

Digitalized Entrepreneurship Scheme and Youth Empowerment in Enugu State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated digitalized entrepreneurship scheme and youth empowerment in Enugu State. Specifically the study is designed to; examine the impact of online training platform on youth acquisition of entrepreneurship skills, evaluate the impact of on blogging on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship skill development, ascertain the impact of digitalized credit scheme on youth accessibility of credit facilities for startup business. The study was carried out in four (4) selected local government areas in Enugu metropolis. The study adopted survey research design. Eight hundred and seventy six thousand residents (876,000) served as the population for the study. A sample of four hundred (400) respondents was drawn using Taro Yamane sampling techniques. A questionnaire developed by the researcher served as the instrument for data collection. Data gotten from the respondents were analyzed using simple percentage while chi-square was employed in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance, the findings of the study revealed that online blogging has positive significant effect on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship skills development, digitalized credit scheme has positive significant effect on youth accessibility of credit facilities for startup capital. Based on the findings the following recommendations were made; the youth should leverage on training platform to acquire vocational skill as the medium is even more cost effective than the traditional means of training, educational institutions should integrate online blogging in their academic curriculum as a means to enhance the learner's communication skills and emotional development as they have to interact with individuals from diverse socio economic background.

Keywords: Digitalized, Entrepreneurship, Scheme and Youth Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

The youth which is a period of transition from childhood dependence to Adulthood independence is characteristically marked by resilience and indefatigable spirit which make them navigate easily through the Vicissitudes of life and make them potential catalyst for national and economic development. The youth is an indispensable force for world continual development as it forms more than 50% of the world population [1]. [2], posited that the Youth are seen as a symbol of hope and potential, and their contributions are essential for the progress of any society as they are often more open to new ideas and are more willing to take risks than older generations. This makes them more likely to come up with innovative solutions to problems, which can lead to the development of new technologies, products, and services [3]. They can also bring fresh perspectives to existing industries, leading to improvements and advancements. As a large portion of the population, youth represent a significant portion of the labor force which is indispensable for economic growth, by participating in the workforce, they ensure continual production of goods and service which is the life wire of economic development of any nation. On the vein, the Youth are often more educated and skilled than older generations, abreast with new innovative technologies. They can bring these skills and knowledge to the workforce, which ensure the development of new product or industries through research to satisfy the diverse human want. A good example is the application of Artificial intelligence in different sector of the economy which had helped to enhance the efficiency of those sectors; likewise the Youth can also play a vital role in national development by participating in

civic activities, such as voting, volunteering, and community service [4]. They can help to shape the future of their countries by advocating for change, promoting social justice, and holding their governments accountable. As youth is a period of graving for independence Youth are more likely to start their own businesses and become entrepreneurs than older generations. They are often more willing to take risks and are more adaptable to changing market conditions. Their entrepreneurial spirit can lead to the creation of new jobs, economic growth, and innovation. The youth are a valuable asset for national and economic development [5]. Their creativity, innovation, education, skills, and entrepreneurial spirit can help to drive progress and growth. By empowering and supporting youth, societies can unlock their full potential and create a brighter future for themselves and future generations [5]. Despite the potential of the youth in propelling and fostering national and economic development the youth remains the most despised, neglected and underutilized in most developing nations and this could be the reason for the slow pace of development in the third world nations as no country seeking economic development which is the good and better life can afford to neglect the youths or abandon them to constitute major social problems. This is because the youths are the engine for growth and development; they provide or serve as the source of the labour force for the production of goods and services, necessary for increased economic activities [6]. They are also the critical masses for people whose action and inactions can develop or destroy the fabric of their country. In other words, they determine the future of the country [7], hence the need to empower the youth through entrepreneurship scheme in order for the youth to be useful to themselves and to their society at large. On the other hand, empowerment could therefore be seen as a means through which one is assisted or encouraged to e self employed, or sufficient [5] Empowerment refers to increasing in the economic, political, social, educational, gender or spiritual strength of individuals and communities. In the same vein, [8], views empowerment as a one of the means of reducing poverty and ensuring economic growth. Empowering the youth is essence if any nation want to achieve a monumental success in national and economic development. In any nation where the youth is not accorded their rightful position in economic, social and political empowerment, the result is often worrisome as the major population that constitutes the workforce needed for development is the youth who are potential entrepreneurs that will spur the economic activities of the nation.

[5], noted that entrepreneurs are often visionaries who identify gaps in the market and develop creative solutions to meet the needs of consumers. Their innovative ideas not only create new products and services but also improve existing ones leading to advancement in technology and overall societal progress, while entrepreneurship is the process of creating new business or ventures and taking on the risk involved in order to make a profit. This can involve innovation and creativity. Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in the development of a nation as it foster innovative, creates job opportunities and stimulates economic growth. Entrepreneurship is not only a means to personal success but also a driving force behind national progress [5]. It is therefore imperative to ensure entrepreneurship development through entrepreneurship scheme. Entrepreneurship scheme is a plan, set of plans, or goal oriented strategies for achieving entrepreneurship development usually for specific time frame. As sine quo non to national and economic development, the Nigeria governments have made launched several non digitalized youth empowerment scheme which include among others; N-power, Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (Youwin); Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Program; Youth Empowering People (YEP); Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS); African Youth Empowerment Nigeria (AYEN) etc. All these empowerment scheme were the traditional or the conventional means of empowerment which was short live by its shortcomings such as inadequate fund as huge fund is often required for infrastructure to power the empowerment scheme, bribery and corruption because the method of supervising and monitoring the scheme was not digitalized to ensure efficient accountability, difficulty in accessing the entrepreneurship scheme which is usually located in areas distant from the under privilege youth to access. Technology in a number of ways had offer proficient solutions to the problems of man; through technology man has been able to get better result in all his endavorment, [9], hence the rise for technology application in all sectors of the economy and industry. Consequently to achieve the desired result in area of national and economic development in Nigeria through youth entrepreneurship development it is pertinent to address the challenges of the conventional or traditional entrepreneurship scheme by adopting the digitalized entrepreneurship scheme. According to [10] Digitalized entrepreneurship scheme refers to progmatic approach of entrepreneurship empowerment using digital technologies, such as internet, social media and other forms of electronic communication. This approach allows the scheme to reach wider participants, streamline operations and leverage various digital tools and platform to promote the empowerment of its participants. It is based on the foregoing background that the researcher wishes to conduct and empirical study digitalized entrepreneurship scheme and youth empowerment in Enugu State. Specifically the study is designed to; examine the impact of online training platform on youth acquisition of entrepreneurship skills, evaluate the impact of on

