Entrepreneurship Education and Wealth Creation Potential Among Secondary School Students in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study examined Entrepreneurship Education and Wealth Creation Potential among secondary school Students in Calabar Education Zone in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the aims of the study, two research questions were raised, and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The study population comprised ninety-six (96) public schools in Calabar Education Zone in Cross River State. The selection was done through a census approach. The main instrument used was a research questionnaire titled: "Entrepreneurship Education and Wealth Creation Potentials Questionnaire (EEWCPQ). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts in the Department of Educational Management, University of Calabar, and the Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the Department of Educational Psychology, Educational Foundation Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar. Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis (r) of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The results revealed that entrepreneurial attitude development and entrepreneurial opportunity identification significantly contribute to wealth creation potential among students. Based on the findings, it was recommended, amongst others, that secondary schools' management should strengthen students' ability to identify and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities within their communities and the wider economy.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship Education and Wealth Creation Potentials, Secondary School Students, and Cross River State.*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education has increasingly been recognized as an important component of education for preparing young people to participate productively in a changing economy. Beyond the acquisition of theoretical business knowledge, entrepreneurship education is expected to develop the attitudes, competencies, creativity, and opportunity-recognition abilities that enable learners to identify economic needs and transform them into productive ventures (Adeniyi, Gamede, & Derera,2024). This is particularly relevant to Nigeria, where the transition from school

to employment remains challenging and where education systems are increasingly expected to equip young people with capacities for self-employment, innovation, and economic participation. Recent Nigerian research indicates that entrepreneurship education can strengthen students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial attitude, opportunity recognition, and entrepreneurial intentions, although the effectiveness of such education depends partly on how it is delivered (Atah, Bessong, & Wonah,2017). At the secondary-school level, entrepreneurship education is particularly important because adolescence represents a formative period for developing attitudes toward work, innovation, risk-taking, and self-reliance. Entrepreneurial attitude development refers to the cultivation of positive dispositions toward entrepreneurial activities, including willingness to take calculated risks, creativity, innovativeness, initiative, self-confidence, persistence, and readiness to pursue business opportunities. A positive entrepreneurial attitude can influence how students perceive entrepreneurship—not simply as an alternative to paid employment, but as a means of creating value and responding to unmet needs in their communities. Recent evidence from Nigeria shows that entrepreneurship education can enhance students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial attitude, which are associated with stronger entrepreneurial intentions (Okeke, Chukwudolue, Agatha, Ohadiugha, Areji, & Ugwunwoti, 2025). The development of entrepreneurial attitudes is important to wealth creation potential because the ability to create wealth does not depend solely on possessing financial resources. It also requires the mindset to recognize productive possibilities, mobilize available resources, tolerate reasonable uncertainty, and persist in converting ideas into economic activities. Students who develop confidence, initiative, creativity, and a positive orientation toward entrepreneurship may be better positioned to consider self-employment, develop small-scale ventures, and create value from locally available resources. In this regard, entrepreneurship education can help develop future economic actors capable of generating income and potentially creating employment for themselves and others (Awoniyi, Owolabi, & Ige, 2025). Entrepreneurial opportunity identification involves the ability to notice unmet needs, emerging market demands, problems, and gaps in existing products or services and transform such observations into potentially viable business ideas. For secondary school students, this may involve recognizing opportunities in areas such as agriculture, food processing, fashion and textile production, digital services, crafts, environmental services, and other activities relevant to their communities (Ngaji, &Wonah,2025). Opportunity identification therefore moves entrepreneurship education beyond simply teaching students how to start a business; it helps them understand where productive opportunities exist and how those opportunities can be developed into value-creating activities (Lawan, & Brihan,2024). Ettah, Wonah, and Ugian (2025) conducted a study aimed at the management of entrepreneurship skill programmes and job creation among postgraduate students of public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study, two research questions were raised, and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of two thousand eight hundred and twenty (2820) postgraduate students of public own Universities in Cross River State. The sampling technique adopted for this study was the simple random sampling technique, which was used to select two hundred (200) respondents from the study area. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Management of Entrepreneurship Skill Programmes and Job Creation among Post Graduate Students of Public Universities Questionnaire (MESPJCPGSPUQ), which was developed by the researchers and was validated by three experts in the Department of Educational Management, Guidance and Counselling and the Measurement and Evaluation Department, Faculty of Educational Foundations, University of Calabar, Calabar. Data collected were subjected

