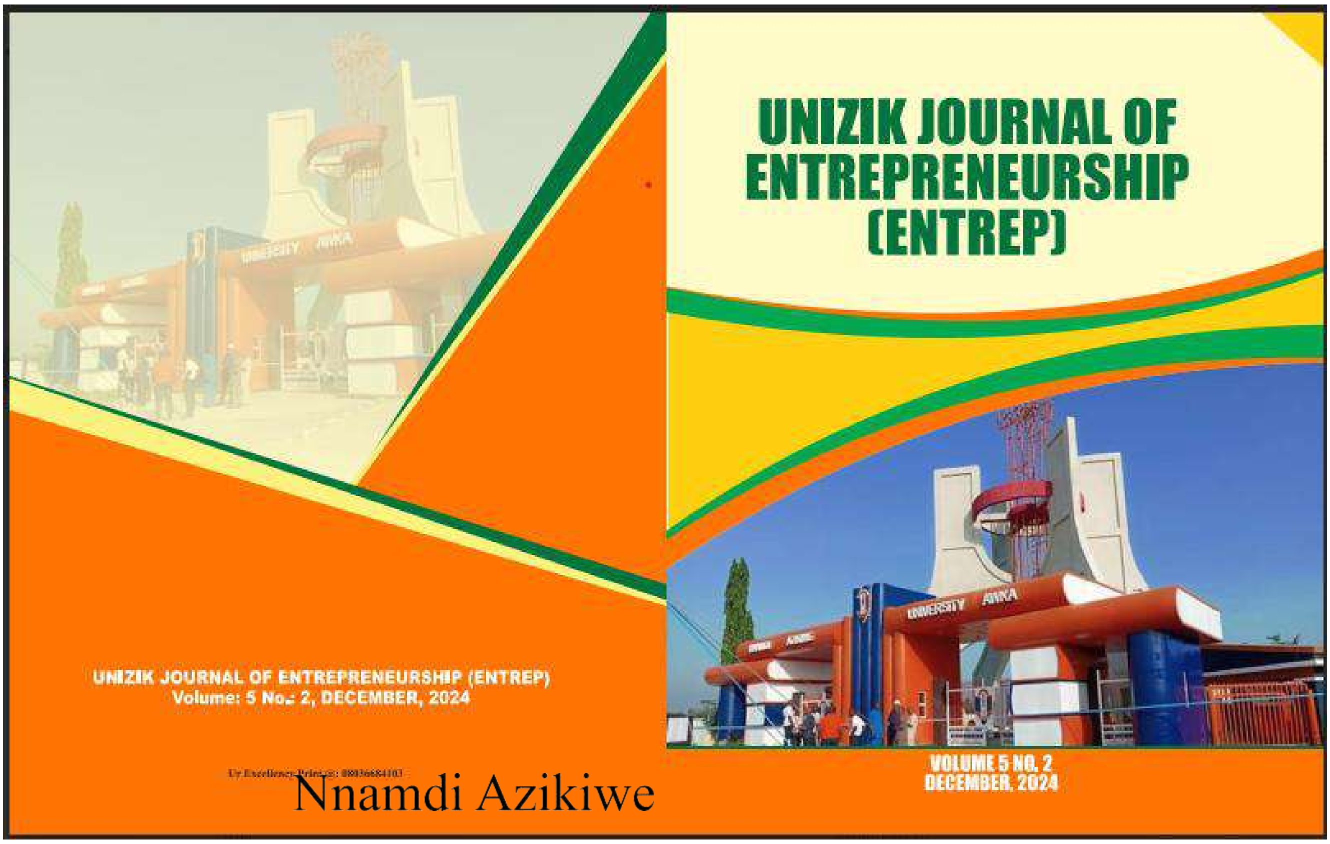

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ACADEMIC ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF STATE-OWNED UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of academic entrepreneurial innovations on sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. A correlational research design was used. The population of the study comprised 3,536 lecturers from nine state-owned old universities in Southwest Nigeria. A sample size of 616 lecturers from three of the universities using purposive and proportionate sampling techniques. Researcher-developed instrument titled Academic Entrepreneurial Innovations Questionnaire (AEIQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into two sections and validated by three experts. The instrument reliability was assessed with Cronbach Alpha. In this instance, copies of the AEIQ were given to 30 ESUST academic members. The instrument reliability coefficient was reported as *($r = .90$). The sustainability of the universities was measured using the universities' average revenue. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer to the research questions at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that there was significant relationship between collaborative research initiatives ($r = .589$, $p < .05$), sale of research outputs ($r = .682$, $p < .05$), technical inventions ($r = .357$, $p < .05$) and sustainability of state-owned universities. Based on the findings, it was concluded that collaborative research initiatives with industry, and technical inventions based on research outputs could enhance the sustainability of the state universities in Southwest Nigeria. Consequently, it was recommended among others that state universities need to embrace academic entrepreneurial innovations through research outputs and commercialisation of intellectual ideas for product development within the industry.*

