

## **Entrepreneurship Studies and Development of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the effect of entrepreneurial studies on the development of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to; determine the effect of entrepreneurship studies on employment generation, examine the effect of entrepreneurship studies on the production of goods and services and ascertain the effect of entrepreneurship skills on the performance of small and medium scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Anambra State, Nigeria. The research instrument used for collection of data was the questionnaire, and the population of the study consists of 300 senior staff of Small and Medium Enterprises in Anambra State with sample size of 160 senior staff. The statistical tools used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses were percentages and Chi-square respectively. The result of the test of hypotheses revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship studies and employment generation. The study further revealed that entrepreneurship studies have significant relationship with production of goods and services and that entrepreneurship skills enhance the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommends that funding of entrepreneurship education should be taken seriously by the federal government. This can be achieved through increase in the budgetary allocation to educational sector. Entrepreneurship education should be inculcated into the school curriculum to promote human empowerment and development through entrepreneurial skill acquisition. This will help in reducing unemployment, since it is skilled oriented and employment motivated.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial studies, employment generation, human capital development, skill acquisition, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and wealth creation.

### **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship education as part of the total educational system is the type of education that involves acquisition of skills, ideas and management abilities necessary for job creation. Nwekpa, Okoli, Etc bong, Mbam and Arisi-Nwugballa (2022), posit that an entrepreneur promotes employment rather than seeks for an employment. Accordingly, there is a need to embrace this type of education and provide all the necessary resources needed to make it functional. Quality entrepreneurship education could be used as a tool for fighting the war against poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. This is because quality entrepreneurship education will enhance job creation which will subsequently reduce unemployment, poverty and social vices in Nigeria. It will also help to improve the standard of living; hence promote social economic and political development in Nigeria which is the cardinal objective of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In order for the recipient of entrepreneurship education to be a job creator rather than job-seeker, the person might acquire essential basic skills and attitudes which will enable him to function as an entrepreneur. However, Boudreaux *et al* (2019), opined that there are some challenges militating against the production of quality

entrepreneur in Nigeria. These may come from the government, parents or even from certain unpredictable environmental forces which are external. Unless these problems are looked into, the realization of the aim and objectives of quality entrepreneurship education in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria will be a mirage.

It appears currently that a very serious attention being paid to entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and the world-over. Arend (2020) described entrepreneurship as a new field of academic inquiry on the source of social value creation. Universities in Nigeria are mandated to establish entrepreneurial centers to enable undergraduate students acquire skills that will enable them to be self-reliant after graduation. The reason for this, of course, is obvious, because the Nigeria educational system that turns out graduates do not them to be self-reliant, but to depend solely on white collar jobs for sustenance. As a result, there are several graduates from Nigerian Universities today who are not gainfully employed. Apart from the book knowledge that they gained, there are no requisite skills to make them self-dependent. There is therefore the need to engage the youth in meaningful engagement to avoid unhealthy alternatives for this group of people. It is against this background that this study examines quality entrepreneurship education as a panacea to job creation in Nigeria.

Most SMEs in Nigeria die within their first five years of existence, a smaller percentage goes into extinction between the sixth and tenth year while only about five to ten percent survive, thrive and grow to maturity' (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011). Many factors have been identified contributing to this premature death of SMEs. Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) are the building blocks of any growing economy. Some of the roles of SMEs in an economy include employments generation, rural development, youth empowerment, contribution to national income and growth, spread and development of adaptable technology, and regional balanced growth channel. Nwabufo and Mamman (2015), posit that enterprises are faced with diversity of problems in Nigeria due to numerous domestic and global economic problems, and policy inconsistencies. Some of the problems are internal to the enterprises and they include inadequate working capital, stiff competition from larger companies, difficulties in sourcing raw materials, low-capacity utilization, lack of management strategies, poor educational background of operators, and huge financial problems.

Some SMEs are thriving in Nigeria despite the challenging environment as a result of effective option strategies (managerial skills and competitive advantage) they have internalized while others have shut down or no longer in operation. It has become important to identify the major problems and the strategies employed by the thriving ones. Nigeria educational system that turns out graduates from about 200 Universities and 150 Polytechnics and Mono-technics is faced with infrastructural facilities' decay and has not trained enough graduates to be self-reliant, but to depend solely on white collar jobs for sustenance. It is expected that the introduction of entrepreneurial studies in universities would revise the trend where there are several graduates from Nigerian Universities today who are not gainfully employed. Apart from the book knowledge that they gained there are no requisite skills to make them self-dependent. It is important to note that SMEs in Anambra State are not immune from the aforementioned challenges in their day-to-day operations. Based on the above development, this study is set out to examine the effect of entrepreneurial studies on the development of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria.

