

Effect of Traditional Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intention of Apprentices in Enugu State

*Nwachukwu, U. L.¹, Njoku, R. C.¹, Agha, N. C.¹, Okafor, L. C.¹, Emaimo, J.²

¹Department of Business Management & Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Management Sciences, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki

²Department of Dental Technology, Faculty of Dental Health, Federal University of Allied Health Sciences Enugu

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

This study captioned the effect of traditional entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state was generally aimed at analyzing the effect of traditional entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. The specific objectives were to find out the effect of mentorship on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices; ascertain the effect of skill acquisition on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices; and determine the effect of settlement on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices. The study used survey research design to gather data from 391 respondents. Data were presented in frequency tables and analysed with percentages. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses of the study, using SPSS 30.0 version. It was found that mentorship, skill acquisition and settlement have positive significant effects on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices. Based on the findings, the study concluded that traditional entrepreneurship education is very effective in igniting entrepreneurial spirits of apprentices. The research recommended that mentors should receive training to improve their mentoring skills and method of knowledge transmission in order to support traditional entrepreneurship education.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; Mentoring; Skill; Settlement; and Theory

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of 4th Industrial Revolution, the global agenda for sustainable development and the increasingly uncertain era have called for the development of innovation and entrepreneurship education (Xiaozhou & Weihui, 2023). Abigail & Alhassan (2022), noted that in any given economy, entrepreneurship development gives birth to job creation which will encourage people to do something that will better their lives and the country at large. Entrepreneurship education is the development of attitudes, behaviours and capacities that can be applied during an individual's career as an entrepreneur (Ndofirepi, 2020; Wilson, 2009). As a multifaceted approach, entrepreneurship education fosters creativity, adaptability, and a profound understanding of socioeconomic dynamics, (Suguna *et al*, 2024). Jardim, & Sousa, (2023), asserted that entrepreneurship education has become increasingly crucial in today's fast-paced and ever-evolving global economy. This form of education is considered highly relevant for economic growth, (Tiberius & Weyland, 2022).

Research in entrepreneurship education is growing simultaneously with the upsurge in interest in the topic and the increase in the programs and courses (Wraae, Brush, & Nikou, 2022). However, not much has been done on the effect of traditional entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention as it relates to developing countries. This study chose to explore apprentices in Enugu state to cover up the gap. This will not only swell literature in this subject, but also, it will add fresh voice to the literature in the underreported zone like other African regions. This study will help to highlight the status of apprentices in Enugu state and show what improvements are needed to be done. Once the deficiencies are identified and dealt with, existing and future

apprentices will benefit from the improved version of the system. This study will be useful to other researchers in the field of entrepreneurship education. The results from this research will be an addition to knowledge and also contribute to boosting literature review in the field of traditional entrepreneurship education.

Being a special kind of social activity, sometimes stakeholder groups might have doubts about its effectiveness (Henry *et al.*, 2005), raising the question of ‘Can entrepreneurship be taught?’ Over the years traditional entrepreneurship education has been seen as an option meant for the poor. Due to its unorganised nature many tend to look down on it, preventing their loved ones from passing through such form of education. This notion only raised further questions of “Is traditional entrepreneurship education effective?” This study is therefore poised to empirically examine the effect of traditional entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

Concept of Traditional Entrepreneurship Education

Kelly, (2024) reveals that traditional entrepreneurship education is one of the most critical networks for transferring wealth across generations and has, over time, become central to the social, economic, and political lives of the people in the South-Eastern states of Nigeria. Fafunwa (2004), observed that the work system in the traditional society was handed down from one generation to the other through the process of indigenous education.