blogging on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship skill development, ascertain the impact of digitalized credit scheme on youth accessibility of credit facilities for startup business.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Youth

Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. The Secretary-General first referred to the current definition of youth in 1981 in his report to the General Assembly on International Youth Year (A/36/215, para.8 of the annex) and endorsed it in ensuing reports (A/40/256, para. 19 of the annex). However, in both the reports, the Secretary-General also recognized that, apart from that statistical definition, the meaning of the term 'youth' varies in different societies around the world. When the General Assembly, by its resolution 50/81 in 1995, adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond, it reiterated that the United Nations defined youth as the age cohort of 15-24. The General Assembly resolution A/RES/56/117 in 2001, the Commission for Social Development resolution E/2007/26 & E/CN.5/2007/8 in 2007 and the General Assembly resolution A/RES/62/126 in 2008 also reinforce the same age-group for youth. Several UN entities, instruments and regional organizations have somewhat different definitions of youth, which the United Nations secretariat recognizes. The following table summarizes these differences.

Table 1: The Summary

Entity/Instrument/ Organization	Age	Reference
UN Secretariat/UNESCO/ILO	Youth: 15-24	UN Instruments, Statistics
UN Habitat (Youth Fund)	Youth 15-32	Agenda 21 ⁷
UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA	Adolescent: 10-19, Young People: 10-24, Youth: 15-24	UNFPA ⁸
UNICEF /The Convention on Rights of the Child	Child until 18	UNICEF ⁹
The African Youth Charter	Youth: 15-35	African Union, 2006 ¹⁰

Concept of Empowerment

Empowerment has been defined and measured in many different ways. Aside from the many politicians and others who use it without defining it at all, this is perhaps the greatest problem with the concept. Empowerment has been defined as an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources; or a process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community, and a critical understanding of their environment [11]. The common elements in those definitions are that empowerment (a) is a process, (b) occurs in communities, (c) involves active participation, critical reflection, awareness and understanding (i.e., consciousness raising about the influence of powerful political and economic structures and interests), and (d) involves access to and control over important decisions and resources. The only difference is that the second definition does not mention creating a climate of mutual respect and caring, which may be especially important for political and civic leaders to include in their understanding and practice of empowerment [12]. Empowerment is not only a process, however. It can also be thought of as the life and outlook-changing outcome of such a process for individuals, organizations, and whole

communities. This chapter is in the section on “Purposes of Political and Civic Leadership,” and empowerment certainly is an important benefit, and for many, perhaps even a goal of developing new leaders and of developing as a leader. Yet I prefer to view empowerment not as a goal or outcome of participation or leadership but rather as a key part of the process of both developing and applying political and civic leadership. The main reason for that preference is that far too many studies and writings have been about how to make people feel empowered and too few have been about how to use empowerment strategies to gain and apply the actual power needed to make important, material improvements in community conditions and people’s lives.

Concept of youth empowerment

Youth empowerment is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives. They do this by addressing their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitudes [13]. Youth empowerment aims to improve quality of life. Youth empowerment is achieved through participation in youth empowerment programs. However scholars argue that children's rights implementation should go beyond learning about formal rights and procedures to give birth to a concrete experience of rights [14]. There are numerous models that youth empowerment programs use that help youth achieve empowerment. A variety of youth empowerment initiatives are underway around the world. These programs can be through non-profit organizations, government organizations, schools or private organizations. Youth empowerment is different from youth development because development is centered on developing individuals, while empowerment is focused on creating greater community change relies on the development of individual capacity [15]. Empowerment movements, including youth empowerment, originate, gain momentum, become viable, and become institutionalized [16]. Youth empowerment is often addressed as a gateway to intergenerational equity, civic engagement and democracy building. Activities may focus on youth-led media, youth rights, youth councils, youth activism, youth involvement in community decision-making, [15] and other methods.

Youth empowerment programs in Nigeria

With Nigeria's dwindling economy, a majority of the population, particularly the youths, face financial hardship. Fortunately, some empowerment schemes have been helpful. Here is a list of some youth empowerment programs in Nigeria in 2021. This article provides an extensive list of some youth empowerment programs in Nigeria in 2021 [17]. Nigeria has a population of over 200 million in 2021. About 34 million of these populations are youths between the ages of 18 to 29. According to Statista, as of 2019, Nigeria's GDP was about \$448.12bn. It is projected to reach \$769.28bn. Despite this, the world bank reports that 7.4% of Nigeria's population are living in poverty [17]. The lack of job opportunities in the nation has caused an enormous increase in the crime rate. While unemployment is not a justification for crime, we can't ignore that it has caused many youths to resort to illegal ways of making money. To help curb the menace of unemployment, the government and individuals have come up with different schemes, skill acquisition programs and youth empowerment programs to assist the youths to stand and cater for their needs. The youth empowerment programs in Nigeria are set up as support systems for youths of the nation who need financial aids.

