EFFECT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
SCHEMES OF THE OSUN STATE GOVERNMENT ON
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

AKANDE, O. OLUSOLA & ALABI, EZEKIEL
Department of Management and Accounting, Faculty of Management Sciences, Ladoke Akintola
University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Nigeria & Department of Business Administration and
Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria

ABSTRACT
This study examined the effects of Entrepreneurial Skills Development Schemes of the Osun State
Government on youth employment. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 160
respondents through multistage sampling method which consists of stratified, purposive and
random sampling. Multiple regression was used to analyze the data collected in order to
determine the effects of independent variables, entrepreneurial dimensions on dependent
variable (youth employment). Result revealed that entrepreneurial skills dimensions have
significant effects on youth employment. The study also revealed that personal and business
operation skills respectively have high beta score than other dimensions with youth employment.
It was concluded that predictor variables namely (Management, Technical, Business Operation
and Personal) is 70.6% variance of youth employment. The paper therefore, recommended that
Osun State government should enhance the level of developing entrepreneurial skills among the
youth in the state by investing more on the schemes, because if it is higher, enterprise
sustainability will be achieved leading to job creation for the youth.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Skills, Employment, Entrepreneur

Background to the Study
The Nigerian economy is characterized by mirage of problems which has constituted a sleepless
night to developmental oriented governance. The most disturbing thing in the country is the
menace of unemployment (Safiriyu and Njogo, 2012). Nigeria as a country has numerous
business and investment potentials due to the abundant, vibrant and dynamic human and natural
resources it possesses. These human and natural resources notwithstanding, Nigeria is still one of
the poorest countries in the world and has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in
sub-Saharan Africa, despite its alleged strong economic growth (Anyadike, Emeh and Ukah,
2012).

The youth can be considered as the strength and backbone of any country. They are the future
hope in most of all spheres of economic development which a nation aspires to attain. Youths
account for about 65% of the Nigeria labour force and are expected to contribute about 73% of
the Nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (NDE, 2009). Youth development and their
economic empowerment are important stages in life for building the human capital that allows young people to avoid joblessness. The human capital found in youth is a vital determinant of long term growth that a nation can invest on. However, making sure that youths are well prepared for their future is greatly important to the course of entrepreneurial skills development and jobs creation.

According to ILO (2007), the increase in the number of youths in secondary and tertiary education is a positive development. This expanding pool of young graduates cannot, however, be accommodated by the labour market. As a result of this decline in jobs and rise in the number of the unemployed, young people are forced into the informal sector of the economy. Factors which always come to mind when discussing unemployment crises in Nigeria are traced to the long period of instability in the socio-economic and political circles. Other factors being held responsible are poor infrastructures, inaccessibility to finance among others but no serious attention has been directed to poor entrepreneurial skills among our entrepreneurs.

Statement of the Problem
Youth unemployment is a global problem that governments all over the world are contending with. As a result, there is an increasing demand for entrepreneurs in the world today. Both developed and developing countries are trying to lure entrepreneurs who can create their own wealth and create jobs for others with ideas, skills and capital in order to enhance economic growth (Olaoye, 2003). The level of unemployment in Nigeria seems to have continued to exacerbate despite various measures and strategies that Nigerian governments have adopted over the years.

At the level of Osun State, recent census figure released by the National Population Commission, NPC (2007) put the population of the state as 3,423,535 of which 42,086 are unemployed. The break down is 23,246 male and 18,840 female without employment. In a bid to reduce youth unemployment in Osun State, very much has been done in the provision of finance, infrastructures and enabling business environment among others but as much as they have been doing, very little have been achieved because the youths have not been developed in line with necessary skills. Their potentials have not been fully developed to the level of creating jobs for others. Literatures suggest that entrepreneurial skills or competencies in the youth have not been developed to serve as sufficient and most critical requirement for success in business. The extent to which entrepreneurial skills development programmes have impacted on youth employment is worthy of exploration. The current study, therefore, attempted to examine the effect of entrepreneurial skills development schemes of the Osun State government on youth unemployment problems in the State.

Literature Review
Concept of Entrepreneurship
Entrepreneurship is a mindset. It is the art of finding profitable solutions to problems. Acadia Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship ACSBE (2005) defined entrepreneurship, as the ability to make an informed decision and take responsibility for the consequences of the action emanating from that decision (risk-taking). Every successful entrepreneur has been someone who has been able to identify a problem and come up with a solution to it before someone else does it. Entrepreneurship is more than simply “starting a business”. It is a process through which individuals identify opportunities, allocate resources and create value. This creation of value is often through the identification of opportunities for an improved change (Solomon, et al, 2002). From the view of Akande (2010), entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur which is seen as one who undertakes innovations with finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods, hence entrepreneurs see “problems” as “opportunities”.