Traditional entrepreneurship education is built on a system of skill acquisition and learning of trades in specialised handcrafts, trade, and business for wealth generation and capital accumulation. This form of education is as old as man and categorised under the informal sector of the economy. The informal economy according to Fajobi *et al.*, (2017) was regarded as the power house of developing economies of the world. Debarliev *et al.*, (2020) argued that non-formal business education has a more significant effect on human capital than formal education. Traditional entrepreneurship education has long been recognized as a valuable pathway to acquiring practical skills and knowledge essential for successful entry into the workforce (Ravichandran & Ramasamy, 2023). Adekola, (2013) referred to it as the process of learning/skill acquisition through enlistment with a master craftsman. Traditional entrepreneurship education is intended to deliver knowledge and skills through practical on-the-job teaching and learning (Okorie & Ezeji, 1988). It serves as a career option for the less privileged ones in the society. Most persons that go into apprenticeship are either forced by parent/guardian or situation of things around them.

Omede & Ngboawaji, (2023) categorised traditional entrepreneurship education into craft and trade. The craft involves acquiring technical skills for an occupation such as bricklaying, tailoring, printing, weaving, blacksmithing, plumbing, motor mechanic etc. This type of traditional entrepreneurship education may not necessarily have the learner living with the master. In this case the learners are relatively free from the domestic activities of the master and are most likely meant to fend for themselves during and after the training. While trade is the commercial buying and selling of products such as electronics, food stuffs, fashion wears etc. In this form of traditional entrepreneurship education, the participant lives with the master as a domestic servant and at the conclusion of the apprenticeship the master settles the servant to start his own trade.

Variables of Traditional Entrepreneurship Education

This study limits the variables of traditional entrepreneurship education to mentorship, skill acquisition and settlement. Mentorship is an essential element of traditional entrepreneurship education as it helps shape the learner in a desired manner during the program. It is deemed essential for facilitating learning, enhancing self-efficacy, and providing support in entrepreneurship (Adeagbo, 2023). The concept of mentorship in traditional entrepreneurship education is characterised by an unorganized relationship that is very flexible and impromptu (Sakamoto & Tamanyu, 2020). Mentorship is characterised by a relationship between more experienced and less experienced individuals with the objective of fostering the development of the less experienced individual's skills and character (Okoli *et al.*, 2021). Participants are not left to figure things out alone- the trainers guide them, answer their questions, and offer insights from years of experience in the trade or craft. Mentorship entails assuming variety of roles to target specific learning modalities (Caza, Vough & Puranik, 2018). Mentors are known to provide guidance, encouragement, and support to their mentee i.e their apprentice through a variety of

interactions, including sponsoring, teaching, mentoring, counselling, and energising. A good mentor helps you avoid costly mistakes, instill trade/craft best practices, and provides valuable feedback to accelerate your growth.

Skill acquisition is the process of learning and developing proficiency in a particular craft or trade. Equipping apprentices with appropriate skills and knowledge needed in starting up their own business is the primary objective traditional entrepreneurship education. In traditional entrepreneurship education skill can be categorized into technical and managerial. Technical skill is the main occupational or vocational skill needed for a particular job such as welding, painting, barbing etc. this is the main skill that defines a person's occupation. Technical skills are job-specific related skills required to perform a particular job. Technical skills involve: specialised knowledge, analytical ability within a specialty and faculty in the use of tools and techniques of the specific discipline. Managerial skills such as negotiating ability; time management; rational and quick decision making; handling and maintenance of tools; proper recording and bookkeeping; advertising and marketing; analytical skill, human relation skill helps to manage the business and keep it running effectively. They are skills employed in starting, growing and establishing a business. Onoh (2011) refers to it as entrepreneurial skills which an entrepreneur acquires to function effectively and efficiently in the turbulent business environment as an independent person in order to improve one's economic status and the society at large.

"Settlement" in traditional entrepreneurship education is the settle-down package a learner gets from the master at the end of a satisfactory training program to aid the former in starting his own business as learnt. After a participant has successfully finished the training and the master is satisfied with his performance, he gets rewarded. Chukwu *et al.*, (2024) revealed that reward can be in form of money, business contacts, tools or any other resources and it forms the bases upon which the learner can commence his own business.

