

The Influence of Entrepreneurship Education on Job Creation among University Students in Delta State: Gender Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the influence of entrepreneurship education on job creation among university students in Delta State, with particular attention to students' gender. The study employed a descriptive design and used the entire population of 214 students, but only 190 responses were deemed usable, yielding a sample of 190. Reliability was established through a pilot test, which yielded a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient of 0.76. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The study established that the entrepreneurship education students receive significantly motivates them to pursue self-employment and increases their awareness of business opportunities in Delta State. The study also found that female students are more motivated to become self-employed and create jobs after graduation. The following recommendations were made: Entrepreneurship Education should be made a compulsory skill-based course in the faculty of education. Encourage group enterprise by forming mixed-gender teams to promote collaboration, diversity, and shared leadership.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, Education, Job Creation, Employability, Entrepreneurship Education

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary global economic agenda emphasises entrepreneurship as a critical driver of economic prosperity, innovation, and sustainable development, particularly in emerging markets. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the primary products of entrepreneurial activity and a significant employer worldwide, underscore their crucial role in poverty alleviation and community development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to encourage sustainable economic growth, full employment, and decent work for all (Abulude & Ogunjemilua, 2025). This will be made realistic through the introduction of Entrepreneurship Education in post-primary and tertiary education.

Entrepreneurship education (EE) has been widely accepted as a strategic intervention to foster this vital economic force. EE is the process of equipping students with the information, abilities, and drive needed to succeed as entrepreneurs across a variety of contexts, including educational institutions and disciplines, especially social studies and business education. Its specific goals include encouraging critical human traits such as creativity, risk-taking, initiative, and responsibility; increasing awareness of self-employment; and teaching the business skills necessary to start a new business. EE aims to develop students into proactive economic activists by empowering them to recognise opportunities and turn ideas into value in a society that is struggling to employ graduates from higher institutions.

Youth unemployment remains one of the most pressing issues in Nigeria. With an unemployment rate exceeding 33% (The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2020), the challenges faced by young Nigerians in securing stable employment have reached critical levels. The demographic shift of a growing youth population, combined with limited job opportunities in the formal sector, has exacerbated this issue. In response to this, EE has been seen as a potential solution, particularly in fostering self-employment, job creation, and the diversification of the Nigerian economy (Ajayi & Ayodele, 2015). Strong EE is desperately needed in Nigeria, where youth

unemployment remains consistently high despite high levels of formal school enrolment. Even though the national youth unemployment rate has increased significantly, underemployment and the lack of formal employment prospects for recent graduates remain major structural issues. On this basis, the study will investigate the influence of entrepreneurship education on Job creation among students in Delta State and assess this influence by gender. The Nigerian government has mandated the implementation of EE across all tertiary institutions, recognising the systemic failure of the traditional labour market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nigeria's youth unemployment crisis is caused by structural issues in the country's economy, including a lack of diversification, dependence on oil, and underdeveloped Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). The majority of unemployed people are young adults aged 15 to 34, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2020). This group is especially at risk in Delta State, which struggles to create jobs outside of the oil industry despite its oil wealth. The state's reliance on oil has hindered the expansion of other industries crucial to economic diversification, such as manufacturing, technology, and agriculture. Many young people have little choice but to take unofficial work or start their own businesses due to the dearth of opportunities in the formal sector. By equipping young people with the information and skills needed to launch and grow enterprises, entrepreneurship education plays a vital role in fostering economic growth. This curriculum emphasises creativity, risk-taking, leadership, and resilience- all essential traits of successful entrepreneurs- in addition to educating students about financial management and company planning using innovative strategies (Okojie, 2017; Obisanya, 2021).

Entrepreneurship Education and Job Creation

Entrepreneurship Education (EE) is a course of study that equips the recipient to start and run a profitable firm. Magasi (2022) opined that EE encourages an entrepreneurial culture, behaviour, attitude, skills, managerial aptitude, and a desire for self-reliance that help change people's perspectives. Students receive specialised instruction in entrepreneurship education to develop knowledge, concepts, and managerial skills and talents for self-employment rather than employment (Osuala, 2020; Arunaye & Uwaifo, 2025). According to Dubey (2017), entrepreneurship education promotes invention, creativity, and the visualisation of ideas rather than only teaching people how to launch a firm. This course helps to shape the learners' personalities while also allowing them to grow in every aspect. This corroborates Oguntimehin and Olaniran (2017), who argue that entrepreneurship education is any method of imparting knowledge that aims to enable people to generate actual wealth in the economy, thereby promoting the country's overall development. As discovered in the study by Oguntimehin and Olaniran (2017), conducted at Ogun State University using a sample of 609 and employing t-tests and ANOVA for analysis. The study revealed a significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and students' intentions to start a business after graduation.