List of youth empowerment programmes in Nigeria

Top popular youth empowerment programmes in Nigeria include:

1. N-Power
2. Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (Youwin)
3. Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Program
4. Youth Empowering People (YEP)
5. Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS)
6. African Youth Empowerment Nigeria (AYEN)
7. TraderMoni
8. Youth Initiative For Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA)
9. Presidential Youth Entrepreneurship Support (P-YES)
10. Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative (YEDI) [17].

Entrepreneurship Scheme

It is interesting to know that the concept “entrepreneurship”, is gaining much attention all over the world. Its conceptualization has made it a bit difficult. The concept has come to mean different things to different people. [18], defines entrepreneurship as the practice of starting new organizations or revitalizing mature organizations, particularly businesses in response to identified opportunities. Similarly, [19], defines entrepreneurship as the process of identifying, developing and bringing a vision to life. The vision may be an innovative idea, an opportunity or a better way of doing something. The end result of this process is the creation of a new venture

formed under the conditions of risks and considerable uncertainties. Contributing further, [20], conceptualizes entrepreneurship as a process of inducting an individual into the culture of innovation, production and creativity. Collorary to this, [21], in [22], says that entrepreneurship is about the persistent pursuit of opportunity. This is aimed at creating wealth through innovative creation of a product or service that meets the need of customers using scarce resources in a way that results in the growth enterprises which satisfy the expectation of stakeholders. [23], opines that entrepreneurship is the acceptance of an individual to seek for new ways of doing things for the sole purpose of generating profit or reward. Having regards to the foregoing definitions of entrepreneurship, the paper further sees entrepreneurship scheme as the process whereby the entrepreneurial and managerial abilities of the potential entrepreneurs are developed. It is the process of inculcating the culture and spirit of creativity and innovativeness into workers for the purpose of preparing them towards the conception, organization, and management of a productive venture. It simply means, teaching people to become self-employed [24]. Accordingly, entrepreneurship is the process of developing the potential of an individual through the identification of business opportunities [25]. Similarly, Tijani –Alawiye in [26], asserts that entrepreneurship is the process of increasing the supply of entrepreneurs or adding to the stock of existing small, medium and big enterprises available to a country by creating and promoting many capable entrepreneurs who can successfully run innovative enterprises, nurture them to growth and sustain them with a view to achieving broad socio- economic development. In the same vein, [27], identifies that the essence of entrepreneurship scheme is the ability to envisage and chart a course for a new business venture by combining information from the functional discipline and the external environment in the context of extraordinary uncertainty and ambiguity which confront a new business venture.

On the other hand, scholars have seen the concept of development to be heavily value loaded and see its operational definition as a matter of what the writer cherishes as the goal or objective of the economy [28]. The controversy surrounding the operationalization of development has made it to be more interesting, exciting and expansive. Explicitly, [29] observes that: The concept of development is neither new nor old. Development is a continuously changing and dynamic concept. Since the beginning of civilization, it has been taking different shapes and dimensions. According to [30], development means a high national income which is accompanied by a sound market economy. The focus of this definition is that, development is seen in terms of the structure and growth of the national economy which is indicated by high income per capital and the average annual rate of growth in the national economy. [31], sees development as a many sided process which at the level of individual, implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. This view of Rodney tallies favourably in consonance with that held by [32]. In his words, development is a constant process of transformation and it is a widely participatory process intended to bring social and material advancements, equality, freedom and other value qualities for the people through gaining of greater control over their resources. However, [29], argues that development involved the realization of the potential of human personality and went on to suggest that this was best achieved through the reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality. To this extent, [33], opines that development is a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration for economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty. In summary therefore, national development can be conceptualized as the quest by a country to achieve development for the betterment and wellbeing of her citizenry. It is against this backdrop that [34], and [35], affirm their insight by asserting that national development is the growth, change and development which take place in a society. In addition, [36], in [37], perceives development in terms of attacking widespread absolute poverty, reducing inequalities and removing the spectrum of unemployment. [38], submits that national development can be viewed as a multifaceted process of change, especially, structural changes towards the enhancement of the economic welfare of the people, self-fulfillment and actualization of such people. The gamut of these definitions will guide a comprehensive approach in discussing this paper

Entrepreneurship scheme in Nigeria

In Nigeria, for instance, the arrival and the subsequent activities of the colonial masters no doubt, negatively affected the entrepreneurial spirit of her citizens as manufactured goods were imported into the country. Moreover, the colonial economic policies did not give any room for Nigerians to develop their skills. Rather, they were incorporated into the middlemen system and were made to buy produce from farmers which served as raw materials for their industries in Europe. [24], however noted that with the establishment of formal education, most Nigerians who were educated were employed in the colonial civil service, and this made many Nigerians to abandon their entrepreneurial attitudes. With the independence in 1960, opportunities for employment in the civil service became difficult and the government of Nigeria decided to initiate policies and programmes that would encourage her citizens to develop the habit of being self-employed. It is this idea that quickly opened the road for

the development of entrepreneurs. The need for national development by the political system is essential and inevitable. The attainment of national development is anchored on policies and programmes [28]. It is on this purview that programmes become derivative of National Development Plan (NDP), [30]. Policy on the other hand, is a set of interrelated decision by a political actor or group of political actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specific situation. This interrelated decision should, in principle, be within the power of those actors to achieve. [39], and [40], further see policy as a purposive course of action, followed by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a problem or matters of concern. In Nigeria today, the government has rolled out many policies and programmes to engender entrepreneurship scheme in order to develop the nation. Among these policies and programmes as noted by [24] include; the establishment of National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Industrial Development Centres (IDCS), Centre for Management Development (CMD), Small and Medium Size Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). There were other policies that encouraged or made it easy for entrepreneurs to acquire the needed funds like the establishment of People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Fund for Small Scale Industries (FUSSI), Bank of Industry (BOI) and the establishment of Micro Finance Bank (MFB). Others were the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Skills Acquisition Programmes (SAPs), National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) and many others which may not be accommodated due largely to limited space.