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of entrepreneurship studies on the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises in Anambra state, Nigeria. Other specific objectives include the following:

- i. To investigate the effect of entrepreneurship studies on employment generation in Nigeria.

- ii. To examine the effect of entrepreneurship studies on the production of goods and services in Nigeria economy.
- iii. To determine the effect of entrepreneurship skills on the performance of Small and Medium scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria.

## **Conceptual Review**

### **Conceptualizing Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education entails teaching students, learners and would-be businessmen, the essential skills required to build viable enterprises, equipping the trainees with skills needed for taking responsibility and developing initiatives of prospective trainees (Daku & Oyekan, 2014). Abefe-Balogun and Nwankpa (2012), posit that Entrepreneurship education involve a dynamic process of creating wealth through the process of creating something new and in the process assumes both attendant risks and rewards. Entrepreneurship Education means many things to many people. Olawolu and Kaegon (2012) observed that entrepreneurship education prepares youths to be responsible and enable individuals to become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by exposing them in real life learning experiences where they will be required to think, take risks, manage circumstances and incidentally learn from the outcomes. Okereke and Okorofor (2011) assert that entrepreneurship education has been acknowledged worldwide as a potent and viable tool for self-empowerment, job and wealth creation. To Atakpa (2011) entrepreneurship education is an aspect of education which equips an individual and creates in the person the mindset to undertake the risk of venturing into something new by applying the knowledge and skills acquired in school. Also, to Clausen (2020) entrepreneurship creates new wealth, improves competitiveness and stimulates the economy. Hence, the overall purpose of entrepreneurship education is to develop expertise as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship education entails philosophy of self-reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment, promoting new sets of attitudes and culture for the attainment of future challenges (Ogundele, Akingbade & Akinlabi, 2012). Abazi-Alili cited in Nwekpa et al (2022) describe an entrepreneur as a person who uses all the factors of production (physical, human and financial resources) together to make a good or service.

### **Rationale for Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

The rationale for entrepreneurship education, basically is derived from the UNESCO (2000), World Declaration on Education for the Twenty- First Century, Article 7, Section D which states that; Developing entrepreneurial skills should become a major concern in education system, in order to facilitate employability of graduates who will increasingly be called upon to be not only job seekers but also and above all, become job creators. There should be opportunity for students / youths to develop their own abilities with a sense of social responsibility, educating them to become full participants in a democratic society and promoters of changes that will foster equity and justice (UNESCO, 2000).

Entrepreneurship education is a form of education which makes humans to be responsive to their personal, families, national needs and aspirations. Entrepreneurship competencies carry with it, the concept of skills and mental awareness which are needed to understand the functioning of an already existing business. The National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), identifies what it calls "Trade/Entrepreneurship subjects", and listed thirty-four (34) of them under section 38.2.5 of the policy. They include;

- i. Auto body repair and spray painting.
- ii. Auto electrical work.
- iii. Auto mechanical work.
- iv. Auto parts merchandising.
- v. Air conditioning and refrigeration.
- vi. Electrical installation and maintenance work.
- vii. Radio, TV and electronic servicing.
- viii. Welding and fabrication engineering craft practice.
- ix. Block laying, brick laying

and concrete work. x. Painting and decorating. xi. Plumbing and pipe lifting. xii. Machine wood working. xiii. Carpentry and joinery. xiv. Furniture making. xv. Upholstery. xvi. Catering craft practice. xvii. Garment making. xviii. Clothing and textile. xix. Dyeing and bleaching. xx. Printing craft practice. xxi. Cosmetology. xxii. Photography. xxiii. Mining. xxiv. Tourism. xxv. Leather Goods Manufacturing and Repair. Stenography. xxvi. Data Processing. xxvii. Store Keeping. xxviii. Book Keeping. xxix. GSM Maintenance and Repairs. xxx. Animal Husbandry. xxxi. Fishery. xxxii. Marketing. xxxiii. Salesmanship (FGN, 2013).