**Entrepreneurial Skills**

Wickham (1998) and Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) define entrepreneurial skills as knowledge or competence which is demonstrated by action. Skills are abilities to perform in a certain way. Synonymous with skills are the words competencies and abilities. Entrepreneurial skills are the basic skills required for a sound-starting, development, financing and marketing of home business enterprise (Lyve, 2005). They are qualities or attributes required of a person to start and successfully manage a business in a competitive environment. A literature search on skills, competencies or abilities revealed that skills can be classified into four categories namely personal, technical, business operations and management skills.

**Theoretical Framework**

Various theories on entrepreneurship have provided insight into entrepreneurial behavior. It is germane that we look at those theories in order to reconcile them. Each theory has classified entrepreneurship according to its interest in studying personal characteristics, opportunities, management or the need for adapting an existing venture and assessing personal qualities. These different theories on entrepreneurship in this study are highlighted as follows.

**The Classical Theory (Acting and Managing)**

The classical view, through the origin of entrepreneur, provides an insight into the fact which makes a distinction between a manager and an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur is known as a person who bears risks and uncertainty in order to make innovations and originality. This definition takes in the notion of undertaking a venture which has a component of risk and requires some creativity. An important feature of entrepreneurship appears to be the process of doing business rather than just owning a business venture (Herbert and Link, 1982 and Muhammad and Andow, 2010).
According to Schumpeter (1934), the key element of entrepreneurship lies in the creativity of the individual and may not involve ownership at all. Innovation and creativity are the key basis underlying the classical thought and research. Entrepreneurship is the process of creating an opportunity which sees style of management that sparks innovation (Peterson, 1985). Here, innovation is seen as upsetting activities having brunt on established ways of assessment. The idea behind this is that, as an entrepreneur, you must be creative and innovative at all times because of the dynamism in the business environment.

The Management Theory of Entrepreneurship
As a matter of fact, entrepreneurship draws heavily from management theory. It follows that the management school sees an entrepreneur as a person who plans, organizes a business and bears risk in order to make profit. Entrepreneur is that person who supervises controls and provides direction to a business venture (Mill, 1984).
This school deals with technical aspects of management and believes that entrepreneurs can be trained and their entrepreneurial skills be developed as well. The school believes that effective training in skills development can help improve individual entrepreneur’s management capacity through the development of rational, analytic and cause-and-effect orientation.
Many entrepreneurial ventures fail each year. This can be attributed to poor decision making, wrong marketing strategy, and financial management problem. This school believes that entrepreneurship can be targeted, therefore the need to identify the specific functions concerned and provides appropriate training. Entrepreneurship is related to function of business plan, start-up, managing growth and development (Roberts, 1987). It goes further that analyzing investment opportunities, acquisition of resources, developing a realistic business plan and working towards the achievement of the organizational goals are other managerial functions of an entrepreneur.

The Psychological Characteristic Theory of Entrepreneurship
Human behaviors begin from the desire to satisfy ones needs. Here, emphasis is on personality factors; the school believes that entrepreneurs have a distinct values and attitude towards work in particular and life in general. The behaviour of an individual is therefore, determined by his/her attitudes, beliefs, drives, needs, and values (Manoma and Aruwa, 2008).
McClelland (1961) occupies a prominent position in the Psychological School with his theory of Achievement Motivation. He links entrepreneurship with a psychological need for achievement. He portends further that the development of entrepreneurship depends on the strength of a clearly defined psychological variable which is the need for achievement. McClelland’s work and those of his associates have added a new dimension of great importance in the study of entrepreneurship.
Hagen’s (1963) theory has much in common with McClelland’s. Not only is Hagen’s theory a mediating psychological explanation but his creative personality is an individual characterized by a high need for achievement, order and autonomy. Hagen’s theory believes that a key factor in
economic development is the presence, in a society of a considerable number of individuals possessed of creative or innovational personalities. Such individuals are people who are willing and able to initiate technological change and adapt the capital intensive techniques of modern industry to the conditions of underdeveloped areas which typically have little capital and an over abundant labour.