Importance of Entrepreneurship scheme to National Development

The contributions of entrepreneurship scheme to national development cannot be over-emphasized. This is because no country can be regarded as being developed if there are no trained entrepreneurs. A country's economy can only be developed through the creation of entrepreneurs and the evolution of sound technical policies. National development cannot take place in the absence of sound entrepreneurship scheme policies which will serve as motivating factors in the match towards the realization of developmental vision.

Moreover, entrepreneurship scheme helps to increase the number of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activities in the country which lead to national development. Entrepreneurship scheme is a viable catalyst that reduces the problem of unemployment in Nigeria and which at the moment, is a serious challenge to the government. It creates the culture of self-employment, reduces redundancy and engages citizens in the productive activities which will help the economy of the country to grow. Entrepreneurship scheme has the tendency to mitigate rural-urban migration. It equally contributes to the development of the rural areas and in addition, decongests the urban centres. Entrepreneurship scheme further helps to facilitate and promote the use of indigenous technology, which in essence will help to transform the Nigerian economy to be one of the developed economies in the world. National development is a function of the development of individuals and corporate entities within the country. Entrepreneurship through its developmental impact on individuals plays a fundamental role in the development of nations and their economies. Finally, it will help the country to fight poverty and social problems and thus, develop the country's industrial and social infrastructures as well as encourage investment in the development of the abundant local resources especially, in rural areas. This is where over 70% of the citizens reside and it plays a significant role in the development process of Nigeria.

Constraints to Entrepreneurial scheme in Nigeria

Generally, there is no dispute on the role of entrepreneurship scheme in national development. In Nigeria for instance, several factors have militated against the country's attempt to develop her economy through the process of entrepreneurship scheme. These factors are clearly discussed below:

Corruption

One of the endemic problems militating against the country's attempt to develop through the process of entrepreneurship scheme is corruption. This social malaise has eaten deep into the socio-economic fabric of Nigeria. It seems to be the very blood that pulsates in Nigeria blood.

In Nigeria, there is high level of corruption which comes in various forms. It takes the form of embezzlement of fund, bribery, nepotism, smuggling, price racketing, diversion of funds meant to implement policies and programmes into private pockets and many others. Corruption is freely practiced both at private and public levels in Nigeria. [39], observes that fraudulent practices also affected policies such as entrepreneurship scheme, and this takes the form of payment for jobs not done, forging of receipts, payment of ghost contractors among others. Individuals connive with government agencies tasked with financing entrepreneurship development programmes to divert funds to other uses and that is why agencies like People's Bank, National Directorate of Employment and others have not done better.

Political Instability and Insensitivity

Political instability and insensitivity are another strong factor to be discussed. Consistent change of government is a hindrance to entrepreneurship scheme in Nigeria. This is most prevalent in the days of military rule. In this era, any change of government would definitely change her policies. The implication is that, no entrepreneurship scheme policy has been fully implemented. Moreover, in developing countries like Nigeria, most policies emanate from the political system. Entrepreneurship scheme policies put in place by politically insensitive leadership is bound to fail or run into difficulties and the support and cooperation of citizens will hardly be attained for the successful execution of such policies.

Poor Policy Implementation

The problem of poor policy implementation shares a great impact in this direction. Poor policy implementation is a very big challenge to the development of entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Most policies and programmes in Nigeria suffer setbacks not because of the inadequacies of the policy or programmes, but due largely to poor policy implementation. Some policies which are aimed at improving entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria, suffer due to poor policy implementation, for instance, the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS).

Finance

Another constraint to the entrepreneurship development in Nigeria is finance. Unexpected fall in the government revenue could frustrate a well-planned and articulated entrepreneurship development programme. The situation is severe when the country depends on only one source of revenue. In the recent time, the Buhari government suffered from this challenge which was made worst by the dwindling price of oil at the international market. Nigeria depends on this revenue and this has posed a challenge to the development of entrepreneurship in the country.

Ethno-Religious Intolerance

Ethno-religious intolerance has remained one of the greatest impediments to entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. The activities of Boko Haram in some parts of Northern Nigeria have greatly undermined the quest to develop the country through entrepreneurship scheme. In addition, is the incidence of bandits, the Fulani herdsmen and kidnappers in the country. No meaningful development would take place in the areas characterized by these vices.

Moreover, the situation in the Niger Delta has made oil companies and the governments to groin in pains as oil facilities are constantly destroyed by the youths. The Eastern part of the country is also facing serious threats from Biafran agitators.

Poor Infrastructure

Infrastructural facilities in Nigeria are in a very bad state. Manufacturers in Nigeria face frequent interruption of publicly provided infrastructural facilities such as water, road, electricity, telecommunication, transportation, to mention but a few. These facilities are needed for any genuine entrepreneurship scheme programmes to take place. It was in the light of this that [41], observes that there are no infrastructures to facilitate the attainment of development in Nigeria. Today, the country is having power challenge.

Over-dependence on Imports

Overdependence of Nigerians on imported/foreign goods is also another challenge. This is a terrible disease that has beclouded Nigerians interest on the local made goods. This attitude of Nigerians towards locally manufactured goods is not encouraging. Rather than encourage local entrepreneurs by patronizing them, they prefer to import goods and this has adversely undermined local entrepreneurs. For instance, most textile industries in Nigeria are in a serious crisis of lack of patronage. Some other local products are not patronized by Nigerians due to their preference for foreign goods. If entrepreneurs produce goods and nobody buys from them, what else do they do other than to wind up or liquidate?