### **Techniques of Acquiring Entrepreneurship Education**

On teaching methods, Zahra, Mansoreh and Narges (2011) classify the teaching methods into the following categories: case study, group discussion, individual presentation, individual written report, group project, formal lectures, guest speakers, action learning, seminar, web-based learning and video recorded. Teaching methods are effective in terms of sending relevant information to a broader population in a relatively short time period. Skills do not depend solely upon a person's fundamental innate capacities but must be developed through training practice and experience. If the objective of entrepreneurship education is to equip individuals with entrepreneurial skills, which are applicable directly to work, then the best technique is industrial training exercise which would provide education and training that enable individuals to involve directly in the entrepreneurial process. One of the objectives of entrepreneurship education is to prepare individuals to act as entrepreneurs, one of the most efforts are ways/technique is to facilitate experiments by trying entrepreneurship out in a controlled environment, for instance through business simulation or role playing. Excursion technique will facilitate first-hand information on a particular field of study. This will enable young entrepreneurs to acquaint themselves with the various skills needed in the accomplishment of their dreams and aspirations as future entrepreneurs. Co-operation or group learning technique is a process of organizing young entrepreneurs into small groups so that they can work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Team work is a contemporary form of collaboration that will prompts a sense of mutual responsibility among the entrepreneurs, boost their self-esteem, improved social skills and offers greater comprehension of the subject matters.

### **Concept of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises**

The concept of small and medium-scale enterprises (also known as small and medium-scale businesses) have been variously defined by different Authors and scholars. Whereas small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) are commonly used by the European Union member states and some international organizations such as the world Bank, the United Nations and the world trade organization; the small and medium-scale businesses (SMBs) is predominantly used in the United States of America. Regardless of the dichotomy inherent in the classification, both SMEs and SMBs conceptually convey the same meaning (Wikipedia, 2011). A small and medium scale enterprise (SMEs) as is commonly used in Nigeria is one concept that means different things to different scholars. Since no universal definition appears to be available for SMEs, the definitions in use depend on the purposes that those definitions are required to serve and the policies which govern the SMEs sub-sector of the economy. However, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in its monetary policies circular No. 22 of 1988 defines Small and Medium Enterprises as enterprises which have an annual turnover not exceeding Five hundred thousand Naira (N500,000). There are three principal parameters which are generally applied by most countries, either singly or in combination. These are: capital investment on plant and machinery; Number of workers employed; and volume of production or turnover of businesses (Effiom & Edet, 2018).

Despite the fact that there is no universally quantitative norm in conceptualizing SMEs in many countries, the factors that set them apart are essentially quantitative or comparative. Ayanda and Adeyemi (2011), posit that quantitative side are internal management structures, decision-making process, financial practice, trading styles, attendance risk factors amongst others. While on the comparative side are factors that have to do with the way SMEs are situated vis-à-vis large enterprises in the corporate sector. On issues that relate to their qualitative definitions, it has been observed that most SMEs are one person show, or are run by two or more individuals, usually relatives, friends or business partners, who take most of the decisions. Under this classification, there exists, no serious distinction between private and business assets, while subjective and personal factors play a large role in decision making. The personal stakes of SMEs entrepreneur have in the management of their business are much higher than those of the corporate executives in their business.

In section 351 of the Company and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) (2020) as amended, a company qualifies as a small company in a year if for that year, the following conditions are satisfied; it is a private company earning a share capital; the amount of its turn over for the year is not more than N2million or such amount as may be fixed by the commission (i.e. CAMA); none of its members is an alien; none of its members is a member of a government corporation or agency or its nominee; and, the Directors between them hold not less than 51% of its equity share capital. Still within the Nigerian context the NESG (2002) argues that the best way to capture the definition of SMEs is based on the nature of business and its magnitude. For instance, wayside artisans, petty traders, pure/bottled water producers, bakers, local fabricators (regarded as micro enterprises) should constitute part of SMEs. The European Union member states traditionally have their own definition to what should constitute SMEs. For instance, the traditional definition of SMEs in Germany has a limit of 250 employees, while Belgium has a limit of 100 employees. At the moment, the EU has started to standardize the concept of SMEs. Its current definition categorizes companies with fewer than 10 employees as “micro” those with fewer than 50 employees as “small” and those with fewer than 250 employees as “medium”. Contrarily, in the United States, when small businesses are defined by the number of employees, it is often referred to those with fewer than 100 employees, while medium-sized business often refers to those with fewer than 500 employees. In Canada, SMEs, are defined as one that has fewer than 100 employees (if the business is a goods-producing business) or fewer than 50 employees (if the business is a service- based business), and a medium-sized business as fewer than 500 employees. In New Zealand, SME is one that has 19 employees or fewer (Wikipedia, 2011).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on human capital theory. The human capital theory advocates education as a tool for improving human capital, stimulating labour productivity and boosting the levels of technology across the globe. Human capital theory was postulated by Becker (1962) and Rosen (1976) who have argued that individual workers have a set of skills or abilities which they can improve or accumulate through training and education. Human capital theorists encourage spending on nation’s workforce (people working with public and private sector organisations) because expenditure on training and development is a productive investment. Besides, human capital enhancement through quality education is a critical factor that propels economic growth and sustainable development in East Africa, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008).