KEYWORDS: Academic entrepreneurial innovations, collaborative research initiatives, sale of research outputs, technical inventions, university sustainability

INTRODUCTION

What makes a university sustainable is its ability to earn money and conduct research that is capable of addressing modern social and industrial concerns. It means doing everything required to keep the system's finances stable without forgoing other important duties. Since inadequate financing is a major problem that undermines the efficacy of education in Nigeria's public institutions, university sustainability might be a solution to the problem. In the pursuit of sustainability, state-owned universities must embrace creative techniques such as acquiring long-term funding streams and decreasing dependency on government subsidies which essential to the long-term viability of higher education institutions. The term sustainable financial resources describe a university's ability to meet all of its financial commitment without depending exclusively on grants and loans from the government. According to Odewole, Olowookere, and Oladejo (2021), university sustainability is the ability of the institution to discharge its daily financial responsibilities and lawful and statutory demands without depending on outside funding sources or outside influence to survive. To get a competitive financial advantage, university sustainability primarily addresses two fronts: broadening the organisational resource baseline of a business or extending the financial boundaries of the entity (Odewole *et al.*, 2021).

University sustainability strives to generate enough revenue internally within operating parameters, expand its revenue source, and broaden its area of expertise to cover all of its costs without the need for outside funding (Hahn & Figge, 2022). One important factor in determining a university's financial standing is its sustainability (Nalwoga, 2021). University sustainability is a crucial factor to consider when assessing a university's financial standing. Liquidity, solvency, and operational sustainability are typical metrics used to assess a university's sustainability (Sami & Sree, 2022). The capacity of the institution to earn revenue from creativity and novel innovations from the academic staff through their research outputs was how Ahmet and Premaj (2022) measured university sustainability by the capacity to earn revenue from creativity and novel innovations from the academic staff through their research outputs ~~was how,~~ while Sazonov, Kharlamova, Chekhovskaya, and Polyanskaya (2020) measured it using dimensions of net operating results, income diversification, liquidity, and solvency or leverage. Alabi, Ojebode and Abdulkareem (2023); Adebayo, Essang and Osime (2022) as well as Carlo, Modugno, Agasisti and Catalano (2023) in their separate studies used university average revenue to measure sustainability of university which was adapted by this study. According to these authors, university average revenue is the addition of school fee consultancy services and government subventions.

In order to close budgetary gaps, universities across the globe are forced to adopt cost-cutting and revenue-enhancement strategies in order to reach sustainability. This is possible when they start to expand their access to financial resources through consistent revenue (Ayam, 2021). Public universities across the world, but particularly in Africa, seem to be under assault right now from a number of fronts. For example, underfunding by the government, heightened rivalry, and the need of pursuing higher education are some of the variables influencing the sustainability of universities (Ivonne, 2020). A major challenge confronting public university in Africa in contemporary times is sustainability, which is jeopardised by reductions in government subvention and society's rising request for higher-quality and more abundant services (Carlo *et al.,* 2023).

Underfunding, which is a direct result of the government's lackadaisical attitude towards tertiary education, substantially limits the effectiveness of university education in Nigeria (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Dibua, 2023). To achieve sustainability, public universities in Nigeria are starting to turn inward. Through academic entrepreneurial innovations (Hahn & Figge, 2022). Odewole *et al.,* (2021) posited that university sustainability could be achieved through these innovations in addition to having the ability to commercialize educational research and development outcomes. The combination of intellectual capacity and entrepreneurship may help universities generate new ideas via academic entrepreneurial innovation (Dada, Obamuyi & Jesuleye, 2021). It may even be seen as data fabrication that bypasses intellectual and entrepreneurial players. According to Dada and Oyebisi (2016), academic entrepreneurial innovation is the proficiency of universities at commercializing their best research and development goods, which include transforming intellectual effort and knowledge into products that will meet consumer and industry demands.

According to the William Davidson Institute (2018), academic entrepreneurial innovations are university arrangements and the process of developing economic concepts and value via the renewal of research outputs, the technical benefit and massive commercialization. This may be accomplished by fostering productive and friendly relationships between the academic system and business sectors for the advancement and mutual benefit of commercialization. This implies that, via creating value for the market, academic entrepreneurial innovations may improve institutions' sustainability. In other words, university leadership need to support academic entrepreneurial behaviours and activities. Dada *et al.,* 2021; Akinwale, Dada, Oluwadare, Jesuleye and Siyanbola, 2019; Dada and Oyebisi, (2016) asserted that university research includes the ready-made stock value of intellectual information that would serve as value and advantages for human requirements. This assertion has been validated by data from both industrialized and developing countries. For instance, universities like Hebrew University of Israel, Cambridge University in the United Kingdom (UK), and the Industrial Technology Research Institute in Taiwan have recognised the value of academic entrepreneurial innovations for university sustainability and have directed their intellectual resources towards the creation of new value and improved economic performance of significant economic sectors. This is to say that given enough other factors, university sustainability in Nigeria is achievable via concept innovation, technological tool development, and the adoption of flexible methods that would promote the commercialisation of research and development outputs (Dada *et al.,* 2021).