Entrepreneurial Intention

Emaimo & Nwachukwu (2023) revealed that the word intention has originated from the field of psychology. It refers to the tendency of an individual to respond to the object of his or her attitude, which is the early psychological manifestation of the choice of future action. Entrepreneurial intention refers to a conscious state of mind that controls attention, experience, and action toward a specific goal or pathway to attain the goal. (Haibin, Sadan, & Abdullah, 2021) asserted that entrepreneurship education act on some intermediate variables, including self-efficacy, passion, confidence, interest, attitude, curiosity, that affect the entrepreneurial intention of participant. Attitude, subjective norms and perception are the determinants of entrepreneurial intention. The attitude toward behaviour is the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question. Attitude is a composite variable comprised of both cognitive and affective elements that support this mindset towards entrepreneurship as a lifestyle or career or activity, whether positive or negative. As an attitude is a conclusion or predisposition toward an action, it too is formed through experience and perception formed over the life of the person. Subjective norm refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour. This variable would be influenced not only by broad cultural attitudes towards entrepreneurship but also the attitudes of particular individuals, groups and networks the person is most influenced by such as family, friends, peers and significant others. Perception refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour and it is assumed to reflect past experience, as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles. This variable is recognised as most impacted by and closely related to Bandura's (1986) perceived self-efficacy, a person's belief they can execute a particular action (i.e. start a new venture).

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) propounded by David Kolb in the year 1984. According to the theory, "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience." Knowledge results from a combination of grasping and transforming experience. The ELT is based on the assumption that experience plays a central role in the learning process that a person learns from direct experience or learns by doing. It describes how people obtain and covert their experiences into knowledge. McLeod (2013) posited that ELT is typically represented by four stage learning cycle: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualization; and active experimentation. Kolb viewed learning as an integrated process with each stage being mutually supportive of and feeding into the next.

Traditional entrepreneurship education participants learn by observation and working with the master craftsman through a period of time and a process of so many repeated of trial and error until the desired skill is learnt. As the saying goes “practice makes perfect” or “experience is the best teacher”; Onwuegbuzie (2017) acknowledged that traditional entrepreneurship education is an experience building process that allows the participant to learn and relearn. Participants of traditional entrepreneurship education learn from the experiences of the master and also learn from his mistakes. This learning process provides hands-on skills and abilities that prepare the individual to be more capable of independent replication.

The experiential learning theory captures the entire process involved with transferring knowledge in traditional entrepreneurship education. Master explains and demonstrates what is to be learned while the apprentice watches with keen interest. The participant reflects on what he has seen the master do and forms a concept or draws conclusion on what he is going to do. He then tries-out or practice what he observed the master did. With the repeated continuation of this learning process, the participants of gains more experience and his knowledge in the skill being learnt keeps growing. The ability of being able to independently experiment improves learner’s entrepreneurial intention to start and own a business at the end of the education

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of this study comprised all craft and trade apprentices within Enugu state. The researcher employed Topman’s (Cochram) formula for unknown population to arrive at a sample size of 474. Using a purposive sampling method copies of questionnaires were distributed. At the end of questionnaire distribution, 391 copies were classified and translated into frequency tables. Each frequency table was analysed using percentage distribution while hypotheses were tested using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

RESULT

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution Analysis

Questionnaire	Number	Percentage
Questionnaire Administered	474	100
Questionnaire Returned	425	89.7
Questionnaire Not-Returned	49	10.3
Questionnaire Rejected	34	7.2
Questionnaire Used	391	82.5

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Table 1 shows that the total copies of the questionnaire administered were 474 showing 100%; 425 copies of the questionnaire representing 89.7% were returned. 49 copies representing 10.3% were not returned; 34 copies representing 7.2% of the questionnaire were rejected. The 391 copies of the questionnaire representing 82.5% that were correctly filled and returned were used for analysis.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	214	54.7
Female	177	45.3

Total	391	100
Age (Year)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20	130	33.2
20-30	193	49.4
31 and Above	68	17.4
Total	391	100
Type of TEE	Frequency	Percentage
Craft	237	60.6
Trade	154	39.4
Total	391	100

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Table 2 showed that 214 respondents representing 54.7% are males while 177 respondents representing 45.3% are females. It indicates that 130 respondents representing 33.2% were below 20 years of age; 193 respondents representing 49.4% were within the age of 20-30 years; while 68 respondents representing 17.4% were above 30. It was also shown in the table that 237 respondents forming 60.6% were into craft; 159 respondents being 39.4% were into trade.

