurial development programmes of government have not been able to lessen the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

H₁: Entrepreneurial development programmes of government have to some extent lessened the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In defining the word unemployment, it appears that there seems to be a consensus on the definition of

unemployment. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines unemployment as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 2008). That is, people willing to work but not presently working. The “unemployed” comprise all people above a specified age who during reference period were;

- i. “Without work”, i.e. that are not on a paid employment or self-employment.
- ii. “Currently available for work”, that is, were willing to accept a paid employment or a self-employment during the reference period.
- iii. “Seeking work”, that is, had taken special steps to seek paid employment or self-employment. The specific steps may include e.g. registration with employers, answering or placing newspaper advertisements.

In an enlarged meaning, underemployment is often used to describe the condition of those who work part-time because full-time jobs are unavailable or who are employed at less-skilled work than they are qualified to do.

According to the Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity (FEML&P), unemployment figures include, those out of work, able to work and looking for a job, but work is not available to them. This definition should be extended to include those unemployed persons who give up job seeking out of frustration and retrenched or laid off persons. Unemployment is usually segmented according to the following characteristics of the unemployed, age, sex, education, duration of unemployment period and kind of education and economic activity previously carried out. Although there seems to be convergence on this concept, its applications have been bedevilled with series of problems across countries.

Okongwu (1996) points out the problem arising from the concept of labour force. In most countries, particularly Nigeria, people below the age of 15 years and those above 55, who are actively engaged in economic activities, are usually excluded from labour statistical surveys. All these factors have the tendency to result in underestimation of unemployment rates thereby making international comparison very difficult. Factors such as the preponderance of full housewives (but who are willing to be engaged in paid job) and unpaid family workers also contributed significantly to the underestimation of unemployment.

According to McConnell et al. (2003) which significantly portrays a Euro-American point of view of unemployment “people are considered officially *unemployed* if during the survey week they were 16 years of age or older, were not institutionalized, and did not work, but were available for

work and (1) had engaged in some specific job-seeking activity during the past 4 weeks, (2) were waiting to be called back to job from which they were temporarily laid off, (3) would have been looking for a job within 30 days”.

Those, who are 16 years or older and not institutionalized but officially neither employed nor unemployed are classified as “not in the labour force”. The labour force itself therefore consists of those employed and unemployed.

The concept of entrepreneurship

The word entrepreneur is derived from the French word “entreprendre” meaning “to undertake”. The definition of an entrepreneur has evolved over time as the world’s economic structure has changed and become more complex. Since its beginning in the middle ages, when it was used in relation to specific occupations, the notion of the entrepreneur has been refined and broadened to include concepts that are related to the person rather than the occupation.

Jean-Baptiste, an aristocrat industrialist, with his unpleasant practical experiences developed the concept of entrepreneur a little further which survived for almost two centuries. According to him, an entrepreneur is one who combines the land of one, the labour of another, and capital of yet another, and thus, produces a product. By selling the product in the market, he pays interest on capital, rent on land and wages to labourers and what remains is his/her profit.

The entrepreneur has been described by Collins et al. (1964) as a “risk taker” – a person who braves uncertainty, strikes out on his own through native wit, devotion to duty and singleness of purpose somehow creates an industry where none existed before.

Essentially, an entrepreneur fills in the people, financing production and marketing gaps by acquiring and assembling the necessary resources into newly created form (Baun et al., 1975). But foremost, the entrepreneur is able to recognize the potentially profitable opportunities, to conceptualize the venture strategy and to become the key force in success, fully moving the idea from the mind to the market place (Frankford, 1975). Entrepreneurship is the process of giving birth to a new enterprise. Entrepreneurship is what entrepreneurs do.

The term “entrepreneur” was first used by the early 18th century French economist Richard Cantillon who defines the entrepreneur as the “agent who buys means of production at certain prices in order to combine them” into a new product (Schumpeter; 1951; Burnett, 2000). Schumpeter (1950) added to Cantillon’s definition by including the idea that entrepreneurs had to be leaders claiming that an entrepreneur is one who brings other people together in order to build a single productive organism.

For Drucker (1970), entrepreneurship is about taking risk. The behavior of the entrepreneur reflects a kind of person willing to put his or her career and financial security on the line and take a risk in the name of an idea, spending much time as well as capital on an uncertain venture.

Badi et al. (2006) defined entrepreneur as a person with vision, original idea, decision-making and daring to try. The entrepreneur is also an investor who brings in new ideas, new commodities, new processes and encourages his team in the new activities. For Scarborough and Zimmerer (2000), an entrepreneur is "a person who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty for the purpose of achieving profit and growth by identifying opportunities and assembling the necessary resources to capitalize on them". "Entrepreneurship is the creation of a new business venture and a new organization for that venture" (Stoner et al., 2000).

Gana (2001) defines entrepreneurship as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment, and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. Though Gana's definition was based on the managerial perspective, it is important to mention that the entrepreneur has certain personality traits which influence his behaviour (psychologists view). He also lives in a society (sociologist view) and he is obviously affected by the economic opportunities and government incentives (economist view). Gana therefore cautioned that any attempt to describe the entrepreneur against only one dimension will be inadequate and would not give a holistic view of who the entrepreneur is.