Based on the knowledge and experience of present researchers, ~~the~~ university sustainability in Nigeria may only exist in theory without a strong institutional leadership vision and purpose in addition to the backing of governmental policy. One of the things that seem to stimulate university technology transfer to businesses is the institution's capacity to maintain value generation, which may lead to innovations and further encourage academic entrepreneurial growth via research commercialisation (Adebayo *et al.,* 2022). However, Carlo *et al.,* (2023) and Sami and Sree (2022) in their separate studies concluded that factors such as sales of research outputs, technical inventions and collaborative research initiatives were among the academic entrepreneurial innovations variables that institutions can commercialized with the industry to generate additional revenue. Sales of research outputs relate to the institutions capability to commercialised novel ideas and innovation of research conducted in the system with the industry. Technical inventions are more of a university's ability coupled with the skills and knowledge of its academic staff to develop new methods of resolving industrial issues like new technological software, a novel idea of production, selecting from alternative materials for greater productivity. Collaborative research initiatives by the university refer to the cordial association with the industry to bring out new products and services to the market for mutual benefits.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigeria's state government-owned universities are dealing with several financial issues' such as a lacklustre income diversification strategy, low revenue, insufficient government support, and low internally generated income (IGR). These issues have shown up in several ways, including staff members not receiving their full salary, unpaid promotion arrears, sharp drops in departmental operating costs, inadequate supplies of stationery for all university units, and many more. It is a known fact that no organisation can achieve sustainability if it does not generate enough income to run the system efficiently. Because of this, the issue of insufficient finance has negatively impacted university education, particularly in the areas of research, ~~the~~ supply of infrastructure, and instructional activities. As a result, it seems that the institutions' output is not sufficiently ready and equipped for national development.

This problem of this study is the persistent absence of a long-term funding source for tertiary institution in Nigeria, which jeopardises the nation's progress toward high-quality university education. This contributes to the delays in payment of salaries of lecturers and others employees of state-owned universities causing to go on strike several times, which negatively impacts both the quality of education provided by these institutions and their viability in the nation. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), increased tuition for students, and the introduction of various levies are just a few of the actions that governments have taken to address these issues. Despite these steps, most state government-owned universities in Nigeria are still unable to attain sustainability. Finding solution to this ugly situation informed this study on the relationship between academic entrepreneurial innovations and sustainability of state-owned universities in South-West Nigeria to provide relevant empirical data for objective measures by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between academic entrepreneurial innovations and sustainability of state-owned universities in South-West Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. Relationship between academic entrepreneurial innovations (sale of research and development (R&D) outputs) and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria;

2. Relationship between academic entrepreneurial innovations (collaborative research initiatives with industries) and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria;
3. Relationship between academic entrepreneurial innovations (technical inventions based on research results) and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study answered the following research questions:

1. To what extent do sale of research and development (R&D) outputs and sustainability are related in state-owned universities in South-West Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between collaborative research initiatives with industries and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria?
3. Would there be any relationship between technical inventions based on research results and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since entrepreneurial innovations are noticeable and share characteristics with many aspects of the modern economy, they are not new in the industrialised world. Around the globe, there are several instances of prosperous economies implementing excellent projects. Governments all throughout the world acknowledge that entrepreneurial innovation has the ability to spur growth and innovation (Abdulazeez, Issa & Yusuf, 2019). According to Ogundele and Ijiya (2017), entrepreneurial innovations are focused, actionable initiatives that are implemented to achieve certain goals shortly. These goals may include lower expenditure, more efficiency, and enhanced performance. When considering entrepreneurial innovations from an integrated perspective, businesses must be able to collaborate with people, clients, staff, the government, and regulatory agencies. This entails taking concrete measures (Sajuyigbe, Madu-Igwe & Unachukwu, 2016). Because there are so many possibilities in the environment, successful entrepreneurs pursue their core businesses. Entrepreneurial innovations including networking, technology adoption, business orientation, and teamwork are highlighted by Kusumawardhani, McCarthy, and Perera (2019) as crucial components of the company.

Academic entrepreneurship (AE), as defined by Ojo (2022), is the commercialisation of knowledge domain, including the conversion of data into goods and processes that will unavoidably support innovation and the economy. Transfer of academic knowledge, research product licencing, contract research, consultancy, research partnerships, knowledge transfer process, positioning of students, teaching, and continuous professional development are components of academic involvement in actions outside the typical functions of research, administration, and training. These activities can be formal or informal and include partnerships with organisations and industries, creation of new businesses, research output licensing, academic invention notifications to technology transfer offices, and academic knowledge transmission (Ojo *et al.*, 2022). Academic entrepreneurial (AE) endeavours facilitate the dissemination of information and the commercialisation of technology, and they have the potential to greatly impact the growth of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Capability variables such as education, human capital, industrial experience, and entrepreneurial-related competencies highlight academic entrepreneurialism (Obamuyi, 2018).