Uwannah, Uwannah, and Ojelabi (2018) conducted a study at Badcock University examining how exposure to entrepreneurship education influences students' employability after school. The study employed linear regression analysis. The sample used was 330, and the reliability was 0.73. The study found a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' employability. This implies that EE is a source of job creation for students after school.

Adelowo and Henrico (2025) investigated entrepreneurial inclination and practice among fresh graduates using a large-scale, cross-sectional, structured questionnaire administered to National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members representing 10 states in Nigeria. The study sample was 6,296 and also represented the entire population. The study further established that entrepreneurial interest and practice were consistently increasing over the years. Additionally, the practice of entrepreneurship increases during the NYSC period, indicating a strong will to create personal job opportunities.

Boahemaah et al (2020) investigated entrepreneurship intentions of undergraduate. The study established that entrepreneurial education, the right attitude, and behaviour have a positive influence on students' and graduates' entrepreneurial intentions after school. This implies that products of universities are more likely to create jobs for themselves because of the strong foundation laid for them in universities or higher institutions.

Gender and job creation among university students.

In Nigeria, entrepreneurship education has developed into a calculated reaction to economic diversification and youth unemployment. Universities and polytechnics in Delta State have embraced this change in education by incorporating courses on entrepreneurship into their undergraduate curricula. However, as this change takes place, concerns about how gender affects students' adoption and efficacy of such teaching have become more pertinent. The overall effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in generating competent and independent graduates may be impacted by gender-based differences in perception, participation, or results.

Abiodun and Oyejoke (2017) examine the connection between Ogun State-owned colleges' students' exposure to entrepreneurship education and their desire to pursue careers in entrepreneurship. The sample of the study was 609 from 7382 students. T-test and ANOVA were used to analyse the findings. The study established that students' desire to start their own businesses was not significantly influenced by their gender. This is a product of gender equality, which holds that a woman can perform any task that a man can.

Loko, Mbam, and Loko. (2023) carried out a study on entrepreneurship education and job creation in universities in Benue State; the population consisted of 22773 graduates, while the sample of respondents used was 1139. The study used a descriptive survey design. The statistical tools used for the bio-data and research questions were percentages and mean scores. The hypothesis was tested using the chi-square and t-test. The study found that there is a strong association between graduates' gender and employment creation driven by entrepreneurship education. The study found that opportunities for entrepreneurship skills are greater for female students than for male students. Furthermore, female graduates are better at setting up business goals than their male counterparts.

Adelowo and Henrico (2025) used a large-scale, cross-sectional, structured questionnaire to gather information from members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) across 10 states in Nigeria to examine entrepreneurial tendencies and practices among recent graduates. 6,296 people were included in the study's sample, which is representative of the total population. The study established that, gender-wise, entrepreneurial practice showed a negative yet significant association ($r = 2.024$, $p < .01$). This is an obvious sign that risk aversion is common among women and that they may not be inclined to create a job for themselves in the future.

While entrepreneurship education is designed to equip students with the skills to become job creators, the lack of sufficient empirical evidence on how well these programs contribute to job creation in Delta State remains a significant gap. Another gap in this study is determining how entrepreneurship education affects Delta State University students' ability to create jobs by gender.

This study's theoretical framework is founded on the convergence of Human Capital Theory (HCT) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). This dual-lens methodology facilitates a thorough comprehension of both the capacity to embark and the motivation to do so. Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) provides the fundamental rationale for the entrepreneur's "resource-readiness." Within the framework of this research, (Entrepreneurship Education) and (job creation). Entrepreneurship education signifies the reservoir of knowledge that mitigates the perceived risks associated with entry. HCT posits that individuals possessing elevated specialised knowledge are more adept at "opportunity recognition," the cognitive process of discerning a viable business gap that others may overlook. Nevertheless, knowledge by itself does not ensure action.

This study integrates the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) to reconcile the disparity between capability and behaviour. Human Capital furnishes the "tools," whereas TPB elucidates the "trigger." High human capital enhances an individual's sense of agency, thereby reinforcing their Entrepreneurial Intention. This study transcends a unidimensional perspective of entrepreneurship by integrating these two theories. It posits that the Influence of Entrepreneurship Education on Job Creation among University Students in Delta State: Gender Perspective is not solely a consequence of an individual's knowledge (Human Capital), but rather how that knowledge influences their internal disposition and perceived agency (Planned Behaviour), ultimately leading to the decision to initiate a venture.