According to Burnett (2000), throughout the theoretical history of entrepreneurship, scholars from multiple disciplines in the social sciences have grappled with a diverse set of interpretations and definitions to conceptualize this abstract idea. Over time, "some writers have identified entrepreneurship with the function of uncertainty-bearing, others with the coordination of productive resources, others with the introduction of innovation, and still others with the provision of capital" (Hoselitz, 1952). Burnett then concluded that even though certain themes continually resurface throughout the history of entrepreneurship theory, presently there is no single definition of entrepreneurship that is accepted by all or that is applicable in every economy.

Mbaegbu reported that Inegbenebor and Osaze (1999) have differentiated various grades of entrepreneurs on a continuum from craftsman entrepreneurs to opportunistic entrepreneurs. According to Inegbenebor, the craftsman entrepreneur generally establishes his own self-employed business which could be a micro enterprise or a small/medium enterprise. The number of outside people he employs depends on the size of the enterprise. The opportunistic entrepreneur on the other hand has the potential of establishing a business and growing it into a

large scale bureaucratic corporation employing hundreds of people.

Thus, our most appropriate and adopted definition is a combination of three different definitions, wherein, entrepreneurship can be defined as a force that mobilizes other resources to meet unmet market demand (Jones, 1983); the ability to create and build something from practically nothing (Timmons, 1989); that is the process of creating value by pulling together a unique package of resources to exploit an opportunity (Stevenson and Gumpert, 1985).

Mbaegbu (2008) submitted that there is, therefore, no "one-best" definition for the entrepreneur: He however stated, "anyone who creates a business, establishes it, and nurses it to growth and profitability or takes over an existing business because the founder is dead or has sold it, or who inherited it and continues to build and innovate on it, or a man who runs a franchise, qualifies as an entrepreneur in our usage" (Nwachukwu, 1990). The bottom line is career in self-employment and profiting from self-employment. We are therefore adopting and operationalising the combined definition of "entrepreneurship" for the purpose of this seminar.

Who is an entrepreneur?

Entrepreneurs are individuals who recognize opportunities where others see chaos, or confusion. One anonymous quote found by Jeffery A. Timmons sums up the realities for entrepreneurs. "Anyone can be an entrepreneur, who wants to experience the deep dark canyons of uncertainty and ambiguity; who wants to walk the breathtaking highlands of success". Entrepreneurship in the modern dispensation in Nigeria can be traced to the colonial era due to the problem of trade by barter of exchanging agricultural products. It means primarily innovation, to others it means risk-taking. To others, a market stabilizing force and to others it means starting, or owning and managing small business.

Thus, an entrepreneur is viewed as a person who either creates new combination of production factors such as new methods of production, new market, find new sources of supply and organizational form or as a person is willing to take risks or a person who exploits market opportunities, eliminates disequilibrium between aggregate demand and supply or a person who owns and operates a business. Institutions and individuals promoting rural development see entrepreneurship as a strategic development intervention that could accelerate the development process.

Types of entrepreneurs

Clarence Dangof made the classification of entrepreneurs

as follows on the basis of his study.

1. Innovating Entrepreneurs:- He introduces new goods, inaugurates new method of production and discovers new market.
2. Imitative Entrepreneurs:- these are characterized as very great Caution and scepticism in experimenting any change in their enterprises.
3. Fabian Entrepreneurs:- they take very great caution and scepticism in experimenting any change in their enterprises.
4. Drone Entrepreneurs:- they are characterized by a refusal to adopt even at the cost of several reduced returns relative to other producers.

Other types of entrepreneurs include Solo Operators, Active partner, inventors, challengers, buyers and life timers etc.

Nwachukwu (1990) said in his book that an average Nigerian thinks of owning business of his own but never fulfils the desire. Only very few actually begin a going enterprise or actualize their dreams.

Roles of entrepreneurs in the Nigerian economy

The role of entrepreneurs in economic development involves increasing per capital output and income, initiating and constituting change in the structure of business and society; this change is accompanied by growth and increased output.

Entrepreneurship facilitates the use of local raw materials and other resources. Being relatively labour intensive, enterprise creates substantial employment opportunities at low capital cost and being resilient, flexible, can better adapt to unexpected changes in the economic and financial environments.

In agreeing with this, Okonkwo (1993) contended that the industrial future of Nigeria depends critically on the twin pillar of a stable macro-economic environment based on a foundation of proactive partnership between government and the public sector. Paying of more taxes which enables government to provide basic amenities, mobilize savings and investments, dispersal of industries, competition globally and earning foreign exchange for the economy (Onuoha, 2005).

Stimulation of indigenous entrepreneurship in developing country like Nigeria is made possible. Private individuals or groups are afforded the opportunity to manage the businesses with minimal resources requirement.

Chuta (1984) mentions that investment in small businesses help to transform traditional sector. It modernizes the people's perception of life and introduces the use of machines instead of manual labour. Again, the skills of men are modernized and synchronized with develop-

ments in the new industrial sector.