Questionnaire Construct

Table 3: Question Items on Mentorship

S/N	Question Items	SA (%)	A (%)	UD (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total	Mean	Remark
4	Mentorship is important in TEE	125 (32.0)	166 (42.5)	74 (18.9)	17 (4.3)	9 (2.3)	1554	4.0	Agree
5	It helps me learn from my master's experience	113 (28.9)	176 (45.0)	51 (13.0)	34 (8.7)	17 (4.3)	1507	3.9	Agree
6	Mentorship makes me consider starting a business	176 (45.0)	153 (39.1)	43 (11.0)	12 (3.1)	7 (1.8)	1652	4.2	Agree

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TEE= Traditional Entrepreneurship Education

Table 4: Question Items on Skill Acquisition

S/N	Question Items	SA (%)	A (%)	UD (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total	Mean	Remark
7	Acquiring skill is fundamental in TEE	111 (28.4)	194 (49.6)	54 (13.8)	29 (7.4)	3 (0.8)	1554	4.0	Agree

8	TEE empowers me with skill to run a business	96 (24.6)	123 (31.5)	92 (23.5)	44 (11.3)	36 (9.2)	1372	3.5	Agree
9	Acquiring the right skill makes me consider starting a business	134 (34.3)	154 (39.4)	48 (12.3)	43 (11.0)	12 (3.1)	1528	3.9	Agree

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TEE= Traditional Entrepreneurship Education

Table 5: Question Items on Settlement

S/N	Question Items	SA (%)	A (%)	UD (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total	Mean	Remark
10	Settlement is very essential in TEE	184 (47.1)	166 (42.5)	41 (10.5)	-	-	1707	4.4	Agree
11	The settlement I will get at the end keeps me going	134 (34.3)	187 (47.8)	38 (9.7)	32 (8.2)	-	1596	4.1	Agree
12	Once I get settlement, I will start my business	161 (41.2)	176 (45.0)	33 (8.4)	21 (5.4)	-	1650	4.2	Agree

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TEE= Traditional Entrepreneurship Education

Test of Hypotheses

Ho1: Mentorship has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

Table 6: Correlation between Mentorship and Entrepreneurial Intention

		Mentorship	Entrepreneurial Intention
Mentorship	Pearson	1	.769**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	391	391
Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson	.769**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	391	391

Source: SPSS 30.0

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

The table 6 above shows that the P-Value of 0.000 is greater than the calculated P-value < 0.05 of significance ($r = 0.769$; $p < 0.05$; $n = 391$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected; implying that mentorship has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

Ho2: Skill acquisition has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

Table 7: Correlation between Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurial Intention

		Skill Acquisition	Entrepreneurial Intention
Skill Acquisition	Pearson	1	.794**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	391	391
Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson	.794**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	391	391

Source: SPSS 30.0

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

The table 7 above shows that the P-Value of 0.000 is greater than the calculated P-value < 0.05 of significance ($r = 0.794$; $p < 0.05$; $n = 391$). The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis; implying that skill acquisition has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

Ho3: Settlement has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

Table 8: Correlation between Settlement and Entrepreneurial Intention

		Settlement	Entrepreneurial Intention
Settlement	Pearson	1	.812**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	391	391
Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson	.812**	1

Intention	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	391	391

Source: SPSS 30.0

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

The table 7 above shows that the P-Value of 0.000 is greater than the calculated P-value < 0.05 of significance ($r = 0.812$; $p < 0.05$; $n = 391$). The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis; implying that settlement has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state.