Digital Entrepreneurship Scheme

According to [19], digitalized entrepreneurship refers to the process of starting and running a business using digital technologies, such as the internet, social media, and other forms of electronic communication. This approach allows entrepreneurs to reach a global audience, streamline operations, and leverage various digital tools and platforms to drive growth and innovation.

The digitalized entrepreneurship scheme typically involves several key steps:

1. Idea generation: Entrepreneurs identify a business opportunity and develop a unique value proposition for their product or service.
2. Market research: Entrepreneurs conduct thorough market research to understand their target audience, competition, and industry trends.

3. Business planning: Entrepreneurs create a comprehensive business plan, outlining their goals, strategies, and financial projections.
4. Branding and marketing: Entrepreneurs develop a strong online presence through branding, content marketing, and social media campaigns to attract and engage customers.
5. Product or service development: Entrepreneurs design, develop, and launch their digital products or services, leveraging various digital platforms and tools.
6. Customer acquisition and retention: Entrepreneurs employ digital marketing strategies, such as search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click advertising, email marketing, and customer relationship management (CRM) to attract and retain customers.
7. Financial management: Entrepreneurs manage their finances effectively, including budgeting, cash flow forecasting, and financial reporting.
8. Continuous improvement: Entrepreneurs monitor their business performance, gather customer feedback, and make necessary adjustments to their products, services, and operations to drive growth and profitability. By leveraging digital technologies and platforms, digitalized entrepreneurs can overcome traditional barriers to entry, such as geographical limitations and high startup costs, and create scalable and sustainable businesses.

The Impact of Online Training platform on Youth Acquisition of Entrepreneurship Skills

An online training platform is a digital platform or software application that provides a range of training courses, tutorials, and educational resources to learners. These platforms allow individuals to access training materials and complete courses from at any time, using an internet connection [25]. Online training platforms offer a variety of advantages over traditional classroom-based training, including flexibility, convenience, and cost-effectiveness [27]. They allow learners to access training materials and complete courses at their own pace, without the need for a fixed schedule or physical classroom. This can be particularly beneficial for individuals with busy schedules or those who live in remote or underserved areas [22]. Online training platforms also offer a wide range of training courses and educational resources, covering topics such as technology, business, healthcare, and personal development [24], went further to assert that these courses are often developed and delivered by subject matter experts, ensuring that learners receive high-quality, engaging, and informative training. Some popular online training platforms include Udemy, Coursera, and LinkedIn Learning, among others. These platforms offer a range of free and paid courses, allowing learners to access the training they need at a price that fits their budget. Overall, online training platforms provide a convenient, flexible, and cost-effective way for individuals to access training and educational resources, helping them to develop new skills, enhance their knowledge, and advance their careers [29].

In today's digital age, online training has become an increasingly popular method for youth to acquire entrepreneurship skills. With the rise of e-learning platforms and online courses, young individuals now have access to a wealth of knowledge and resources at their fingertips [27]. One of the primary advantages of online training is its accessibility. Unlike traditional classroom-based training, online courses can be taken from anywhere, at any time, as long as there is an internet connection. This flexibility allows young individuals to learn at their own pace and on their own schedule, which can be particularly beneficial for those who have busy lives or limited mobility [24]. Additionally, online training eliminates the need for commuting, which can save time and money. As noted [33], another advantage of online training is the wide range of courses available. From basic entrepreneurship skills to specialized topics such as marketing and finance, there is something for everyone. This variety allows young individuals to tailor their learning experience to their specific needs and interests. Furthermore, online courses often provide interactive learning experiences, such as quizzes, discussions, and group projects, which can help students retain information and engage with the material [41], [26], [18]. However, [25], observed that there are also some potential drawbacks to consider. One of the main disadvantages of online training is the lack of face-to-face interaction. While online courses can provide valuable knowledge and skills, they may not offer the same level of personal support and guidance as traditional classroom-based training. Additionally, some young individuals may struggle with the self-discipline required to complete online courses, as they may need to motivate themselves to stay on track and complete assignments. Online training has the potential to greatly impact youth acquisition of entrepreneurship skills. By providing accessibility and a wide range of courses, online training can help young individuals develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the world of entrepreneurship [1], [22], [24]. However, it is important to consider the potential drawbacks and ensure that online training is the right choice for each individual. Ultimately, the key to success in entrepreneurship is a combination of knowledge, skills, and personal support, which can be achieved through a combination of online and traditional learning methods [29].

Impact of on blogging on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development

Youth unemployment is a global crisis in today's rapidly evolving world, with many young people facing challenges when entering the job market. The transition from education to employment can be daunting, filled with uncertainties and challenges [24]. This is where comprehensive mentorship programs have emerged as a beacon of hope, offering a structured approach to bridge the gap between education and employment. By connecting aspiring individuals with experienced professionals, these programs provide more than just career guidance—they foster skill development, boost confidence, and open doors to a world of opportunities. The thrust of this article is to share insights into the transformative power of comprehensive mentorship in skill acquisition and how it empowers youth to thrive in the professional world most especially in this digital age with the help of blogging. Comprehensive mentorship goes beyond traditional career advice. It's a holistic approach that nurtures both personal and professional growth [22]. While career guidance remains a cornerstone, comprehensive mentorship delves deeper, focusing on:

Technical Skill Development: Mentors, often experts in their fields, share their knowledge and expertise, helping mentees gain practical skills relevant to their chosen career paths. This can range from coding and data analysis to marketing and project management. The hands-on experience and insights gained from mentors can significantly accelerate a mentee's learning curve and make them more competitive in the job market [24], [42].

Soft Skills Training: Equally important are the interpersonal skills that employers value, such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability. Mentors provide guidance and feedback to help mentees develop these essential skills. They may offer tips on effective communication, conflict resolution, or time management, which are crucial for success in any workplace [43].