### **Empirical Review**

Entrepreneurship education has recently grown substantially in many parts of the world (Miller, Wesley & Williams, 2012). However, there has been a growing interest in acquiring the

competences to become successful social entrepreneurs in this contemporary era. Many universities have introduced academic programs that aim at equipping students with the requisite skills that bridge the social welfare, commercial, and the public sector logic of social enterprise. Also, Entrepreneurship education has become the determinant for a framework that strengthens the creative potential for business establishment (Zuperka & Zuperkiene, 2012). Research carried out by Greblikaite and Kriscuinas (2012) proved that economic transformation is directly related to acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge and new innovative skills that contribute significantly to the development of many enterprises. American universities, for example, have been the pioneers in the field of entrepreneurship education since 1947. There is the need to have an effective entrepreneurship course in tertiary institutions' curriculum that can have an impact on students' potential to be self-employed after school. Higher education institutions have contributed enormously to ensure the economic vitality of many economies through the introduction of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurs have contributed significantly to the advancement of many nations and enhancement of local economic development (Peggy & Maramark, 2013). There is, therefore, the need for university administrators to provide for an effective entrepreneurial education that equips students with necessary knowledge and skills to set up own ventures that lead to economic development.

A study carried out by Ugoani (2019), investigated the relationship between social entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Nigeria. The case study approach was adopted and the findings revealed that social entrepreneurs are social change agents who often possess the competences to do a new thing for the social good and also deploy the appropriate competences to pursue their objectives to a logical conclusion.

Similarly, Uchegara (2019) investigated the *Impact of Social Entrepreneurship on Wealth Creation in Nigeria: A Study of Not-for-Profit Organizations (NGOs)*. The study made use of descriptive survey and copies of questionnaire were administered to get responses from the target audience. The population of the study consisted of 40 founders and 288 clients of sampled NGOs. The findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between social entrepreneurship and wealth creation.

**Methodology**

Survey design was adopted for the study with questionnaire being used as the instrument for data collection. The population of the study comprises twelve (12) registered small-scale manufacturing firms in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

**Table 1: Distribution of population of SMEs**

S/N	Name of company	Number of staff
1	Ayakata table water Nodu Okpuno	24
2	Awka Amalgamated Cooperative Society Awka	24
3	Goodwill Bakery Umudioka Awka	22
4	Benlovas Table water Umukwa Awka	23
5	Ndubisi Block Industry Along Enugu Onitsha Express Way Awka	27
6	Anaeliaku Block Industry Ezinifite Okpuno	36
7	Feboria Bakery Amudo Village Awka	26
8	Cassava Oil Processing Enterprises Isiagu Town	29
9	Millenium Plastic Industry Nodu Okpuno	31
10	Ayom Foam & Plastic Industry Ifite Awka	25
11	Aroma Feed Enterprises Ifite Road Awka	29
12	Awka Black Smith Processing Enterprises Old Timber Shead Awka	28
	<b>Total of senior staff</b>	<b>300</b>

Source: Researchers' field survey, 2023

The required sample size was determined using Yaro Tamane formular thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 \times N(e)^2}$$

Where

- n = sample size = unknown
- N= Population = 300
- e = error term = 5% = 0.05
- 1 = constant

Hence,

$$n = \frac{300}{1 \times 300(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{300}{1 \times 0.75}$$

$$n = \frac{300}{1.75}$$

$$n = 171$$

Therefore, the sample size (n) is one hundred and seventy one (171). Note that 171 copies of the questionnaire were distributed but 160 copies were retrieved for analysis. Data collected through questionnaire were complemented with indepth interview. The questionnaire was desihned using Likert Scale options of Strongly Agreed (SD), Agreed (A), Undecided (UD), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) Statistical tools used were percentages and Chi-square for data analysis and test of hypotheses respectively.