Another function of entrepreneurs in Nigeria's economy is creation of employment. In Nigeria of today, government cannot provide 100% employment for the citizens; entrepreneurship has helped many to be gainfully employed. It helps to reduce unemployment problem in the country i.e., the root of all socio-economic problems. It leads to wealth creation.

Furthermore, utilization of resources is being accomplished. Resources that might end up to be idle in the hands of people are effectively mobilized (capital, skills etc.) and employed productively. More so, it also induces backward and forward linkages which stimulate the process of economic development in the country. It helps to link up various sectors of the economy. It constitutes the market for Agriculture extractive and industrial outputs. Also, it helps in diversifying economic activities but also in saving foreign exchange for their mother country.

It helps reduce the concentration of economic power, stimulates economic equitable redistribution of wealth, income and even political power in the interest of the country. It contributes to regional activity and cooperation. It promotes Nigeria's export trade, reasonable quantity of products or services from Nigeria are sold in other countries. Trade among member states of ECOWAS is expanding. Good trades Relationship (import and export) are being fostered due to the factor of comparative cost advantage.

According to Baumbach (1992), he states that some of the economic contributions of entrepreneurs include

- i. Interdependence of business: - No business is an entity on its own which does not interact. It must buy from other firms and sell either to different firm or customers in competition.
- ii. Maintenance of competition:- in a dynamic environment or an age of rapid change, a globalize world, competition can be the vehicle of change, through innovation or through improvement.

Competition is needed to preserve a system of free and independent enterprise. Competitive capitalism insures freedom of enterprise which provides for individual creativity as well as a livelihood for a large segment of the population. Innovation is, new idea generation, inventions, improvement are needed to remain in a global world. There is a Japanese proverb which says "Fall seven times." It means innovation is required to remain competitive which are all needed to develop the economy.

- iii. Rural-Urban migration:- by providing employment for rural areas will reduce the incidence of urban migration.
- iv. Better Standard of living:- increase in demand , in supply of large quantities of goods and services as a result of numerous economic activities will in turn result in

a better standard of living for the people (Osuala, 1993).

Entrepreneurship as a distinct factor of production contributes to the economic development of an economy in many significant ways as mentioned above. The overall role of entrepreneurship in economic development of an economy is put as “an economy is the effect for which entrepreneurship is the cause.”

Policies of Nigerian government on entrepreneurship development

The Federal Government in collaboration with foreign bodies continues to make capital available to SMEs. For instance, some international organizations since mid-1980s have continued to play vital roles in providing foreign capital to some SMEs in Nigeria. Such organization includes World Bank, African Development Bank (ADB) and International Finance Corporation (IFC).

It could be seen that entrepreneurship business was hitherto neglected in Nigeria. When the government realized that large-scale business cannot operate in all aspects of the nation's economy, small and medium scale entrepreneurship business became recognized and certain schemes were established to take care of their development and survival.

Some of the agencies established by government to aid entrepreneurship development in Nigeria include: the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC); National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND); the National Directorate of Employment (NDE); among others.

Problem of Nigerian entrepreneurs

According to John and Mary (1986), entrepreneurship has a lot of problems. Nigeria entrepreneurship is faced with several constraints which limit its development. Among these constraints is financial or capital shortage, infrastructure problems, technology, organizational constraints, inadequate or lack of skilled manpower, competition from imported goods and poor administration of government assisted programmes, inadequate information as to business opportunities, inadequate capital, substandard goods, anxiousness for profit etc. These problems have great potentials of affecting business operations.

Inadequate capital: Inadequate capital is one of the problems encountered by entrepreneurs. As a result of insufficient capital, entrepreneurs are not able to carry out all the beautiful project /ideas that they may have formulated. Borrowing from banks and other institutions have not been very easy as very stringent conditions are required for the entrepreneurs. This has greatly affected

business development.

Lack of awareness of business opportunities: Most often, entrepreneurs are not aware of business opportunities available to them. This is because most entrepreneurs do not know how to seek for business opportunities. Rather than seek information from the Chambers of Commerce, Ministry of Trade and Industry, foreign and technical partners etc, most entrepreneurs depend on their intuition and what is obtained within their immediate environment, which may not be enough.

Production of substandard goods: As a matter of fact, most entrepreneurs are in the habit of producing substandard goods. This is because they may not have the technical know-how or the resources to make better products. The implication is that market is saturated with poorly produced goods and the consumers are left at the mercy of the entrepreneurs for profit;

Quest for high profit: The quest for high profit can be said to be responsible for the non-chalant attitude of most entrepreneurs. Because they seek for high profits, most entrepreneurs resort to reducing standards and quality of their products. The effect of this is that, the average consumers would prefer imported products not minding the high cost compared to the locally produced ones.

Management control: The employment of incompetent and low quality staff can affect the features of a business. When a worker is incompetent, his output would surely be poor. Most entrepreneurs have no effective control over their workers due to the fact that most of the employees are well known to them. It must be stated that there is no sentiment in business. An entrepreneur should be very firm in the running of his business as the success or failure of the business depends largely on his abilities.