Furthermore, people who have similar characteristics as entrepreneurs do, will have a superior predisposition to perform entrepreneurial activities than people who do not possess such characteristic (Lachman, 1980). Cunningham and Lischeron (2002) recognize three basic personality traits namely; Personal value, such as honesty, duty, responsibility, and ethical behaviour, risk-taking tendency and the need for achievement. Studies of entrepreneurs have shown that many are exhibiting honesty, ethical and socially responsible and hardworking compared to the general population (Cunningham and Lischeron, 2002). In conclusion, it means that certain values and needs are preconditions for entrepreneurship.

**The Leadership Theory of Entrepreneurship**

This theory believes that the concern for getting task accomplished and the concern for the people doing the work is the basic measurement for the management of business. This measurement grows out of previous research which tried to describe the necessary aspect of leadership (Hemphill, 1959). The school proposes that entrepreneur must be skilled in bringing vision to reality. An entrepreneur must be ready and willing to lead, motivate, organize and direct people. This school is concerned with how a leader gets task accomplished and respond to the needs of people (Kao, 1989). Here, an entrepreneur is seen as a leader who depends on people to achieve organizational goals.

More importantly, leadership role is the centre for change and encouraging values. It also involves the skills of setting clear goals and creating opportunities (Kao, 1989). Leaders must be effective in developing and mentoring people. It has been suggested that effective leaders are those who create a vision and institutionalize it (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). In respect of the above position, an entrepreneur is more than a manager when it comes to mentoring because he is a leader as well (Muhammad and Andow, 2010).

**The Relationship between Entrepreneurial Skills Development and Youth Employment**

Employment is the life line of any economy. Human development will definitely be grossly undermined and impaired without employment (NEEDS document, 2004). How soon Nigeria sets to address the problems of mass unemployment, low productivity and poverty to a large extent depends on how speedily it is able to develop the millions of its labour force into a knowledgeable and skilled people needed for the required change (Okafor, 2011).

The entrepreneurial skills development programme, as an urgent and sure mechanism to youth unemployment is specifically designed for Nigerian youths, informing them about the world of
business and opportunities with skills to create their own businesses and successfully manage them. The relationship between entrepreneurship and employment has been shrouded with ambiguity. In the first place, a view in the literature has found that unemployment stimulates entrepreneurial activity, which has been termed as a refugee effect. In another development, a different view in the literature has identified that higher level of entrepreneurship reduces unemployment, which has been termed as a Schumpeter effect. Taken together, these two relationships result in considerable ambiguities about the relationship between unemployment and entrepreneurship (Audretsch, Carree and Thurik, 2001).

This study attempts to reduce this ambiguity by exploring the entrepreneurial skills training requirement for business owners who wish to establish, successfully manage their businesses and create more jobs in order to reduce youth unemployment.

Entrepreneurship development and entrepreneurial skills development have led to employment generation, growth of the economy and sustainable development. This is better explained with the conceptual model below.

The conceptual model for this study was drawn from the literature reviewed to examine the effects of entrepreneurial skills development schemes of the Osun State government on youth employment

**Conceptual Model**

*Figure 1: Research Model*
*Source: Designed by Researchers*

**Empirical Studies on the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Skills Development and Youth Employment**

Many studies have been carried out by researchers and scholars, addressing the relationship between entrepreneurial skills development and youth employment. Although, findings of entrepreneurial skills development and youth employment relationship vary across various researches, there are considerable empirical base of evidence that entrepreneurial skills development programmes have positive impact on youth employment.

Considering a study conducted by Muhammad and Andow (2010) which was basically a survey of small scale enterprises in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The result of the analysis conducted sequel to the study showed that in terms of turnover level, number of employees, market coverage and profit before tax, there is a positive significant difference between the pre and the post Entrepreneurial Skills Development Programmes (ESDP) performance of women entrepreneurs in Kaduna State. This meant that post ESDP’s period was remarkably better than the pre period in all the variables tested especially in employment generation.
In a similar study carried out by Idogho and Ainabor (2011), the study investigated the extent to which the entrepreneurship education introduced in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, has imparted in students, the entrepreneurial skills development needed to set up small scale businesses and manage them successfully, using Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi as a case study. The result of the analysis conducted showed that there is a positive correlation between the variables. That is, entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial skills development. In other words, it also found that students who received instructions in entrepreneurship education showed a greater desire to set up small scale businesses after graduation leading to more economic empowerment for youths.