Conceptual Framework

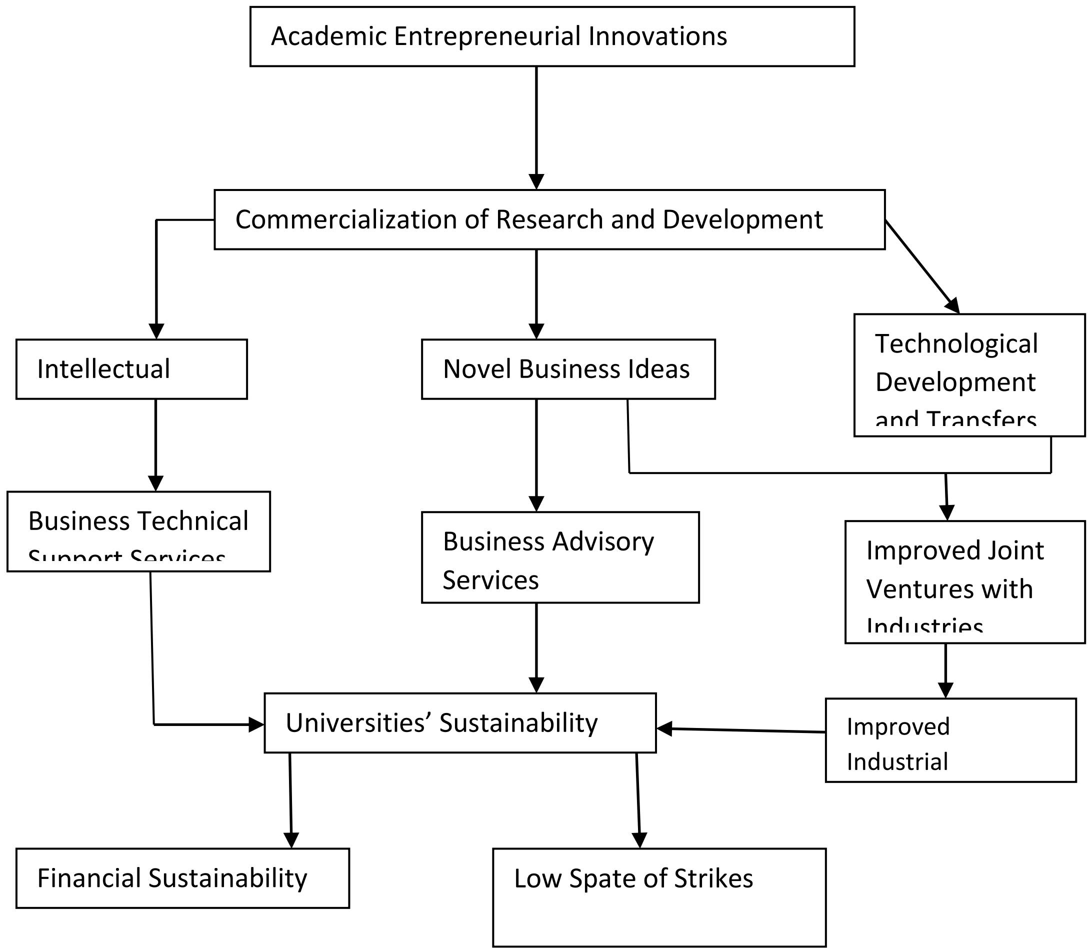

Figure 1: Academic Entrepreneurial Innovations Framework

Universities Sustainability

To be sustainable is to be able to survive without collapsing. Sustainability, according to Abdullahi (2021) and Sharma (2013), is the capacity of an institution to operate over an extended period of time without suffering a reduction in growth as a result of a shortage of essential resources. In many postsecondary institutions nowadays, sustainability is considered as one of the main issues (Njoki, 2016). Therefore, ensuring that tertiary institutions are ready to create adequate revenue through a long-term goal to enable them carry out their operations efficiently and invest in their academic and research activities without unduly depending on government funding is the primary goal of governance in these institutions. The current appalling economic condition of academic institutions in Nigeria mostly arose from their incapacity to balance their expenses and earnings (Abdullahi, 2021). Due to the rising expenses of post-secondary education, rising enrolment, and deteriorating economic circumstances, postsecondary institutions are not receiving enough outside money to effectively carry out their missions.