to statistical analysis using Pearson product-moment correlation analysis. The results revealed that the effective management of entrepreneurship skill programmes significantly relates to job creation among postgraduate students of public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. It was recommended, among others, that the management of the universities should ensure adequate management of entrepreneurship skill programmes in order to enhance job creation among postgraduate students (Wonah, *etal*,2026). Egbetokun, Olofinyehun and Adelowo (2024) investigated the long-term impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial attitudes among Nigerian university students. The study examined whether exposure to entrepreneurship education could produce sustained interest in entrepreneurship over time. The researchers used data from repeated surveys of undergraduate students across six Nigerian universities between 2007 and 2021. A difference-in-differences approach within an instrumental-variable framework was employed to address potential endogeneity and to examine the effect of entrepreneurship education over time. The findings indicated that entrepreneurial interest declined significantly in the absence of the entrepreneurship education intervention. However, the researchers also found that the longer the intervention remained in place, the weaker its effect appeared to become among subsequent student cohorts. The study therefore suggested that entrepreneurship education requires continuous innovation rather than simply repeating existing approaches.

Lawan and Brihan (2024) examined entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention and the mediating role of entrepreneurship education and pedagogies among university students in Northern Nigeria. The study adopted a causal research design and used a cross-sectional questionnaire survey involving 359 final-year undergraduate students from six universities. The researchers examined the role of entrepreneurship education and specific teaching approaches, including live projects, meetings with entrepreneurs and business-plan pedagogy. The findings revealed that entrepreneurship education is significantly related to entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention. In particular, live projects and meetings with entrepreneurs contributed significantly to the mediation effect, whereas business-plan pedagogy did not show the same effect in the study context. The study concluded that the method through which entrepreneurship education is delivered is important in developing entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions.

Otache, Edomwonyi Edokpolor, Sani and Umar (2024) investigated entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions, with particular attention to entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial alertness and opportunity recognition. The researchers employed a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design and collected data from 254 business management students in three Nigerian polytechnics using a self-reported questionnaire. Repeated-measures *t*-tests and serial mediation analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings showed that entrepreneurship education significantly improved students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial alertness, opportunity recognition, and entrepreneurial intentions. The study further found that opportunity recognition, together with self-efficacy and entrepreneurial alertness, positively influenced entrepreneurial intentions and independently and sequentially mediated the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

Letshaba, Mahosi and Sibiya (2025) examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education, opportunity recognition and opportunity exploitation among students in a selected Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college in South Africa. The study adopted a quantitative research design and used a structured questionnaire administered to 151 students enrolled in N5 and N6 business management and marketing management programmes. Data were analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS to establish relationships between the study constructs. The findings showed a positive relationship between the quality of entrepreneurship

education and students' ability to recognize and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Students who received comprehensive entrepreneurship education demonstrated a greater propensity to identify and act upon entrepreneurial opportunities. The researchers concluded that quality entrepreneurship education is important for developing students' ability to recognize and exploit opportunities. The study recommended stronger integration of entrepreneurship education across programmes and greater collaboration between educational institutions, businesses and policymakers. The relationship between entrepreneurial opportunity identification and wealth creation potential can therefore be understood through the process of opportunity recognition, resource mobilization and value creation. A student who can identify a problem or unmet need may be able to develop a product or service that responds to that need. If the idea is feasible and successfully implemented, it may generate income, encourage savings and investment, provide self-employment and potentially create employment for other people. Recent Nigerian research on venture-creation skills similarly identifies opportunity identification as an important competence for successful business operations and self-reliance. Thus, opportunity identification provides an important link between what students learn in entrepreneurship education and their potential to participate in wealth-generating activities. The quality and orientation of entrepreneurship education delivered in secondary schools are consequently important. Evidence from recent research on Nigerian secondary schools suggests that entrepreneurship education can be constrained when it is predominantly theoretical and insufficiently connected to practical, experiential, and local economic realities.