Relating the study conducted by Muhammad and Andow (2010), to the one carried out by Idogho and Ainabor (2011), it therefore follows that for micro entrepreneurs irrespective of the nature of their business ideologies, key success factors such as good financial management, technology, oral communication and other skills are germane to the success of the organizations whether such micro enterprises are with international presence or only domesticated in Nigeria.

In a similar study conducted by Agbaeze and Kingsley (2013) on entrepreneurial development as a tool for poverty alleviation (unemployment reduction) in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, the analysis of these completed questionnaire and interview confirmed that majority of these respondents see their micro businesses as a way out of endless unemployment. Safiriyu and Njogo (2012) examined the impact of small scale and medium scale enterprises in the generation of employment in Lagos State. It was discovered that giving of right focus to the youth employment through entrepreneurship skills development and job creation reduces social vices in an economy. A study carried out by Nwaigburu and Eneogwe (2013) on the impact of accounting skills on entrepreneurship education for self reliance and sustainable development: A study of selected small scale business in Owerri Municipal, Imo State. The study showed that there is a correlation between entrepreneurship skills development as agent of transformation and creation of employment, reduction of rural-urban migration and serving as a training ground for managerial skill acquisition.

Research Hypothesis
In accordance with the previously stated conceptual framework and consistent with related literature, this study tested the hypothesis below;

H₀: Entrepreneurial skills development programmes have no effects on youth employment.

Model Specification
Mathematically, the model is expressed as follows;

\[ YE = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \mu \quad \text{eqn 1} \]

Where; \( YE \) = Youth Employment; \( X_1 \) = Personal Skills; \( X_2 \) = Business Operation Skills. 
(\( X_3 \) = Technical Skills; \( X_4 \) = Management Skills, \( \beta_0 \) = regression constant (intercept) 
\( \beta_1 \sim \beta_4 \) = regression coefficients, \( \mu \) = error term.)
Methodology
This study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure. This involved three sampling designs which include stratified, purposive and random sampling that was administered all in a progressively sequential manner, meaning that sampling is done at different stages of the sampling procedure. A stratified random sampling frame was constructed where three local government areas were being selected from each of the three (3) senatorial districts in Osun State. Each senatorial district has ten (10) local government areas. In all, nine (9) local governments were being selected for the purpose of this study.
Furthermore, micro entrepreneurs were being selected using purposive sampling method and a random sample was taken of micro entrepreneurs within the nine (9) local government areas. In all, 160 micro enterprises were being randomly picked and questionnaires distributed to their owner-managers. Samples were taken from these local government areas because majority of entrepreneurs sited their businesses more predominantly in towns and cities than the villages. Self administered structured questionnaire served as operational instrument to collect primary data from 160 respondents. Data collected were analyzed using multiple regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire
This scale was used to measure entrepreneurial skills and the responses were rated on the Likert-scale format, with answers ranging from 1-5 (1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The psychometric properties of the instrument were evaluated in terms of reliability. Cronbach’s alpha values were calculated for all multi-item variables. The entire instrument as well as the individual variables exceeded the minimum alpha of 0.60 and achieved high levels of reliability ranging from 0.86 to 0.90 (Van Der Wal, 2001).

Youth Employment Questionnaire
This scale was used to assess respondents’ perceived levels of employment generation among the youth. The scale was developed and validated by Van Dyk, Nel, Loedolff and Haasbroek (2001). The response format was in likert form with indicants ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). It consisted of 7 items and the scoring procedure indicates that high scores represent high perceived employment generation and low scores imply low perceived level of youth employment. The study reported Crombach reliability alpha of .91, while when correlated with employment level; the relationship was moderately high having being .77. The instrument was subjected to further revalidation in order to determine its soundness. Therefore, the reliability alpha coefficient obtained for the seven items in the current study was .78

Data Analysis and Discussion
Table 1a: Model Summary
In order to examine the effect of entrepreneurial skills development schemes of the Osun State government on the youth employment, multiple regression analysis technique was applied to test the data collected and the result presented on the tables 1a, 1b, and 1c shown above. From table 1a, it was observed that the identified entrepreneurial skills as a construct accounted for a total of 70.6% ($R^2=0.706$) of the youth employment created within the period of the study. The model was confirmed with an F value of $(4,155) = 93.107$ which was significant at 5% level of significance meaning that the model had the ability of capturing the contribution. This implies...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.840</td>
<td>.706</td>
<td>.699</td>
<td>1.397</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictor: (Constant), Personal Skills, BOP Skills, Technical Skills, Mgt Skills
b. Dependent Variable: Youth Employment