As a result, the organisation's biggest issue right now is the problem of maintaining university sustainability. For postsecondary educational institutions to determine whether learning programmes are viable over the long term, accurate and relevant models of sustainability are essential. Numerous studies are being carried out globally with the goal of resolving concerns related to financial sustainability in educational settings. The research by Driscoll, Clare, and Dennis (2013) is one of the well-known studies that made the case that five skills are necessary for education to be sustainable.

METHODOLOGY

A correlational research design was used for the study. A correlational study design examines associations between a minimum of two variables without altering any of them. This is in line with studies of of Ivonne (2020) who examined the factors that affect university financial sustainability as well as Dorothea and Connie (2018) who looked into drives university academics to be entrepreneurial. These two studies used correlational design. Population of the study consists of 3,536 lecturers from nine state-owned universities in Southwest (SW) Nigeria that have existed for 10 years (Source: Establishments office of each university, 2023). The sample size of 616 lecturers was drawn using a multi-stage sampling technique involving purposive and proportionate sampling techniques. Hence, sample of the study was drawn from the three of the nine universities; Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Ekiti State University, Ekiti State and Lagos State University, Lagos State.

A five-point rating scale questionnaire titled: ‘‘Academic Entrepreneurial Innovations Questionnaire (AEIQ)’’containing three sections according to the research questions was used to collect data on the extent of academic entrepreneurial innovations at universities. The instrument was face and content validated by three experts two in Business Education and one in Educational Management Department from Tai Solarin University of Education and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUST), Agbami, Enugu, Nigeria. A pilot study involving 30 lecturers from Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUST) was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach alpha and an overall reliability coefficient value of 0.90 was obtained. Average revenue of the university obtained by adding students’ fees, revenue from consultancy services and government subvention was used as indicators for measuring sustainability of the universities. Data for the study were collected by the researchers with the help of three research assistants who were guided on the procedure to follow. The researcher and assistants visited the universities and administered copies on the instrument directly to the respondents. After three weeks, the research assistants collected the administered instruments from the respondents. This facilitated a high response rate of 589 copies (representing 95.6%) of the instrument with attrition rate of only 27 copies (representing 4.4%). Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis was used to analyze data to answer data to the research questions. When p_{value} is less than significance level ($p < .05$), the research question is positive or otherwise.

RESULTS

Table 1: PPMC results on the sale of research and development (R&D) outputs and sustainability in state-owned universities in South-West Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	r_{value}	p_{value}
University Sustainability		15.6672	2.35056			
Sales of research outputs	589	15.9066	2.08732	587	.682	.001

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 shows that there was significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the order of ($r = .682$, $p < .05$). This means that there is significant relationship between sales of research outputs and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

Table 2: PPMC results on the relationship between collaborative research initiatives with industries and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	r_{value}	p_{value}
University Sustainability		15.6672	2.35056			
Collaborative research initiatives	589	22.5603	2.32522	587	.589	.020

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows that there was significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the order of ($r = .589$, $p < .05$). This means that there is significant relationship between collaborative research initiatives and state-owned universities sustainability in Southwest, Nigeria.

Table 3: PPMC results on the relationship between technical inventions based on research results and sustainability of state-owned universities in Southwest Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	r_{value}	p_{value}
University Sustainability		15.6672	2.35056			
Technical inventions on research results	589	15.9949	2.22883	587	.357	.025

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 shows that there was significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the order of ($r = .357$, $p < .05$). This means that there is significant relationship between technical inventions on research results and state-owned universities sustainability in Southwest, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study's findings show that there is a favourable correlation between academic entrepreneurial innovations and sustainability of universities in South-West, Nigeria. This finding suggests that a rise in academic entrepreneurial innovations would only slightly improve the sustainability of universities. These results are consistent with those of Wang *et al.,* (2021), who demonstrated that entrepreneurial innovation positively influences entrepreneurial intention and that entrepreneurial knowledge acts as a mediator in the interaction between the two. Academic entrepreneurial innovations in terms of sales of research outputs, technical invention and collaborative research initiatives are found to be positively related with universities' sustainability. The results concur with ~~those~~ Ogunkoya and Hassan (2019) who reported that an organisation's profitability in Lagos State was significantly impacted by its entrepreneurial innovation strategy. The authors came to the conclusion that an organisation's profitability and competitiveness in Lagos State, Nigeria, are positively and significantly impacted by an entrepreneurial innovation strategy. According to Dorothea and Connie (2018), a positive academic environment fosters knowledge-sharing and encourages academics to become more entrepreneurial. Dorothea et al also reported that increased entrepreneurial orientation by academics can help universities modify their business models to satisfy the requirements of the industrial sector and achieve sustainability. According to Gontur *et al.,* (2016), there is a favourable correlation between an organisation's competitive advantage and innovation, as well as between entrepreneurial development and innovation. Additionally, the researchers' discovered that boosting organisational sustainability, competitiveness, and wealth creation requires the use of entrepreneurial innovation. This is in line with Pablo *et al.,* (2010 who noted that different factors impact on academics' entrepreneurial endeavours. The researchers' found that while prior entrepreneurial experience drives the identification of economic opportunities, other factors shape the process of detecting and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities for the sustainability of the organisation.