The Cross-River State context makes the subject particularly relevant because secondary school students live within communities containing diverse economic activities and locally available resources that can provide opportunities for entrepreneurial learning. Entrepreneurship education can help students examine their immediate environment, identify economic problems and resource gaps, and develop productive responses to them. Rather than viewing students only as future employees, entrepreneurship education can help prepare them as potential innovators, producers and business creators. Such preparation is consistent with the broader objective of using education to develop human capabilities that can contribute to employment, income generation and economic development.Nevertheless, entrepreneurial attitude development and opportunity identification should not be interpreted as guarantees of actual wealth creation. Wealth creation is also influenced by access to finance, markets, infrastructure, mentoring, technology, family support, government policies and the broader business environment. Consequently, entrepreneurship education should provide students with both the attitudinal orientation to pursue productive opportunities and the practical competence to recognize, evaluate and exploit those opportunities. Against this background, the researchers intend to investigate Entrepreneurship Education and Wealth Creation Potential among secondary school Students in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship education is increasingly regarded as an important means of preparing young people for self-employment, innovation, income generation, and participation in economic development. However, the mere provision of entrepreneurship education does not necessarily guarantee that students will develop the attitudes and competencies required to translate entrepreneurial knowledge into wealth-creating activities. One major problem concerns the inadequate development of entrepreneurial attitudes among secondary school students. As observed that most of the students lack the attitude of entrepreneurial development such as creativity, innovativeness, initiative, self-confidence, willingness to take calculated risks,

persistence and readiness to pursue productive economic activities. Also, the researcher evident has shown that there is a problem is the inadequate development of entrepreneurial opportunity-identification abilities among students. This opportunity identification involves the ability to recognize unmet needs, market gaps, problems, available resources, and emerging demands that can be transformed into viable products or services. However, where these attitudes are poorly developed, students may complete entrepreneurship education with theoretical knowledge but lack the confidence, initiative and motivation to apply what they have learned. Consequently, students may continue to perceive paid employment as the primary avenue for economic advancement and may be reluctant to initiate small businesses or other income-generating activities. Evidence from Nigeria also suggests that the effects of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial attitudes and interest may weaken over time when educational interventions are not continually strengthened and innovated. Thus, failure to develop entrepreneurial attitudes and opportunity identification seems to have serious implications for students' wealth-creation potential. Students may possess skills in areas such as agriculture, food processing, fashion, baking, crafts, or digital services but may not know how to identify customers' needs, market gaps, or profitable applications for those skills. As a result, available skills and local resources may remain underutilized. Despite the integration of entrepreneurship education into Nigeria's secondary school curriculum, there has been a rising problem regarding the extent to which secondary school students in Cross River State acquire functional entrepreneurial skills that are capable of fostering job creation and economic self-reliance among secondary school students. It is against this background that the researchers are interested in examining entrepreneurship education and wealth creation potentials among secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine Entrepreneurship Education and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the relationship between entrepreneurial attitude development and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State.
2. Determine the relationship between entrepreneurial opportunity identification and wealth creation among potential secondary school students in Cross River State.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent does entrepreneurial attitude development relate to wealth creation among potential secondary school students in Cross River State?
2. To what extent does entrepreneurial opportunity identification relate to wealth creation among potential secondary school students in Cross River State?