**Source:** Survey Data, 2015

**Table 1b: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Regression</td>
<td>726.947</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>181.737</td>
<td>93.107</td>
<td>.000b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>302.547</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1.952</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1029.494</td>
<td>159</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. **Dependent Variable:** Youth Employment
b. **Predictors:** (Constant), Personal Skills, BOP Skills, Technical Skills, Mgt Skill.
**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey, 2015. Statistical Significance at 5%

**Table 1c: Multiple Regression showing the Effects of Entrepreneurial Skills Development Schemes of the Osun State Government on Youth Employment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>20.596</td>
<td>5.158</td>
<td>3.993</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Skill.</td>
<td>.845</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bop Skills.</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.347</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techn. Skills.</td>
<td>1.047</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.449</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgt Skills.</td>
<td>1.365</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. **Dependent Variable:** Youth Employment. Statistical Significance at 5%
**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey, 2015.
that entrepreneurial skills jointly influence youth employment at 5% level; this result conform to Akande (2010); Odia and Odia (2013) and Kabiru and Yusuf (2014) who confirmed through the results of their studies that entrepreneurial skills development have positive effect on youth employment.

In determining the effect of the individual skills while holding the others constant, the study observed that technical skill accounted for a variation of 0.639 of the youth employment attained after entrepreneurial skills development programme and this was the lowest among other skills identified but significant at 5% level of significance with t-value of 7.893 the result suggested that the technical skills effect was not new or strange to the respondents during the entrepreneurial skills development programmes. Observation carried out revealed that the respondents had some of these technical skill dimensions from previous working experience, previous self employment, working in relative shops, parents having a business in the same field among others. This result is in line with Smith and Perks (2006) who agreed with the result of this study that micro business participants acquired technical skill prior to starting a business.

The effect of business operation skills on youth employment, while holding other factors constant, was observed to be positive. Business operation skills accounted for a variation of 1.047, $\beta= 0.449$ while the t-value is 10.203 and is significant at 5% level. This result showed that business operation skills such as record keeping, financial management, and interpersonal relation among others have effect on the youth employment. The sensitive nature of human being to financial management and control may have accounted for this development. It could also be an offshoot of human nature associated with finance which pays close attention to every amount spent and generated. The result is in line with Okwena and Okioma (2010); Akande (2010); Akande (2012); Mohd and Mohamed (2013) and Nwaigburu and Eneogwe(2013) who aligned with the result of this study that all business operation skill dimensions have positive effect on business performance (profit) and employment creation for the youth.

The effect of business management skills while holding other factors constant showed a variation of 0.845, $\beta=0.263$ while t-value is 5.833 at 5% level of significance confirming the model. It was indicated that business management skill was very crucial in piloting the affairs of the business. The effect, however, was highly significant to business fortune and as such, business owners should avail themselves of any opportunity that present itself for management training. This result therefore is in line with Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) that business management skills are crucial and therefore positively influence the employment creation.

In a related manner, personal skills indicated a positive effect on the employment creation for the youth. From table 1c, it could be observed that personal skills accounted for 1.365 variation in the creation of employment for the youth holding the effect of other variables constant and this was significant at 5% level of significances with a $\beta$ of 0.475 and a high t-value of 10.631 justifying its significance. This implies that personal skills if well developed could help sustain small business growth and thereby create more employment for others. This result has given a support to the studies carried out by Smith and Perks (2006) and Muhammad and Andow (2010).
that well developed personal skills could help small business sustainability and in the long run, generate more employment for others.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

In line with the empirical review of the present study about Entrepreneurial Skills Development Schemes and youth employment as well as the established facts by researchers that there is positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Skills Development Schemes and youth employment. The findings of present study revealed that entrepreneurial skills dimensions (Management, Technical, Business Operation and Personal) have significant effect on youth employment. The study revealed that personal and business operation skills respectively have high beta score than other dimensions with youth employment. Also, according to the results it can be concluded that predictor variables namely (Management, Technical, Business Operation and Personal) is 70.6% variance of youth employment. It is therefore, recommended that Osun State government should enhance the level of developing entrepreneurial skills among the youth in the state by investing more on the schemes, because if it is higher, enterprise sustainability will be achieved leading to job creation for the youth.

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