Conclusion

An increasing number of stakeholders in tertiary education is worried about the viability and sustainability of state-owned universities. Based on the findings of the study that academic entrepreneurial innovations has a positive relationship with sustainability of state-owned universities, the study concluded that state government-owned universities in Southwest, Nigeria and other parts could be made more sustainable through academic innovations involving the sales of research outputs, joint research initiatives with businesses and technological inventions based on research findings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. State-owned universities should embrace more academic entrepreneurial innovations through sale of research and development (R&D) outputs, collaborative research initiatives with industries, and technical inventions based on research results to industry to make more revenue for the system and enhance their sustainability.
2. Universities management should do more of investments in lecturers' capacity building in form of mentoring, conferences, workshops, seminars and ICT training to

improve their knowledge and skills for conducting reputable research towards addressing industrial needs.

3. Senior lecturers and others in state-owned universities should provide mentoring programmes for younger and less-experienced colleagues through collaborative research with solid contents for knowledge sharing with the industry.
4. State-owned universities should re-invent themselves as entrepreneurial and boundary-spanning hubs by collaborating diligently with industry players to increase their revenue-base through academic entrepreneurial innovations.

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BUSINESS EDUCATION ACCOUNTING SKILLS AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN OGUN STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of Business Education accounting skills on economic prosperity of post graduate students in Ogun state-owned universities. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population 281 postgraduate Business Education students in two state owned universities studied without sampling because the size was not too large. A self-developed questionnaire titled Business Education Accounting Skills for Economic Prosperity of Post Graduate Students Questionnaire (BEASEPQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire was apportioned into three sections. Section 1, 2 and 3 focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, accounting skills needed and economic prosperity items respectively. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by three experts. A total of ten Business Education postgraduate students at Rivers state University, Rivers State were used as pilot testing and the data gotten were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and a reliability coefficient of .93 reported. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation and bar-chart were used to answer research question 1 while multiple regression analysis was use to answer research questions 2 and 3. The findings of the study indicated that accounting skills such as communication, adaptability, auditing, sales, ledger, cashbook preparation, business-acumen and finance are relevant for the prosperity of postgraduate students in the area. There was composite contribution of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable; $R = 0.334$, $p < .05$. It was concluded that Business Education accounting skills can propel economic prosperity of post graduate students in Ogun state-owned universities. The study recommended that Business Education postgraduate students should further receive more training in accounting skills to prepare them for economic prosperity.

KEYWORDS: Accounting skills, business education, economic prosperity, postgraduate students

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the prosperity of an economy of the nation is the sole aim of the government. Prosperity of the nation or an economy has different meanings to different individual or countries, but, in this study, it implies an economic system where majority of the people are engaged in economic activities, peaceful coexistence and enjoy the fruitfulness of the development. It also entails circumstances that promote behavior for growth and development for generality of the economy. Since prosperity of a nation always guides against any one or group from falling into the poverty-circle and ensures that most, if not all, must get employed and busy with of on-going job. Economic prosperity entails the process of creating an avenue and environment that can promotes growth and development of indigenous business for employment opportunities. It also focuses on the nation ability to experiences economic growth as well as development for the achievement of optimal business sustainability and employment creation.

A country is deemed to attain economic prosperity when it has capability to compete with the committee of the world economies globally. Such country will have capacity of competitiveness and majority of the citizens will have access to quality of life and gainful employment. It is in this regard that authors like Abuka, Tunga and Nwandu, (2020), Mong and Okolocha (2020) and Hassan and Gbadegesin (2021) have raises concerns about economic prosperity of Nigeria as a nation due to the high level of poverty, unemployment and poor quality of life facing the citizens. These authors averred that for any nation to attain economic prosperity, the quality of graduates from its tertiary institutions must be such that can drive economic development in terms of ability to self-engage with ~~the~~ economic issues that tend to plunge them into the poverty-circle. This implies that their institutions must produce quality graduates that have capability to drive self-economic development through self-reliance which will serve as antidote for rising unemployment. In the same vein, Umoru and Bala (2018) reiterated that when graduates of university become economically self-reliant it will serve as viable way of attaining economic prosperity in long run since the graduates will venture into the development of small and medium scale business (SMEs) using local raw materials and employee and eventuality pay taxes which will improve total government revenue.