Research hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. Entrepreneurial attitude development has no significant relationship with wealth creation among potential secondary school students in Cross River State.
2. Entrepreneurial opportunity identification has no significant relationship with wealth creation among potential secondary school students in Cross River State.

Methodology

The research design adopted in this study was a correlational design. The study population comprised ninety-six (96) public schools in Calabar Education Zone in Cross River State. The selection was done through a census approach. The instrument used for the data collection was a questionnaire titled: "Entrepreneurship Education and Wealth Creation Potentials Questionnaire (EEWCPQ), which was developed by the researchers and was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Management, University of Calabar, and the Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the Department of Educational Psychology, Educational Foundation Studies, University of Calabar. The reliability coefficient estimate of the instrument was established through Cronbach's Alpha reliability methods. The instrument was divided into two Sections. A and B. Section A sought respondents' demographic data, such as the name of the school and qualifications. Section B consisted of fifteen (15) items constructed in a four (4) point modified Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis, using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 was used for data analysis, and the results are presented as follows.

Results

Hypothesis 1:

Entrepreneurial attitude development has no significant relationship with wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State. The calculated result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Correlation analysis of the relationship between entrepreneurial attitude development and wealth creation potentials among secondary school students (n=96)

Variables	Mean	Std.Dev.	r cal.	p-value
Entrepreneurial attitude development	16.39	2.368	.830**	.001
wealth creation potentials	16.47	2.432		

- Significant at .05 level; df = 94 critical –r.205

The result in Table 1 revealed that the calculated r-value of .830** was significantly greater than the critical value of .205 when tested at the .05 level of significance with 94 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude development and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State.

Hypothesis two:

Entrepreneurial opportunity identification has no significant relationship with wealth creation among potentials among secondary school students in Cross River State. The calculated result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Correlation analysis of the relationship between entrepreneurial opportunity identification and wealth creation potentials among secondary school students (n=96)

Variables	Mean	Std.Dev.	r cal.	p-value
Entrepreneurial opportunity identification	16.42	2.433	.787**	.001
Wealth creation potentials	16.47	2.432		

- Significant at .05 level; df = 94 critical –r.205

The result in Table 2 revealed that the calculated r-value of .787** was significantly greater than the critical value of .205 when tested at the .05 level of significance with 94 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial opportunity identification and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State.

Discussion of findings

The result of hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude development and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State. This result agrees with the findings Lawan and Brihan (2024) examined entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention and the mediating role of entrepreneurship education and pedagogies among university students in Northern Nigeria. The findings revealed that entrepreneurship education significantly mediated the relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention. In particular, live projects and meetings with entrepreneurs contributed significantly to the mediation effect, whereas business-plan pedagogy did not show the same effect in the study context. The result of hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial opportunity identification and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State. This result agrees with the findings of Letshaba, Mahosi and Sibiya (2025), who examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education, opportunity recognition and opportunity exploitation among students in a selected Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college in South Africa. The findings showed a positive relationship between the quality of entrepreneurship education and students' ability to recognize and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Students who received comprehensive entrepreneurship education demonstrated a greater propensity to identify and act upon entrepreneurial opportunities. The researchers concluded that quality entrepreneurship education is important for developing students' ability to recognize and exploit opportunities.

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

That there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude development and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State. The findings also revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial opportunity identification and wealth creation potential among secondary school students in Cross River State. Therefore, entrepreneurial attitude development and entrepreneurial opportunity identification constitute important dimensions through which entrepreneurship education may contribute to wealth creation among undergraduate students.

Recommendations

Based on the identified problems and the empirical evidence, the following recommendations are proposed.

1. Secondary school principals and entrepreneurship education teachers should provide practical learning experiences that develop positive entrepreneurial attitudes among students, such as self-confidence, creativity, innovativeness, persistence, calculated risk-taking, initiative, and self-reliance.
2. Secondary schools' management should strengthen students' ability to identify and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities within their communities and the wider economy.

WJEDS

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