Emotional Support: The transition to adulthood and the pursuit of a career can be emotionally taxing. Mentors offer a listening ear, encouragement, and a safe space for mentees to navigate challenges and build resilience. This emotional support can be invaluable in helping young people overcome setbacks, maintain motivation, and develop a positive outlook on their future [29].

The skills gap, a global phenomenon where employers struggle to find workers with the right qualifications, has widened in recent years. This is partly due to rapid technological advancements, which have created new job roles. Additionally, changing economic landscapes have rendered some traditional skills obsolete [26], [44], [45]. This widening skills gap poses a particular challenge for young people entering the workforce. Over 85% of employers consider technology adoption a key driver in transforming their businesses in the next few years. As a result, these young people, often fresh out of educational institutions, may need more practical skills, industry knowledge, and professional networks to secure meaningful employment. Mentorship programs can offer young people a platform to gain exposure to real-world work environments, learn from seasoned professionals, and develop highly demanded skills. This, in turn, can improve their chances of finding employment and increase their earning potential.

The impact of comprehensive mentorship programs on young people is far-reaching and transformative. These programs offer a wide range of benefits that extend beyond career guidance, significantly impacting personal and professional development. Here are some of the key advantages:

- **Accelerated skill acquisition:** Mentors, with their years of experience and knowledge, provide invaluable shortcuts to learning. They share practical insights, industry trends, and professional tips that would otherwise take years for young people to acquire on their own. This accelerated learning curve equips them with the skills they need to enter the workforce confidently.
- **Enhanced employability:** Mentorship and employability skill training programs focus on developing both hard and soft skills essential for success in today's competitive job market. Mentees gain not only technical expertise but also the communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills that employers seek. This comprehensive skill set makes them more attractive candidates for job opportunities.
- **Career path clarity:** Many young people struggle with choosing a career path or understanding the steps to take to achieve their goals. Mentors offer valuable guidance, helping mentees explore different options, identify their strengths and interests, and create a career roadmap. This clarity can save mentees valuable time and resources, ensuring they make informed decisions about their future.
- **Increased confidence and self-efficacy:** A supportive mentor can boost a mentee's confidence and belief in their abilities. Through encouragement, constructive feedback, and shared experiences, mentors help young people develop a strong sense of self-efficacy, which is crucial for overcoming challenges and achieving success.

- **Networking opportunities:** Mentors often have extensive professional networks that they can leverage to help their mentees. Introducing mentees to industry contacts, potential employers, or collaborators can open doors to exciting opportunities that might otherwise be inaccessible.

Impact of digitalized credit scheme on youth accessibility of credit facilities for startup capital

A digitalized credit scheme is a system that allows individuals or businesses to borrow money electronically, without the need for physical collateral or traditional credit checks [41]. This type of credit scheme is typically facilitated through online platforms or mobile applications, and it relies on advanced algorithms and data analysis to assess the creditworthiness of borrowers. The primary advantage of digitalized credit schemes is their convenience and accessibility. They allow people to access credit quickly and easily, even if they have limited or no credit history. This can be particularly beneficial for individuals who are new to credit or who are living in underserved areas where traditional credit options may be limited. However, digitalized credit schemes also come with some risks. Because they rely on algorithms and data analysis, there is a potential for errors or biases in the credit assessment process. Additionally, digitalized credit schemes may charge higher interest rates or fees compared to traditional credit options, which can make borrowing more expensive for borrowers. Overall, digitalized credit schemes offer a convenient and accessible way for individuals and businesses to access credit, but it is important for borrowers to carefully consider the terms and conditions of any credit agreement and to understand the potential risks and benefits associated with this type of credit [28]. In this dispensation of technology driven age, the world of finance has seen significant advancements, particularly in the realm of credit facilities. Digitalized credit schemes have revolutionized the way young entrepreneurs access the capital they need to kick start their startups. This article will explore the impact of digitalized credit schemes on youth accessibility to credit facilities for startup capital, shedding light on the benefits and challenges that come with this innovative approach. [1], observed that digitalized credit schemes have made it easier for young entrepreneurs to access credit facilities, regardless of their geographical location or financial background. Online platforms and mobile applications have streamlined the application process, eliminating the need for lengthy paperwork and in-person visits to financial institutions. This not only saves time and effort but also increases the chances of approval, as decisions are based on data-driven insights rather than traditional credit scoring methods. Furthermore, digitalized credit schemes have made credit more accessible to young entrepreneurs who may have previously struggled to obtain it. By analyzing factors such as income, employment history, and creditworthiness, these schemes can assess the risk associated with lending to young entrepreneurs more accurately. This has led to a decrease in the interest rates charged on credit facilities, making it more affordable for young entrepreneurs to access the capital they need to grow their businesses [1], [22],[37]. However, it's important to acknowledge the potential challenges associated with digitalized credit schemes. One of the main concerns is the lack of personal interaction between lenders and borrowers. While digital platforms have streamlined the application process, they have also eliminated the human touch that can be invaluable in building trust and rapport between lenders and borrowers. Additionally, there is a risk of fraud and identity theft, which can be mitigated through robust security measures and verification processes. Finally digitalized credit schemes have had a profound impact on youth accessibility to credit facilities for startup capital. By streamlining the application process and making credit more accessible, these schemes have empowered young entrepreneurs to turn their dreams into reality. However, it's crucial to address the potential challenges associated with this innovative approach to ensure that it continues to benefit young entrepreneurs in the years to come.

Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratification Theory [46]

This theory was first introduced by Elihu Katz when he came up with the idea that the people use the media for their benefits. This was expanded by him and his two colleagues Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch early 1970s [46]. Uses and Gratification Theory is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy certain needs. Thus this theory is relevant to this current study because it explore the reason youth uses digital media.