Government policies: Most times, government came up with certain policies that may not be in the interest of the entrepreneurs. This could either be in form of restriction on certain key raw material or outright ban, withdrawal of subsidies; increase in taxes etc. These policies can affect business operations.

Falling economic trends: The prevailing economic trends in any given country have the potentials of affecting business activities. These include inflation, price change, market demand etc. An increase or decrease in each of these variables can affect business operations as well as the fortunes of entrepreneurs.

According to Henry-Phillip (2011), other problems or challenges faced by citizen's participation in entrepreneurial development in Nigeria are as follows:-

1. Lack of proper planning
2. Lack of finance
3. Poor management

These are the obvious ones but the non-obvious ones are:-

1. Improper assessment of self, local operations
2. Political and religious crisis
3. Use of obsolete equipment
4. Misapplication of business finance to other areas
5. Too much family interference (cultural barriers)
6. Lack of infrastructural facilities such as good road link
7. Lack of incentives and protection
8. Multiple taxation and other economic levies, at all tiers of government (Federal, State, local level)
9. Lack of inadequate collateral security

Research has shown that entrepreneurs co-ordinate other factors of production (Land, Capital, Labour); therefore, he must to a large extent believe in his desires.

Prospects of entrepreneurs in Nigeria

According to Obanla (1986), the prospects for small enterprise development are quite bright. He further asserted that, it is just a matter of time; Nigeria will attain the golden height in the development of entrepreneurship. That can be achieved if the government does not relent in its current efforts.

The Federal Government has promulgated schemes and policies to curb hindrance to the development of small-scale industries since independence. One among these was the launching of the National Entrepreneurship Development Fund with a huge sum of money being set aside for the development of small industries.

Entrepreneurs have always found it difficult to get seed capital (fund needed to start a business) from financial institutions especially the banks. Some of the schemes and policies established for the development of small scale industries include the following: Small Scale Industries Credit Scheme, Small Scale Graduate Employment Programmes, etc. We shall discuss the two listed above among other programmes or policies the government of Nigeria has come up with at one time or the other.

1. Small scale industries credit schemes: The small scale industries credit scheme provided debt capital for medium and long term projects. This scheme is the main source of purely direct government financial assistance to small scale businesses. All the States of the federation operate this scheme which is normally under the supervision of the various States Ministries of Commerce and Industries.
2. Small Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programmes: The Small Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programmes (SSIGEP) is designed to encourage and aid unemployed Nigerians to set up and run their own business. The directorate gives applicant loan, the value of which ranges between N5, 000.00 and N35, 000.00. Before qualifying for this loan, an applicant is to submit to the NDE a comprehensive visibility report of the intended business, the amount of loans needed, names and addresses of two guarantors and his own

curriculum vitae.

Significance of entrepreneurship business in Nigeria

The entrepreneurship existing in Nigeria is an indigenous type. In many parts of the world, the importance of entrepreneurship business in the process of socio-economic development has been documented. Recent economic development around the world especially in the developing countries has led to the realization that large scale enterprises have not played and cannot let alone be expected to play the dynamic roles that are supposed to be played in the development of the economy.

The importance of small scale enterprises includes among others, substantial contribution of the sector to the gross domestic product (GDP), employment generation, increasing local value added, and technological development in Nigeria.

Since the entrepreneurship operated in Nigeria is indigenous, the operators understand the indigenous more than the foreign bodies. It generates employment opportunities for the country with the engagement of young schools leavers; it reduces crime to a considerable extent, and reduces immorality in the country.

Another significance of entrepreneurship in Nigeria is retained earnings or plough back profit. This is when entrepreneurs re-invest their profit into the business instead of taking them to foreign countries. When such profits are retained in Nigeria, they help in the development of the whole country. The establishment of entrepreneurship business encourages social interaction and promotes peace in the country.

Entrepreneurship business in the country has also helped in increasing the level of local technology in the county. It can be seen that the industrialist has gone out virtually to acquire recent technology for the production of goods and services. With the introduction of this technology, it has helped in the area of development of locally produced goods rather than relying solely on imported goods.

Another importance is the low level of capital requirement needed for its establishment. A more equitable redistribution of income is usually achieved in small scale enterprise. Inventions, adaptations, general technological development are more common in small-scale industries.

Entrepreneurship business is very essential since it serves as the spring board and training ground for others. It is generally agreed that the strength of an economy to a large extent depends on the strength of its small business brought about by the development of entrepreneurship in such a country.

Theoretical framework

Several theories abound to serve as platform for the

explanation of the nature, processes, manifestations and variables of entrepreneurship.

Schumpeter's Theory developed in 1934 dwells on the "Concentric Circles" of economic boom and depression which generates the "Social Climate" that determines societal attitudes, encouragement and rewards to business endeavours.

The Creative Imitation Theory espoused by the likes of Drucker, on the other hand, stressed the issue of change which in turn informs the search, response and exploitation of opportunities by people in a particular society at a given time.