Research Questions

1. How does entrepreneurship education influence job creation among students at Delta State University?

2. How does entrepreneurship education influence job creation among students at Delta State University based on gender?

Hypothesis:

Students' responses to how entrepreneurship education influences job creation at Delta State University will not differ by gender.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive design to explain the influence of entrepreneurship education on job creation among students at Delta State University, Abraka. The population of this study, which also served as the sample, consisted of all year two, three, and four social studies education and business education students in the Faculty of Education at Delta State University, Abraka, who were enrolled in Entrepreneurship Education, except for the first-year students making a total of 214 students, 82 students from Social Studies Education and 132 students from Business Education. In the end, only 190 respondents' questionnaires were used in the study. The questionnaire was divided into sections A and B. Section A contains the biodata of the respondents, while Section B contains statements designed to gather information from respondents, titled "Entrepreneurship Education and Job Creation Among Students in Delta State University Questionnaire (EEJCASDSUQ)." Reliability was established through a pilot test, yielding a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of 0.76. The collected data were analysed using mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS

Research Questions 1

How does entrepreneurship education influence job creation among students at Delta State University?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the influence of entrepreneurship education on students' job creation

S/N	ITEMS	SA F (%)	A F (%)	DbF (%)	SD F (%)	MEAN
1	The Entrepreneurship education I received has motivated me to become self-employed	161(84.74)	25(13.16)	3(1.58)	1(0.53)	3.82
2	I have developed practical skills through entrepreneurship education training that enable me to produce for sale	55(28.95)	105(55.26)	28(14.74)	2(1.05)	3.12
3	Entrepreneurship education has increased my awareness of business opportunities in Delta State, and this has made it possible for me to create jobs	80(42.11)	58(30.50)	49(25.79)	3(1.58)	3.13
4	My university provides adequate support for students who want to start businesses, and I benefited from it	22(11.58)	45(23.68)	25(13.16)	98(51.58)	1.95
5	Entrepreneurship education has helped me develop innovative thinking, which is useful in the services I render.	63(33.16)	70(36.84)	41(21.58)	16(8.42)	2.95

Item 1, show that 161 students representing 84.74% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 25 students representing 13.16% of the sampled population agreed, 3 students representing 1.58% of the sampled population

disagreed, and 1 student representing 0.53% of the sampled population strongly disagreed that the Entrepreneurship Education they received has motivated them to become self-employed.

Item 2, on the table, also shows that 55 students representing 28.95% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 105 students representing 55.26% agreed, 28 students representing 14.74 of the sampled population disagreed, and 2 students representing 1.05% strongly disagreed, that they have developed practical skills through entrepreneurship training that enable them to produce for sale.

Item 3, the table revealed that 80 students representing 42.11% strongly agreed, 58 students representing 30.50% of the sampled population agreed, 49 students representing 25.79% of the population disagreed, and 3 students representing 1.58% of the sampled population strongly disagreed, that Entrepreneurship Education increased their awareness of business opportunities in Delta State, and this has made them job creators.

Item 4, on the table revealed that 22 students representing 11.58% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 45 students representing 23.68% of the sampled population agreed, 23 representing 13.16% of the sampled population disagreed, and 98 students representing 51.58% of the sampled population strongly disagreed, that the university provided adequate support for students who wants to start businesses and they benefited from it.

Furthermore, item 5 showed that 63 students representing 33.16% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 70 students representing 36.84% of the sampled population agreed, 41 students representing 21.58% of the sampled population disagreed, and 16 students representing 8.42% of the sampled population strongly disagreed, that Entrepreneurship Education has helped them develop innovative thinking useful in the service rendered.

From the analyses above, it can be observed that the mean for all the items on how Entrepreneurship Education influences job creation is 3.82, 3.12, 3.13, 1.93, and 2.95, respectively. All the means are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50, except for item 4, which has a mean of 1.95.

Research Question 2

How does entrepreneurship education influence job creation among students at Delta State University based on gender?

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage, and mean showing the rating of students on how entrepreneurship education influences job creation among students at the Delta State University based on gender.