DISCUSSION

Table 6 showed that mentorship has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. Mentorship is a very essential aspect of traditional entrepreneurship education as seen in question item 4, where the majority of the respondents ticked agreed. This is in consonance with Adeagbo (2023), which opined that mentorship is deemed essential for facilitating learning, enhancing self-efficacy, and providing support in entrepreneurship. Apprentices come from different background with varying characters, attitude, personalities, etc., which may not be in agreement with what is expected of them. It is therefore essential that they get into a relationship with a more experienced person that will guide them through a process of reformation leading to their personal and professional growth in their chosen career. On question item 5, most respondents agreed that mentorship helps them to learnt from their master's experience. Okolie *et al.*, (2020), affirmed that mentorship accords the opportunity of learning directly from an experienced person. Drawing from the master's experience creates confidence in the apprentice and makes his journey to being an entrepreneur less erroneous. In this relationship, apprentices are not left to figure things out alone- the master guides them and offer insights from years of experience in the business. It allows them to acquire decades of data, trial, and error without paying the personal cost of making those mistakes themselves. This is the fastest way for apprentices to accelerate their own growth in their chosen line of trade or craft. Seeing a business built through the eyes of someone who has already done it makes starting a business feel realistic rather than risky. Agbonna (2022), noted that traditional entrepreneurship education is a fundamental instrument for supporting entrepreneurship, which is in line with respondents' response on question item 6 where the majority strongly agreed that they consider starting up a business after their training. Mentors break down massive business challenges into small manageable steps; talk about their past business losses thereby reducing the paralyzing fear of failing and increase the entrepreneurial intention of apprentices.

Results in table 7 showed that skill acquisition has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. Question item 7 revealed that traditional entrepreneurship education is basically aimed at imparting skills for the purpose of self-reliance. Bako *et al.*, (2022) affirmed that skill acquisition is the brain behind entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. When acquired, the skill helps to transform theoretical knowledge into physical or digital economic value; boosts self-efficacy; and directly increases apprentice's entrepreneurial intention. In agreement, respondents on question item 8 and 9 agreed that traditional entrepreneurship education empowers them with skill to run a business and acquiring the right skill makes me consider starting a business, respectively. More so, Eneh *et al.*, (2023), agreed that traditional entrepreneurship education imparts participants with skills and knowledge of practicing their trade and these skills increase productivity in business for those living in an informal sector of the economy. Acquiring a skill through traditional entrepreneurship education permanently shifts apprentice's economic status from a job seeker to a job creator.

Result in table 8 indicated that settlement has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. In question item 10 respondents strongly agreed that settlement is essential in traditional entrepreneurship education. At the successfully end of the training program, the master provides the graduating apprentice with the seed capital, shop space, or inventory needed to commence their own independent business. In consonant, Nwaubani (2020), noted that apprentices are ‘blessed’ by their masters, after successfully completing their apprenticeship. The study went further to state that ‘blessed’ may come in a way of capital or stock to start up some business activities. Furthermore, Chukwu *et al.*, (2024), revealed that reward can be in form of money, business contacts, tools or any other resources and forms. Though it comes at the end of the education, yet contributes largely in determining how the apprentice behaves in the course of the training. It is a consoling factor and possess the ability of putting the apprentice right back on track during the period. Supporting the above statement, response on question item 11 showed that apprentices agreed that the settlement they will get at the end keeps them going. Without a settle-down package as it can also be called, the entire apprenticeship lifecycle breaks down; it deteriorates into a system of cheap, exploitative labour that leaves trainees with skills but no resources to deploy them. Settlement becomes necessary to keep the system functional and bridges the gap between skill acquisition and commencing a business.

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of entrepreneurship has always been a thing of discussion. A question like “can entrepreneurial skill be taught” or “can it be learnt” has been an issue in this field of study. It was on this premise that this study, effect of traditional entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state was carried out. The results of the finding showed that mentorship has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. This aligns with the finding of Adeagbo (2023) which revealed that a significantly strong positive correlation was found to exist between mentorship and entrepreneurship intention. Also, Skill acquisition has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. More so, settlement has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial intention of apprentices in Enugu state. This implies that traditional entrepreneurship education is an effective tool in igniting entrepreneurial intentions of apprentices in Enugu state. Following the foregoing, this study recommends that mentors should improve in their mentoring skills; ensure active participation of apprentices in every activity; and stick to settlement agreement once an apprentice has meritoriously served the master (Akande, 2020).

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