Inkele and Smith's Need-to-Improve Theory is also one of the reference base for the theoretical understanding of entrepreneurial development, study and endeavour. Supported by the likes of Harbison and Myers (1964), Meir (1976), Onwuejeogwu (1987), the theory stands on the exploratory behaviour of entrepreneurs which makes people to continually seek for new ideas and better methods.

This endless "search" for available, but yet unnoticed opportunities directly links up to Kirzner (1984) and other writers of this mould's formulation of their Theory of Entrepreneurship Alertness. Proponents of this theory believed that this alertness is a common trait that successful entrepreneurs possess.

Lastly, is the Economic Survival Theory, which is adopted by the researcher as the framework for the presentation and better understanding of this research work. The Centre-piece of the proponents of this theory's argument focuses on what Gilder (1981) referred to as the "movement from poverty to wealth". The theory assumes that entrepreneurship is more prevalent among people who are:

1. Oppressed by marginalization
2. Suppressed by discrimination
3. Victimized by circumstances; and
4. Affected by political upheavals.

According to Mbaegbu (2008), people who fall into this category have to channel their creative abilities to entrepreneurship.

The above Theory is therefore relevant to this study in the light of the fact that Nigeria as a country today sits at the precipice of political disintegration arising out of the present state of economic disconnect and unease, occasioned by unemployment unmitigated level of poverty among her people and other unpalatable socio-economic imbalances.

To grapple with loss of jobs caused by lower capacity utilization, factory closure forced migration; many Nigerians have adopted this Economic Survival model for sustenance. The theory becomes more appropriate viewed against the background of the high rate of poverty engendered by both educated and uneducated unemployment in the country. Since the jobs are non-existence

or negligible in quantity compared to the influx, entrepreneurial endeavour by people has become the only visible alternative. It is noteworthy that the average Nigerian, and their government at all level including those of Kogi State have also come to this realization in full and have therefore set different machineries and in motion formulated to several programmes to promote entrepreneurial development in the country towards minimizing poverty.

However, the researcher is of the strong opinion that the position of the Economic Survival Theory cannot be taken hook, line and sinker. While the theory had the capitalist, pro-western Europe industrial outlook, it is pertinent to point out that there exists substantial entrepreneurship indigenous to Nigeria. Secondly, there is the failure or inadequate capturing by the theory of such important things as the desire to develop internal and local capacity as a substitute for foreign ones in the quest for national development.

For instance, the Nigerian government is as at today promoting massive cassava production as a means of poverty alleviation at the grassroots, since it is a product that can be produced in most parts of the country. However, the desire to improve export earnings, substitute cassava for imported wheat and regain the over \$10 billion dollars spent on rice and wheat is important and the development of local capacity remains the driving force. Also, many people's desire in today's world to be self-employed and the desire to attain self-actualization through the unleashing of latent talents also inform the entrepreneurial consideration rather than just to keep body and soul together as assumed by the economic survival theorists.

According to Mbaegbu (2008), various theories have been advanced to explain the nature of entrepreneurship and the factors or variables that drive entrepreneurship in a given society. Some of the reputable ones are.

Schumpeter's Theory

According to Meir and Baldwin (1986), this approach was developed by David Alois Schumpeter in 1934. The theory identified innovation as a function specific to all entrepreneurs, suggesting that the entrepreneur undertakes new combinations of the existing factors of production in any of the following ways:

1. The introduction of a new good
2. The use of a new method of production
3. The opening of a new market
4. The exploitation of a new source of raw material supply
5. The reorganization of any industry.

In the Schumpeterian general theory, economic development occurs through a dynamic process of boom and depression (Business cycle) and therefore, economic

development in the Schumpeterian model is an uneven and disharmonious process that ebbs and flows like the waves at the sea side. The determinants of entrepreneurship in the model according to Higgins (1978) can be symbolically summarized as follows:

$$E = E(Rx) \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$X = x(R/w) \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where, E = supply of entrepreneurship

R = profit (return on investment)

x = social climate

w = wage level

R/w = Ratio of profit to wages

Therefore the supply of entrepreneurship by this equation is a function of the rate of profit and the "social climate". Which means a vibrant profitable economy encourages entrepreneurship while a depressed economy discourages entrepreneurship. Mbagbu (2008) explained that the social climate includes the educational system, the social values, the class structure, the nature and extent of prestige and other rewards that accompany business success, and the attitude of society towards business success (Higgins, 1978). By this theory a pragmatic philosophy of education that is qualitative and purposeful, that encourages skills acquisition; self-reliance and self-employment will increase the pool of entrepreneurship.

Druker's Creative Imitation Theory

According to Druker (1985), entrepreneurs in LDCs are not truly innovators in the traditional Schumpeterian sense. They rarely produce brand new products rather they imitate the products and production processes that have been invented mostly by the developed countries. To Druker, therefore, entrepreneurship in LDCs is "Creative Imitation". This takes place when the imitators better understand how an innovation can be applied, used or sold in their particular market niches, to wit, their own countries and neighbours. Mbaegbu (2008) opined that in Nigeria this brand of entrepreneurship abound in the South East among the Ibos as revealed by Nafziger (1967) and Harris (1967). These brands of entrepreneurs imitate and adapt products of innovation. To Druker, what underscores entrepreneurship is change "The entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it and exploits it as an opportunity" (Druker, 1986).