Empirical Review

[47], conducted a study on Social Media and Youth Empowerment: An Empirical Inquiry. The methodology adopted for the study is mixed method design which involved descriptive survey and factorial design was employed using descriptive analysis and ANOVA statistical tools. The sample population was 143 social media users in Anambra State whose ages ranged from 23-37 years. The participants were sampled from a pool of social media users using purposive and convenient technique. The result revealed that youths' awareness on the empowerment potential of social media is high, while indicating that majority (65.7%) of the youths are attracted by social media by its leisure appeal and they use it for chatting, connecting friends and leisure compared to 34.3%

of youths who use it for learning, empowerment and opportunities. Furthermore, significant differences were observed between males and females on social media user appeal. It is recommended that youths be mentored on the empowerment potentials of social media by the successful leaders in the industry. [48], conducted A Study on Impact of Social Media on Youth. The adopted descriptive type of research is used which describes the characteristics of a group or individuals and their perception about the social media and its impact on youth. The research is qualitative in nature. Researcher has collected the primary data with youth through the structured questionnaire. Secondary data has been collected from various articles, journals, magazines. The youths are considered as sampling units for this study. The sample size of this study consists of 50 youth Respondents. results revealed that 20% of the respondents said that they have benefits/ positive impact of learning from social media and another 20% of the respondents got benefits of staying connected with friends through social media, 28% of the respondents get benefits like entertainment and fun, 18% of the respondents got benefits like in quest of job opportunities. Results also depicts that social media cause health problems and affect our cultures. While using social media, users have to remember the cultural values and social norms. [49], carried research titled perception of the broadcast media promotion of skill acquisition in Edo state. The study employed survey research design questionnaire was employed to elicit data from 215 Native indigence of three local government area of Benin City consisting of Ovia North East. Egor LGA and Ovia LGA through two stages using the simple random sample and Cluster sampling procedure. it was discovered that the broadcast media perceive skill acquisition in a positive approach through their consistent and educational communication of skill acquisition programmes. Hence, this study conclude that the broadcast media perceive skill acquisition positivity and the audience as the selected State acknowledge this fact in prove of their knowledge and Involvement in skill acquisition programmes, with the suggestion that the broadcast media improve more on its programmes presentation and ideas. [50], investigated the influence of Youtube Videos on Skills Acquisition among Youth in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research method. Results revealed that participants were highly exposed ($n=239$, 100%) to YouTube contents through their mobile phones and other devices, and were highly aware of YouTube skills acquisition videos ($x=3.88$). However, it was discovered that awareness and exposure to YouTube videos had no positive influence on skills acquisition among youths in the study ($R^2= 0.040$, $\beta= -0.199$, $t= -2.896$, $p< 0.05$). It was recommended that youths should take advantage of the opportunities available on YouTube to acquire needed skills as they download and view videos rather than spending most resources on entertainment. [17], the study examined the influence of youtube videos on learning English Language. A quantitative questionnaire was distributed among 118 college students using an online Google Form. The results show that majority of participants found YouTube to be both beneficial and pleasant, indicating a positive assessment of its usefulness in learning a language. Additionally, while the students conveyed differing preferences and encounters, YouTube was universally acknowledged as an advantageous extra source to improve language skills. The findings of this study suggest that teachers can use YouTube videos to enhance their teaching strategies and promote improved language proficiency.

[51], explore the relationship between mentorship and successful youth entrepreneurship at telkom, south Africa. The sample consisted of 40 mentors and 160 mentees [52]. The study used the purposive sampling technique to select 10 youth entrepreneurs and 10 mentors. A self- selection sampling strategy was used for this research, as this strategy enabled the researcher to select the study's participants, based on the researcher's subjective judgment [52]. Data was collected using semi-structured, open-ended interviews developed from the literature study. The researcher, with the assistance of one fieldworker, the findings of the study confirmed that there is a relationship between mentorship and youth entrepreneurship. One of the themes that emerged from the findings was the influence of mentorship on successful youth entrepreneurship. Key recommendations were that both government and the private sector should make youth mentorship programmes more accessible to the public, make them compulsory for all private companies and provide the required funding.

[6], investigated the effect of mentoring approach on skills acquisition among business education students in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. Quasi-experimental research design was used in the study. The population of the study consisted of 534 third year Business Education students drawn from two colleges of education and two universities in Cross River State. The sample size of the study comprised 200 students in two colleges of education and two universities offering business education programme. The respondents were assigned into two groups made up of a college of education and a university in each. One of the groups was assigned treatment group and it comprised 100 male and female students. The order group (control group) also comprised 100 male and female students. The Ability Test in business education was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha and it produced an alpha of 0.79. The experiment followed pre-test and post-test procedures. At the beginning, a pre-test was administered to all the

respondents in both groups. After four weeks of mentoring of the experimental group and conventional teaching of the control group on the same topics in business education, a post-test was later administered. The scores obtained from the two administrations were used for data analysis. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while, ANCOVO was used to test the hypotheses. The results suggested that mentoring is a more effective approach to skill acquisition in business education than the conventional teaching approach, and there is no significant difference in the mean skills acquisition score of male and female Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. It was recommended that mentoring should be fully embraced in business education as an approach of teaching and learning.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in four (4) selected local government areas in Enugu metropolis. The study adopted survey research design. Two thousand eight hundred and seventy six (2876) youths between the age of 18 to 56 years from the four selected local government areas served as the population for the study. A sample four hundred respondents was drawn using Taro Yamane sampling techniques. A questionnaire developed by the researcher served as the instrument for data collection. Data gotten from the respondents were analyzed using simple percentage while chi-square was employed in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTION

Presentation and analysis of research question

This is the statistical presentation of the respondents' view to the research question.