Establishments of SMEs as a way to curb graduates' unemployment and reduce poverty in the society. It is a welcome development that government and stakeholders in Nigeria are supposed to encourage and support for the nation to achieve economic prosperity (Okeke-Ezeanyanwu, Onyeagba & Ugwuogo, 2022). A country where majority of its youthful-age members are economically engaging will enjoy peaceful atmosphere and quality of life because no meaningful development can take place in an atmosphere of crisis and unrest. According to Adeleye et al (2022) for university graduates to support the nation economic prosperity, such graduates must not join unemployment figure in the country, rather they should be ready to commercialize the skills learnt while in institution. Through this, more business as form of SMEs could be establishes which could flourish the achievement of economic prosperity. Adeleye et al (2022) further opines that for graduates to take such steps, skills such as accounting skills might be useful to propel the optimum features of effective cost arrangement for the establishment of the enterprises. However, the authors said that Business Education graduates should be in a position to have acquires accounting skills better than other disciplines, because of its vocational in nature.

Business Education is a programme of study that training students for business, teaching and office work. It prepares its recipients for future engagement in business and is vocational in nature, by this, it means it's a discipline that train it students for self-reliance in long-run, if white-collar job not coming (Umaru & Bala, 2018). Osuala (2007) defines Business Education as programme that taught its students in vocational way of handling business and enterprise for life self-sustenance. The author further buttresses that business education is an educational programme that teaches students on saleable skills for the future work engagement and ability to be economically self-reliance. Osuala further stated that Business Education is subdivided into options which include accounting, secretarial administration, marketing, entrepreneurship as well as management.

Business Education accounting is an option of the programme that dealt with the training of students in the concepts, application and skills of accounting to propel them for future word of work (Hassan & Gbadegesin, 2021). Business education accounting skills are those skills business education graduates needed to excel in their place of work as well as those skills that can shape their business character and development ability. Abuka et al (2020) stated that having acquires detail knowledge of accounting skills by business education is a welcome development that can help them in preparing accounting records that can propel the performance of any business they later engage in future. It will also promote their ability in management of cash and prudency in resources allocation for effective and sustainability of businesses.

Okeke-Ezeanyanwu et al (2022) further opines that accounting skills such as budgeting, critical, business-acumen, finance among others were the needed skills and competencies requires for the establishments of SMEs by graduates of Business Education and these skills may ensure enterprise sustainability for economic prosperity. Adeleye et al (2022) argues that the acquisition of fundamental accounting skills such as effective communication, competencies to audit business account, business competencies as well as adaptability skills could drive and motivate Business education graduates' ability to venture into business such as capability to establish SMEs.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The achievement of economic prosperity whereby Nigerian university graduates could secure white-collar jobs or engage in entrepreneurship ventures to eradicate or reduce unemployment, poverty and improve quality of life seems to be a mirage in the country. Observations have indicated that some graduates lack skills for paid employment, lack of entrepreneurship skills, and access to funds entrepreneurship ventures in the midst of high level insecurity and government policy of multiple taxation, are among the factors affecting graduates' economic prosperity in Nigeria. Despite steps taken so far by the government and other stakeholders in the country, the problem of inability to attainment of economic prosperity by Nigerian university graduates will persists and call for urgent intervention. This prompted the study on the influence of Business Education accounting skills on economic prosperity of post graduate students in Ogun State to provide empirical data that will inform objective intervention by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to determine the influence of Business Education accounting skills on economic prosperity of post graduate students in Ogun State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. Business Education accounting skills that are relevant for attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State.
2. Contributions of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State.
3. Relative influence of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State.

Research Questions

The following research question guide the study:

1. What Business Education accounting skills are relevant for the attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State?
2. Is there any composite contribution of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity?
3. To what extent do Business Education accounting skills relatively influence the attainment of economic prosperity?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design was used for the study in order to collect data from the respondents for answering the research questions. This design has been adopted by Mong and Okolocha, 2020; Hassan and Gbadegeshin, 2022). The population 281 postgraduate Business Education students in two state owned universities (Tai Solarin University of Education and Olabisi Onabanjo University) studied without sampling because the size was not too large. The study uses adapted researcher self-developed questionnaire titled: Business Education Accounting Skills and Economic Prosperity Questionnaire (BEASEPQ). The questionnaire was apportioned into three sections 1, 2 and 3. Section 1, 2 and 3 focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, accounting skills needed and economic prosperity items respectively. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by three experts from Department of Technical and Vocational Studies as well as Business Education, Tai Solarin University of Education. All their inputs were amended on the questionnaire before proceeding on the reliability of the questionnaire. However, a total of ten Business Education post graduate students at Rivers state University, Rivers State were used as pilot testing because they were not among the sample size of the study and this exercise was conducted twice. The data gotten were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and a reliability coefficient of .93 reported. Primary method of data collection was adopted in this study. This was happened through the usage of researchers self-developed questionnaire (BEASEPQ). However, four research assistants were employed to assist in distributing the questionnaire to the participants. As early mentioned, a total of 281 copies of the questionnaires were distributed for administration and only 279 were retrieved and used for analysis with 99.3% as retrieval rate.

Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and bar-chart were adopted for answering research question 1. Research questions 2 and 3 were analyzed using multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What Business Education accounting skills are relevant for the attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State?