The economic survival theory

This theory posits that entrepreneurship is prevalent among people affected by political upheavals or people victimized by discrimination or oppressed by marginalization. Thus it is possible for people who have lost their

jobs to corporate downsizing to become entrepreneurs. They do this not by choice but by sheer will to survive. Mbaegbu (2008) argued that having lost their means of livelihood, these people now channel their creative energies to entrepreneurship, usually after the initial period of inertia and despondency. A phenomenon that Gilder (1981) refers to as the movement from poverty to wealth.

Inkele's and Smith's need to improve theory

Mbaegbu (2008) also reported that Inkeles and Smith (1975) have identified disposition to accept new ideas and try new methods, a time sense that makes a person more interested in the present and future than in the past as altitudes which directly or indirectly affect entrepreneurship development. Meir (1976) collaborated on this theory by arguing that entrepreneurs show more exploratory behavior than other persons. They are continually researching the environment on how to move forward.

In Nigeria the Ibo race is cited as correlating these attributes with greater success in economic activity as the Igbos travel to any part of the world for material success (Meir, 1976). Harbison and Myers (1964) had reported a correlation as high as 0.82 between the level of entrepreneurial activity and education. With regard to the effect of family structure; Onwuejeogwu (1987) has demonstrated how the influence of the extended family system in apprenticeship training among the Igbo has impacted positively on entrepreneurship development among the people: A successful business man picks up a nephew or a young cousin and puts him under internship for some years in his own line of business until he is able to freelance on his own with seed (Mbaegbu, 2008).

Kirzner's theory of "entrepreneurship alertness"

Kirzner (1984) focuses on "entrepreneurial alertness" to available, but as yet unnoticed opportunities. The essence of alertness theory is that someone is endowed with the trait to recognize something others have failed to recognize; that there is an opportunity waiting to be exploited. Kirzner believes that this alertness is a trait successful entrepreneurs have.

The use of entrepreneurial development to generate employment, economically empower the people, reduce poverty and propel economic growth was postulated by Friedman (1953) based on an earlier General Theory of Employment by Keynes in 1938. The economic policy direction encapsulated in the Nigeria Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) I & II has entrepreneurship development as its focal point. Entrepreneurship development aims at equipping the youth and school leavers especially the graduates of

tertiary institutions with skills to create jobs for themselves and other people instead of hunting for non-existing jobs from the public sector.

Iguisi (2008) posit that large firms have been down-sizing employment in order to maintain competitiveness. By contrast, it has been small businesses that have created more jobs worldwide. Iguisi (2008) went on to submit that small businesses have become important economic factors in the struggle against poverty and Under-development in most parts of Africa. This development he added, is taking place in response to the continuing economic crisis and ensuing political and economic reforms of the 21st century. He then concluded that a great number of the local population are now eking out a living from their own entrepreneurial efforts in what can be called small scale business activities with greater intensity to combat the growing economic crisis and deterioration in their standard of living.

In his view, Kelechi (2012) stated that the prevalence of unemployment, underemployment, high competition in the labour market and the frustration of job seekers cannot be overemphasised. This, therefore, has created the need for re-orientation of undergraduates from being job seekers to job-creators

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design

The approach adopted in the execution of the study was a survey design. The researcher chose survey design as it is one method where a group of people is studied by collecting information from them. More so, this type of design specified how the researcher's data were collected and analyzed. So, the design was specified to use questionnaire and oral interview. This survey was used by the researcher to source for his primary data.

Research sample and sampling techniques

The researcher using the Yamani (1962) formula sampled, two hundred and seventy five (275) people, out of the total of over three million people in Kogi State according to the 2006 National Population census figure. The questionnaire was distributed in this manner; eastern senatorial district, 95; central senatorial district, 85; and western senatorial district, 75. Our focus was on the literate and illiterate population going by the nature of the study. The researcher sampled this number because it was not possible to use the entire population of Kogi State.

In the choice of the population for this study, the researcher used simple random sampling technique. The technique provided each member of the entire Kogi State

Table 1. Sex distribution of the respondents.

Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	125	48.7
Female	95	51.2
Total	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

population equal and independent chance of being selected or included in the sample. Another reason why the researcher chose the technique is that it is a simple and easy probability sampling technique in terms of conceptualization and application. The researcher shared the questionnaire in offices and public places, likewise the oral interview.

Sources of data

The researcher collected data for this study from both primary and secondary sources. She used questionnaire and oral interview to collect his primary data, while she consulted books, journals, magazines, newspapers and other documents not within the mentioned categories to source for her secondary data. Secondary data were sourced from both public and private resourced centres like libraries and printed materials.

Data analysis

All the data collected from primary source through questionnaires and oral interview were statistically presented and analysed. Frequency and tabular percentage forms were used for data presentation while Chi-square T-test was used to test and analyse some selected hypotheses as not all were analysed due to time constraints.

Presentation and analysis of data

Of the 275 questionnaires sent out, a total of 220 was duly filled and returned to the researcher. As such, the data for this study is hereby presented and analyzed below using the Simple Percentage and the Chi-Square statistical technique for test of Hypotheses as appropriate.