Research Question 1

What are the roles of online training on youth acquisition of vocational skills?

Table 2: The respondents' views on the roles of online training on youth acquisition of entrepreneurship skills

roles of online training on youth acquisition of vocational skills	Frequency	Percent
Online training programs are easily accessible anywhere with an internet connection making them convenient for youth to acquire entrepreneurship skills	85	21.25
Online training programs offer a range of flexible learning option which enable the youth learn at their own pace and schedule	82	20.50
Online training programs are often more cost effective which has made entrepreneurship training to be at the reach of young people from diverse socio-economic background	74	18.50
The diversity of online training program has helped young people develop a more holistic understanding of the profession or vocation they aspire to acquire the skills and expertise	81	20.25
Online training program provide opportunity for young people to connect with experienced mentors and industrial experts who provide a wealth of information on entrepreneurship development	78	19.50
Total	400	100.0

Source: Researcher, 2024

From the table 2, Majority of the respondents which constitute 21.25% of the respondents concurred that online training programs are easily accessible anywhere with an internet connection making them convenient for the youth to acquire vocational skills, 20.5% of the respondents agreed online training programs offer a range of flexible learning option, which enable the youth to learn at their own pace and schedule, 18.5% of the respondents online training programs are often more cost effective, which has made entrepreneurship training to be at the reach of young people from diverse socio-economic background, 20.25% of the respondents noted that the diversity of online training program has helped young people development a more holistic understanding of the profession or vocation they aspire to acquire the skills and expertise, 19.5% of the respondents agreed that online program provide opportunity for young people to connect with experienced mentors and industrial experts who provide a wealth of information on entrepreneurship skills development. From the findings of the table above, it could be inferred that online training played significant role on youth acquisition of vocational skills

Research Question 2

What are the roles of online blogging on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development?

Table 3: The respondents view on the roles of online blogging on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development

the roles of online blogging on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development	Frequency	Percent
online blogging help young youth build relationship, collaboration on project and offer useful assistance to one another	76	19.00
By receiving feedback and comments from readers, young people can gain a sense of accomplishment or validation for their work which will invariably act as motivation	81	20.25
Online blogging increase the communication skills of the youth and emotional development as they interact with matured mind from diverse socio economic background	73	18.25
Online blogging provide a wealth of information that help young people learn from experience of others and gain valuable insight and knowledge	84	21.00
Online blogging creates an avenue to seek for seek and professional advice from well experienced experts in the field	86	21.50
Total	400	100.0

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Source: Researcher, 2024

From the table 3, 19% of the respondents were believed that online blogging has helped the youth build relationship, collaboration on project and offer useful assistance to one another, 20.25% of the respondents were of the opinion that by receiving feedback and comments from readers, young people can gain a sense of accomplishment or validation for their work which will invariably act as motivation to entrepreneurship development, 18.25% of the respondents occurred that online blogging increase the communication skills of the youth and emotional development as they interact with matured mind from diverse socio economic background, 21% believed that online blogging provide a wealth of information that help young people learn from experience of others and gain valuable insight and knowledge, while 21.50% of the respondents agreed that online blogging creates an avenue to seek for professional advice from well experienced experts and specialist. The findings of the table therefore revealed that online blogging played significant role on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development.

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square statistical tool

Hypothesis I

H₀: online training has no significant role on youth acquisition of vocational skills

Table 4: Chi Square table for testing of hypothesis 1

O	E	(O-e)	(O-e) ²	$\frac{(O-e)^2}{E}$
85	100	-15	225	2.25
82	100	-18	324	3.24
74	100	-26	676	6.76
81	100	-19	361	3.61
78	100	22	484	4.84
400				20.7

Table value = 5.991, calculated value = 20.7

Decision: Since the calculated value (20.7) which is greater than the table value (5.99), the H₀ (null hypothesis) is therefore rejected. This implies that online training has plays significant role on youth acquisition of vocational skills.

Hypothesis II

H₀: Online blogging has no significant role on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development

Table 5 Chi Square table for testing of hypothesis II

O	E	(O-e)	(O-e) ²	$\frac{(O-e)^2}{E}$
76	100	-24	576	5.76
81	100	-19	361	3.61
73	100	-27	729	7.29
84	100	-16	256	2.56
86	100	-14	196	1.96
400				21.18

Table value = 5.991, calculated value = 21.18

Decision: Since the calculated value (21.18) which is greater than the table value (5.99), the H₀ (null hypothesis) is therefore rejected. This implies that online blogging plays significant on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study could be summarized as follows;

1. Online training plays significant role on youth acquisition of vocational skills
2. Online blogging plays significant role on youth mentorship on entrepreneurship development

CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings, the study draws the conclusions; online training is an effective means to augment for the shortcomings of the traditional means of skill acquisition which allows for easy access, and flexibility of program which gives the learner the opportunity to learn at his/her own pace. Online blogging on the other hand proves an essential platform for collaboration, team work, which enhances the communication skills of members, and invariably enhances their emotional development as they communicate with people from diverse socio-economic background. Online blogging also offer learner the opportunity to interact and gain guidance from experienced industrial experts. On the other hand, digitalized credit scheme had made it easy for young investor to access credit facilities, which may in most case do not have the collateral often required by commercial banks

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. The youth should leverage on training platform to acquire vocational skill as the medium is even more cost effective than the traditional means of training
2. Educational institutions should integrate online blogging in their academic curriculum as a means to enhance the learner's communication skills and emotional development as they have to interact with individuals from diverse socio economic background.
3. The youth should leverage on training platform to acquire vocational skill as the medium is even more cost effective than the traditional means of training, educational institutions should integrate online blogging in their academic curriculum as a means to enhance the learner's communication skills and emotional development as they have to interact with individuals from diverse socio economic background.

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