**Decision rule:** Reject null hypothesis if  $\chi^2$  calculated is greater than  $\chi^2$  tabulated

**Data presentation and analysis**

**Table 2: Distribution by Gender**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	95	59.4
Female	65	40.6
Total	160	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 shows that the proportion of the respondent that were male is 57.4% (95) to that of female which is 40.6% (65), the reason for this is that most of the respondents were students in the area of entrepreneurial studies and only few female students were found among them showing clearly that male students are more involved in entrepreneurs than the females.

**Table 3: Age distribution**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-25	110	68.75
26-30	42	26.25
31 and above	8	5.00
Total	160	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The Table 3 above shows that the respondents within the age bracket of 20-25 years had the highest number of responses representing 68.75% (110) of the total sample size while age group 26-30 years had 26.25% of the sample size and the least of it is the age group from 31 and above which had 5% (8) respondents of the sample size.

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents’ religion**

Response	No of respondents (Frequency)	Percentage (%)
Christianity	106	66.25
Islamic	42	26.25
Traditional	12	7.50
Total	160	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4 shows the 106 respondents representing 66.25% of the sample size were Christians, 42 (26.25%) were Moslems while 12(7.5%) of the sample size were traditional religion worshipers respectively.

**Table 5: Entrepreneurial education is useful tool for unemployment reduction**

Response	No of respondents (Frequency)	Percentage (%)
Agreed	148	92.5
Undecided	8	5.0
Disagreed	4	2.5
Total	160	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 5 shows that 140 respondents (92.5%) agreed that entrepreneurial education is a useful tool for unemployment reduction in Nigeria while 8 respondents (5%) were not sure and only 4 respondents (2.5%) disagreed. However, this goes to suggest that entrepreneurial education could be a tool for unemployment reduction in Nigeria.

**Table 6: Entrepreneurship studies would empower managers of firms and improve their creativity and skills**

Response	No of respondents (Frequency)	Percentage (%)
Agree	150	95.5
Disagree	7	4.4
Total	160	100

Source: Field survey, 2023

Table 5 shows that 153 respondents (95.6%) agreed that student’s creativity has improved through entrepreneurship education and only 7 respondents (4.4%) disagreed.

**Table 6: Compulsory entrepreneurial education for all students in Nigeria higher institutions will help in the production of goods and services in the Nigerian economy.**

Response	No of respondents (Frequency)	Percentage (%)
Agree	149	93.125
Disagree	11	6.875
Total	160	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023



Table 6 shows that 149 (93.125%) of the respondents accepted wholly that the introduction and implementation of entrepreneurial education in Nigerian Universities will develop students and create self-employment among them even after graduation while 11 (6.875%) of the respondent said no.

### Hypotheses Testing

#### Hypothesis One

Ho: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship studies and employment generation in Nigeria.

In testing the hypothesis, Chi square ( $X^2$ ) was used.

$$\text{Formula } X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

Assumption: Level of significance 5% = 0.05,

Using the item questions as contained in table 4.4,

**Table 8: test of hypothesis one**

Response	O	E	OE	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
Agreed	148	53.3	94.7	8,968.09	168.26
Undecided	8	53.3	-45.3	2052.09	38.50
Disagree	4	53.3	-49.3	2430.49	45.60
Total	160				252.36

Source: Researchers' computation, 2023

Degree of function (Df) = K - 1

$$3-1 = 2$$

$X^2 = 7.824$  tabulated value

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

$$X^2 = \frac{8968.09}{53.3} + \frac{2052.09}{53.3} + \frac{2430.49}{53.4}$$

$$X^2 = 168.26 + 38.50 + 45.60$$

$X^2 = 252.36$ , which is the calculated value of Chi-square comparing the critical value as stated above as 7.824.

$$252.36 > 7.824$$

**Decision**

Since the calculated value of  $X^2$  is higher than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. So, we can then conclude that there is significant relationship between entrepreneurship studies and employment generation in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two**

Ho: Entrepreneurship studies have no significant relationship with production of goods and services in Nigerian economy.

To test for this hypothesis, Table 9 was used.