Table 1 shows that 125 respondents representing 48.7% of the total respondents are males while 95 respondents representing 51.4% are females.

Table 2 shows that 25 respondent representing 11% of the total respondents are between 18-25 years, 65 respondents representing 30% of the total respondents are between 26-30 years, 74 respondents representing 34% of the total respondents are between 31-40 years, 35

Table 2. Age distribution of respondents.

Age distribution	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
18-20	25	11
25-30	65	30
31-40	75	34
41-50	35	16
50 and above	20	9
Total	220	100

Source: Field work 2012.

respondents representing 16% of the total respondents are between 41-50 years while 20 respondents representing 9% of the total respondents are 50 and above.

Table 3 shows that 123 respondents representing 55% strongly agreed that entrepreneurial development can help to curb unemployment problem in Nigeria, 47 respondents representing 21% agreed to that as well; but 19 respondents representing 9% strongly disagreed, 19 respondents representing 9% merely disagreed while 12 respondents representing 6% were undecided.

The result in Table 4 indicates that 37 respondents representing 17% strongly agreed that the Government has been effective in creating enabling environment for entrepreneurs to thrive, 35 respondents merely agreed which amount to 16%, 118 respondents strongly disagreed which indicated 53%, 24 respondents representing 11% disagreed while 6 respondents representing 3% were undecided.

Table 5 shows that 135 respondents indicating 61% strongly agree, 46 respondents representing 20% agree that there is a relationship between entrepreneurship and employment opportunities generation in Nigeria, 15 respondents representing 7% strongly disagree to it while 12 respondents representing 6% disagree and 35 respondents representing 6% were undecided

Table 6 indicates that 25 respondents representing 11% say to a very high extent they are satisfied with citizens' participation in entrepreneurial business, 39 respondents representing 18% agree to a high extent while respondents 126 respondents representing 57% say it is to a low extent, 20 respondents representing 9% disagree and 10 respondents representing 5% were undecided.

Table 7 shows that 147 respondents representing 67% say that the chances of the success of entrepreneurial businesses in Nigeria is to a very high extent, 37 respondents representing 17% say it is to a high extent, 25 respondents representing 11% say it is to a low extent, 10 respondents representing 5% while 6 respondents were undecided which represents 3%.

Table 8 indicates that 165 respondents representing 74% strongly agree that there are challenges and impediments militating against the entrepreneurial develop-

ment in Nigeria, 23 respondents agree to it representing 10%, 10 respondents strongly disagree accounting for 5% and 12 respondents representing 6% disagree while 10 respondents which indicate 5% were undecided.

Table 9 shows that 100 respondents strongly agree representing 30%, 90 responses agree representing 25%, 80 respondents strongly disagree representing 19%, 70 disagree indicating 13% while 54 respondents representing 13% were undecided.

The result in Table 10 shows that 161 respondents representing 73% strongly agree, 23 of the respondents with an average of 22.3% agree, 15 respondents strongly disagree which constitute 7%, 10 respondents which represent 4% disagree, while 11 respondents with 5% were undecided.

Analysis of data

In analysing our data, we shall recall our statement of hypotheses one and two, and also sought out presented tables that have direct bearing on stated objectives and hypotheses.

Hypothesis I

H₀: Unemployment problem in Nigeria cannot be solved through entrepreneurial development.

H₁: Unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solved through entrepreneurial development.

With reference to 4.1.3 this hypothesis was tested with the Chi-square research technique.

The formula for the computation of Chi-square (x²) is given below:

$$\text{The Chi-square method denoted by; } \chi^2 = \frac{\sum(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

Computed result is presented in Table 11.

Decision making: from the chi-square research technique, we observed that the calculated result is greater than the table result at the 10% level of significance i.e. 9.09 > 7.78. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that unemployment problem in Nigeria cannot be solved through entrepreneurial development and accept the alternative that Unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solved through entrepreneurial development. This result corroborated with that obtained in Table 3 using the simple percentages.

Hypothesis II

H₀: Entrepreneurial development programmes of government have not been able to lessen the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

H₁: Entrepreneurial development programmes of govern-

Table 3. Respondents' response on whether they agree that entrepreneurial development can help to curb unemployment problem in Nigeria.

Option	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	75	48	123	55%
Agree	28	19	47	21%
Strongly disagree	4	15	19	9%
Disagree	11	8	19	9%
Undecided	7	5	12	6%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

Table 4. On whether they agreed that the Government has been effective in creating enabling environment for entrepreneurs to thrive.

Option	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	25	12	37	17%
Agree	20	15	35	16%
Strongly disagree	57	61	118	53%
Disagree	18	6	24	11%
Undecided	5	1	6	3%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

Table 5. On whether there is a relationship between entrepreneurship and employment opportunities generation in Nigeria.

Responses	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	75	60	135	61%
Agree	25	21	46	20%
Strongly disagree	10	5	15	7%
Disagree	10	2	12	6%
Undecided	5	7	12	6%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

ment have lessened the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

With reference to Table 4, this hypothesis was also tested using the chi-square research technique:

The formula for the computation of Chi-square (χ^2) is given below:

The Chi-square method denoted by; $\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$

Computed result is presented in Table 12.