S/ N	ITEMS	MALE					FEMALE				
		SA F(%)	A F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	MEAN	SA F(%)	A F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	MEAN
1	The Entrepreneurship education I received has motivated me to become self-employed	56 (29.47)	13 (6.84)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.81	52 (27.37)	36 (18.95)	31 (16.32)	2 (1.05)	3.14
2	I have developed practical skills through entrepreneurship education training that enable me to produce for sale	14 (7.37)	40 (21.05)	14 (7.37)	1 (0.53)	2.97	38 (20.0)	67 (35.26)	14 (7.37)	2 (1.05)	3.17
3	Entrepreneurship education has increased my awareness of business opportunities in Delta State, and this has made me offer employment	27 (14.07)	21 (11.05)	18 (9.47)	2 (1.05)	3.03	52 (27.37)	36 (18.95)	32 (16.84)	1 (0.53)	3.15

4	My university provides adequate support for students who want to start businesses, and I benefited from it	11 (5.79)	13 (6.84)	11 (5.79)	34 (17.89)	2.02	22 (11.58)	52 (27.37)	40 (21.05)	7 (3.68)	2.41
5	Entrepreneurship education has helped me develop innovative thinking, useful in the service I render.	22 (11.58)	27 (14.07)	13 (6.84)	7 (3.68)	2.93	38 (20.0)	67 (35.26)	14 (7.37)	2 (0.53)	3.17

Item 1: The table showed that 56 male students representing 29.47% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 13 male students representing 6.84% of the sampled population agreed, no male student representing 0.0% disagreed, and 0 student representing 0.0% strongly disagreed that the entrepreneurship education they received had motivated them to become self-employed. The table shows that 52 female students representing 27.37% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 36 female students representing 18.95% of the sampled population agreed, 31 female students representing 16.32% of the sampled population disagreed, and 2 students representing 1.05% strongly disagreed, that the entrepreneurship education they received has motivated them to become self-employed.

Item 2: The table revealed that 14 male students representing 7.37% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 40 male students representing 21.05% of the sampled population agreed, 14 students representing 7.37% of the sampled population disagreed and 1 student representing 0.53% of the sampled population strongly disagreed that they developed practical skills through entrepreneurship training that enable them to produce for sale. The table shows that 38 female students representing 20.0% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 67 female students representing 35.26% of the sampled population agreed, 14 female students presenting 7.37% of the sampled population, and 2 female students representing 1.05% strongly disagreed that they developed practical skills through entrepreneurship training that enabled them to produce for sale.

Item 3: on the table Showed that 27 male students representing 14.07% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 21 male students representing 11.05% of the sampled population agreed, 18 male students representing 9.47% of the sampled population disagreed and 2 male students representing 1.05% of the sampled population strongly disagreed that entrepreneurship education increased their awareness of business opportunities in Delta State and this has made them job creators. In addition, the table revealed that 52 female students representing 27.37% of the sampled population strong agreed, 36 female students representing 18.95% of the sampled population agreed, 32 female students representing 16.84% of the sampled population disagreed and 2 female students representing the sampled population of 1.05% strongly disagreed that entrepreneurship education increased their awareness of business opportunities in Delta state and has made them job creators.

Furthermore, item 4, table showed that 11 male students representing 5.79% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 13 male students representing 6.84% of the sampled population agreed, 11 students representing 5.79% of the sampled population disagreed and 34 students representing 17.89% strongly disagreed that the university provided adequate support for students who want to start businesses and they benefited from it. While that of the female showed that 22 female students representing 11.58% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 52 Female students representing 27.37% of the same population agreed, 40 female students representing 21.05% the sampled population disagreed, and 7 female students representing 3.68% the sampled population strongly disagreed that their university provided adequate support for students who want to start businesses and they benefited from it.

Lastly, for item 5, the table showed that 22 male students representing the 11.58% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 27 males representing 14.07% agreed, 13 male students representing the 6.84% of the sampled population disagreed, and 7 male students representing 3.68% strongly disagreed that Entrepreneurship Education has helped them develop innovative thinking useful in the service I render. While the table for their counterpart revealed that 41 female Students representing 21.58% of the sampled population strongly agreed, 43 female students representing 22.63% agreed, 25 female students representing 13.16% of the sampled population

disagreed, and 12 female students representing 6.32% of the sampled population strongly disagreed that Entrepreneurship Education has helped them develop motivating thinking useful in the service I render.

The means for all items on how Entrepreneurship Education influences job creation are 3.83, 2.97, 3.03, 2.02, and 2.93 for males, and 3.14, 3.17, 3.15, 2.41 and 3.17 for females, respectively, for items 1 to 5. All means are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50, except for Item 4, which has a mean of 2.41 for females. This shows that a high percentage of the findings are in favour of the female students, with the exception of item 4, which is in favour of the male.

Hypothesis: Students' responses to how entrepreneurship education influences job creation at Delta State University will not differ by gender.