**Table 9: test of hypothesis two**

Response	O	E	OE	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
Agreed	149	80	69	4,761	59.5125
Disagreed	11	80	-69	4,761	59.5125
Total	160				119.025

Source: Researchers' computation, 2023

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Level of significance = 0.05

Df = K-1

2-1 = 1

Tabulated value of  $X^2 = 3.841$

Therefore, 
$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{69^2}{80} + \frac{69^2}{80}$$

$$X^2 = 59.5125 + 59.5125$$

$$X^2 = 119.025.$$

Comparing the values of  $X^2$  calculated (119.025) to the values tabulated (3.841) it is clear that the value of the  $X^2$  calculated is far higher than the tabulated.

**Decision**

Since the calculated value of  $X^2$  is greater than the table value, we then reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative. This revealed that entrepreneurship studies have significant relationship with production of goods and services in Nigerian economy.

**Hypothesis Three**

Ho: Entrepreneurship skills would not enhance the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

To test for this hypothesis, contents of table 5 were used.

**Table 10: test of hypothesis three**

Response	O	E	OE	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
Agree	153	80	73	5,329	66.6125
Disagree	7	80	-73	5,329	66.6125
Total	160				133.225

Source: Researchers’ computation, 2023

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Level of significance = 0.05

$$Df = 2 - 1 = 1$$

X<sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841 tabulated.

$$\text{Hence, } X^2 = \frac{5329}{80} + \frac{5329}{80}$$

$$X^2 = 66.6125 + 66.6125 = 133.225 \text{ critical value}$$

### Decision

From the table above, it is obvious that the calculated value exceeded the table value (133.225 > 3.841), hence the need for the rejection of the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The study then concludes that entrepreneurship skills would enhance the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

### Discussions of Findings

The findings of the research have confirmed that there is significant relationship between entrepreneurial studies and employment generation in Nigeria. The results from the findings showed that entrepreneurial studies are a useful tool for unemployment reduction in Nigeria. 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”. The study further revealed that the introduction of entrepreneurship education has empowered managers of SMEs by enhancing their skills in the production of goods and services in the economy. This is in agreement with the findings of Ezeani (2012), who views entrepreneurship as the engine driving the economy of nations, creating new industries, young entrepreneurs, employments and wealth. Also, in the view of Uchegara (2019), entrepreneurship involves a process aimed at creating wealth for the purpose of growth, development of the environment and eradication of unemployment for national sustainability. Based on the analysis of the data collected, it is evidently clear that entrepreneurial education is a tool for employment generation in Nigeria. The study further revealed that the introduction of entrepreneurship education has made students to be more creative; it also has the ability of making them to be future managers of SMEs. Finally, the result also showed that entrepreneurship studies would enhance national development, skills in business, ability to fabricate tools, skills in craftsmanship, ability to handle woodworks among others.

### Conclusion

This study examined the plausibility of deploying entrepreneurship education as a tool for employment generation and empowerment of managers of SMEs in Nigeria. Based on the

above development, exhaustive review of literature was carried out to provide more insight into the subject matter being investigated. Despite the prospect of entrepreneurship education, it is faced with challenges of paucity of funds, ineffective teaching method, paucity of textbooks, and lack of experienced lecturers and host of others. Entrepreneurship education is very important and there is urgent need for all higher educational institutions in Nigeria to embrace it. Entrepreneurship studies should be made compulsory for all students of higher educational institutions in Nigeria, irrespective of their areas of specialization. This policy decision was based on government awareness of the crucial role of entrepreneurship education and training in fostering employment generation among the teaming youths, economic growth, and wealth creation. Lukas *et al* (2014) observed that entrepreneurial skills development goes beyond training and education, it involves a process of human capacities building through formal and or informal training inculcating in the entrepreneurs' basic skills such as financial skills, technical skills, creative skills, managerial skills, intellectual skills, marketing skills, communication skills and technological skills.

### Recommendations

In the light of the issues discussed, the following recommendations are proffered:

- i. Funding of entrepreneurship education should be taken seriously by the government at all levels. This can be achieved through increase in the budgetary allocation to the educational sector.
- ii. Entrepreneurship education should be inculcated into the school's curriculum to promote human empowerment and development through entrepreneurial skills acquisition. It is a means of reducing unemployment since it is skills-oriented and employment motivated. All school programmes should be geared toward providing entrepreneurial skills.
- iii. To empower youth, the Federal Government should provide an enabling environment and all the necessary equipment and materials for easy teaching and learning of entrepreneurship skills.

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