Decision making: from the chi-square research technique, we observed that the calculated result is less than the table result at the 10% level of significance i.e. $5.53 < 7.78$. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis that

Table 6. On to what extent are they satisfied with citizens' participation in entrepreneurial business.

Option	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Very High extent	13	12	25	11%
High extent	22	17	39	18%
Low extent	65	61	126	57%
Very low extent	15	5	20	9%
Not at all	6	4	10	5%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

Table 7. On the chances of the success of entrepreneurial businesses in Nigeria.

Option	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Very High	85	62	147	67%
High	24	10	37	17%
Low	10	15	25	11%
Very low	5	3	10	5%
Undecided	1	5	6	3%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

Table 8. On whether there are challenges and impediments militating against entrepreneurial development in Nigeria.

Responses	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	90	75	165	74%
Agree	16	7	23	10%
Strongly disagree	7	3	10	5%
Disagree	8	4	12	6%
Undecided	4	6	10	5%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

entrepreneurial development programmes of government have not been able to lessen the unemployment problem in Nigeria and reject the alternative that entrepreneurial development programmes of government have been able to lessen the unemployment problem in Nigeria. This result corroborated with that obtained in Table 4 using the simple percentages.

Conclusion

Unemployment problem like corruption in Nigeria is a

hydra-headed phenomenon and cannot be effectively tackled through a mono-methodology. Our study looked at the way the unemployment problems in Nigeria can be solved through entrepreneurial development. Our findings revealed that though unemployment problem in Nigeria can be curbed through effective entrepreneurial development the unemployment rate is still alarmingly high in Nigeria. This is in spite of government efforts aimed at reducing the unemployment menace in Nigeria. This is because government effort alone is not sufficient when compared with the magnitude of the unemployed in Nigeria. Our finding is in line with an assertion by Obanla

Table 9. On whether the citizen of Nigeria are adequately motivated to participate in entrepreneurship activities.

Option	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	85	70	155	30%
Agree	22	13	35	25%
Strongly disagree	8	12	20	19%
Disagree	3	4	7	13%
Undecided	2	1	3	13%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work 2012.

Table 10. On whether there exists limiting factors that disenable some citizen's participation in entrepreneurship endeavours.

Option	Respondents		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	91	70	161	73%
Agree	12	11	23	11%
Strongly disagree	10	5	15	7%
Disagree	5	5	10	4%
Undecided	7	4	11	5%
Total	125	95	220	100

Source: Field Work, 2012.

Table 11. Computed result.

Variables	N	T Cal.	T Crit.	df	Prob.	Remark
Male	125					
Female	95	9.53	7.78	4	0.5	Reject H ₀
Total	220					

Source: Researcher's X² Calculation, 2012.**Table 12.** Computed result.

Variables	N	T Cal.	T Crit.	df	Prob.	Remark
Male	125					
Female	95	5.53	7.78	4	0.5	Accept H ₀
Total	220					

Source: Researcher's X² Calculation, 2012.

(1986), that the prospects for small enterprise development in Nigeria are quite bright. He further asserted that, it is just a matter of time; Nigeria will attain the golden height in the development of entrepreneurship. That can be achieved if the government does not relent in its current efforts. It is in the wake of the above that we make the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our results of findings show that government efforts aimed at entrepreneurial development cannot solve the multidimensional nature of the Nigerian unemployment problem. As such, it will require the collective efforts of both the public and private enterprises to mitigate the

unemployment problem in Nigeria. i.e. a public private partnership in curbing the unemployment problem in Nigeria through entrepreneurial development.

Secondly, as it is currently being practised in some Nigeria institutions of higher learning entrepreneurial programmes and curricula should be designed to meet with the current trends. Its content should be properly designed towards making a graduate in Nigeria skilful in a particular trade or enterprise of interest before he or she leaves the school, such that the long years of waiting for the elusive supposed dream or plum job will be greatly cut-down through practicing the trade or enterprise learnt about in school. Finally, adequate fund should be set aside by both the public and private enterprises and channelled towards assisting graduates with entrepreneurial skills to set up their own privately owned enterprises in the area of their skill. This also comes with the possibility of becoming an employer of labour as against the usual after school long waiting for the never forthcoming dream job. This corroborated with one of the recommendations made by Williams and Michael (2012) in their study on Developing Entrepreneurial Skills through Business Education Programme to Curb Youth Restiveness for Sustainable Niger Delta Development; they stated that in order to curb the problem of youth restiveness, there is the need for the youths and job-seekers to be assisted to acquire the necessary entrepreneurship skills through business education programmes. They stated further that, emphasis in our educational programmes curriculum at all levels of education should be placed on the development of entrepreneurship skills. Efforts should be intensified by government, business education practitioners, and management of educational institutions as well as captains of business and industrial sectors to jointly develop vibrant and worthy business education programmes that will help in reducing the problem of unemployment and youth restiveness through entrepreneurship education.

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