Table 3: Independent sample t-test on students' responses to how entrepreneurship education influences job creation among students at Delta State University based on gender

Gender	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Sig.	Decision
Male	69	2.96	4.64	188	2.08	1.98	0.04	Reject: H_{03}
Female	121	3.01	4.92					

Table 6 showed that $t_{cal} = 2.08$, $df = 188$, and $t_{tab} = 1.98$. Therefore, since $t_{cal} > t_{tab}$ is greater than $P < 0.05$, it thus means that students differ in their responses to how entrepreneurship education influences job creation at Delta State University by gender. The analysis led to the rejection of the null hypothesis at the 0.05 significance level.

DISCUSSION

The findings from research question one revealed the influence of entrepreneurship education on student job creation at Delta State University. The study's findings established that the entrepreneurship education students receive has been a significant motivator for them to pursue self-employment, heightening their awareness of business opportunities in Delta State and empowering them to create their own ventures and generate employment opportunities. Students have developed practical skills through entrepreneurship education training that enable them to produce for sale. The study further revealed that entrepreneurship education has helped students develop innovative thinking useful for service delivery, and that the university's business incubation programs, mentorship, and resources have been instrumental in helping students launch successful startups. The study's findings aligned with those of Dubey (2017) and Oguntimehin and Olaniran (2017), who argued that EE promotes the visualisation of ideas, creativity, and inventions, helping students transition into business after school and realise their business intentions. Furthermore, Uwannah, Uwannah and Ogelabi (2018) study also corroborated this finding. The findings established a positive relationship between EE and students' job creation, implying that the education students receive creates job opportunities after graduation. Adelowo and Henrico (2025) and Arunaye and Uwaifo (2025) studies confirmed that EE and entrepreneurial interest and practice consistently increased over the years. This is as a result of knowledge, talent, and managerial skills developed, which have enhanced self-employment.

The results of research question two show the impact of entrepreneurship education on job creation among male and female students. The findings established that the EE students received have motivated them to become self-employed, in favour of female students. The study further established that students developed practical skills through entrepreneurship education training that enable them to produce for sale. This is also in favour of female students. The study also found that EE has increased students' awareness of business opportunities in Delta State, empowering them to create jobs. This finding also favours female students. EE has helped students develop innovative thinking useful for service delivery, in favour of female students. The study's findings established that entrepreneurship education significantly impacts job creation among university students, with a notable emphasis on female students, and that this impact appears to be less pronounced among male students than among female students. The study's findings confirmed those of Loko, Mbam, and Loko (2023), namely that

opportunities for entrepreneurship skills are greater among female students than among male students. This implies that female graduates are good at setting up businesses and business goals than their male counterparts. Furthermore, Adelowo and Henrico (2025) findings contradicted the findings of this study. Their study showed a significant negative association between entrepreneurial practice and female students; hence, there was evidence of risk aversion among women, which might negatively affect their future inclination to create jobs for themselves. Finally, Abiodun and Oyejoke (2017) found that students' desire to start a business after graduation from university was not significantly influenced by gender.

Furthermore, the results of the hypothesis test show that students' responses to how entrepreneurship education influences job creation at Delta State University differ by gender. The analysis led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This aligns with research conducted by Loko, Mbam, and Loko (2023), who reported differences in responses to how entrepreneurship education influences job creation by gender.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, entrepreneurial education significantly impacts the employment creation of university students. By giving students, the skills, information, and mindset they need to launch their own companies, entrepreneurship education enables them to create jobs for others as well as for themselves. Consequently, this promotes innovation, progress, and economic prosperity. Incorporating successful entrepreneurship education programs can have a long-lasting effect on job creation and economic growth, as universities continue to play a crucial role in forming the next generation of entrepreneurs. Finally, the study established that female students are more inclined toward innovation, incorporate entrepreneurial skills, and have a stronger desire to create jobs than their counterparts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Entrepreneurship education should be made a compulsory skill-based course in the faculty of education.
2. Encourage group enterprise by forming mixed-gender teams to promote collaboration, diversity, and shared leadership.
3. Offer free or cheap legal tax advice for student businesses.
4. Projects should be assessed not only for profitability but also for gender inclusivity and community impact.

Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations. It should be noted that only 190 students from one university participated in the study. It is possible that this will prevent the results of this study from being applied to a broader context. Only a questionnaire was utilised in the study. Response bias is a problem in questionnaire administration. Researchers in the future would do well to combine questionnaires with other methods, such as focus groups, in-depth interviews, and observational studies, to reduce the possibility of response bias.

Suggestion for Further Research

It is suggested that more research on the same study title should be conducted using more students and universities.

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