Table 1: Relevant Business Education accounting skills for the attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State

Business Education Accounting Skills	Mean	SD	Responses
Communication and adaptability skills	2.88	.894	Relevant
Auditing and sales skills	2.93	.885	Relevant
Ledger and cashbook preparation skills	2.96	.727	Relevant
Business-Acumen and finance skills	3.19	.705	Relevant
Total Mean	2.99		Needed

Source: Field Survey, 2024

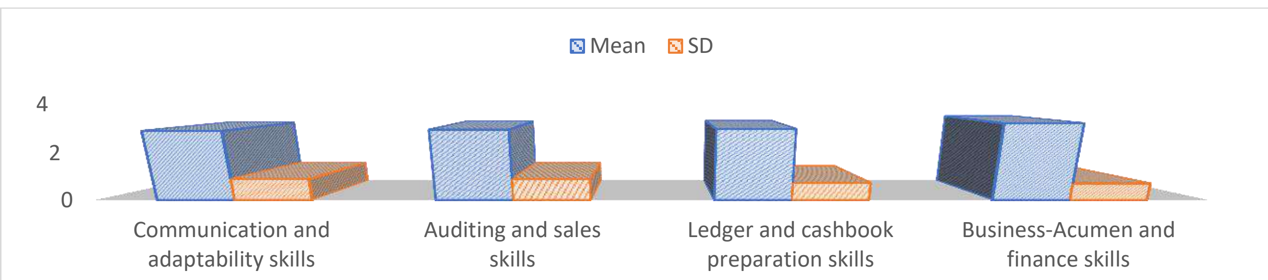

Figure 1: Bar-chart showing relevant business education accounting skills for the attainment of economic prosperity by postgraduate students in Ogun State

From table 1 and bar-chart 1, communication and adaptability skills with mean value 2.88 > 2.50; auditing and sales skills with mean value 2.93 > 2.50; ledger and cashbook preparation skills with mean value 2.96 > 2.50; and business-acumen and finance skills with mean value 3.19 > 2.50 all greater than bench mark mean value. It was further revealed that cluster mean was 2.99 and since this value greater than the bench mark mean value of 2.50. i.e 2.99 > 2.50. This implied that communication, adaptability, auditing, sales, ledger, cashbook preparation, business-acumen and finance skills were among the business education accounting skills needed for the attainment of economic prosperity.

Research Question 2: Is there any composite contribution of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity?

Table 2: Composite contribution of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.334[a]	.112	.111	3.33611

a. Predictors: (Constant), Economic prosperity

The table showed that there was composite contribution of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable; R = 0.334, $p < .05$. The table further indicated that {11.1% (Adj. R^2 = 0.111)}, that about 11% of the variance in economic prosperity of post graduates' students was accounted by the linear combination of the explanatory variables. Thus, this implied that there was composite contribution of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity.

Research Question 3: To what extent do Business Education accounting skills relatively influence the attainment of economic prosperity?

Table 3 Relative influence of explanatory variables on dependent variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	16.263	.720		22.593	.000
	Comm and adaptability	.183	.023	.121	8.011	.000
1	Auditing and sales	.306	.022	.206	14.008	.000
	Ledger and cashbook	.092	.025	.056	3.632	.000
	Business-Acu and finance	.142	.011	.186	12.864	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Economic prosperity

Table 3 showed that the sign of the coefficient of explanatory variables such as communication and adaptability, auditing and sales, ledger and cashbook and business-acumen and finance skills were positive which implied that an increase or improvement in any of these will increase the economic prosperity. All the eight variables examined three were found to be significant and strongly determine economic prosperity of post graduate students with their p-value less than 0.05. Sign of auditing and sales skills (β = .206, t = 14.008, $p <.05$), business-acumen and finance skills (β = .186, t = 12.864, $p <.05$), communication and adaptability skills (β = .121, t = 8.011, $p <.05$) and ledger and cashbook skills (β = .056, t = 3.632, $p <.05$) were positive and significant.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study reveal that communication, adaptability, auditing, sales, ledger, cashbook preparation, business-acumen and finance skills were among the business education accounting skills needed for the attainment of economic prosperity. These findings correlate with Adeleye et al (2022) who agreed that accounting skills for graduates to prepared ledger and cashbook for enterprises may include the factors driving their success their economic prosperity while Hassan, and Gbadegesin (2021) concludes that accounting skills such as adaptability and business-acumen skills were viable enough to drive SMEs towards economic success and prosperity. The findings of the study indicated that business education accounting skills such as communication and adaptability, auditing and sales, ledger and cashbook and business-acumen and finance skills positively influence economic prosperity in the form of promoting their ability and capability to venture into the establishments of SMEs. This further improved their chances of not being fell into the poverty-circle in the country. The study findings also corroborate with Abuka et al (2020) who found that the possession of accounting skills enhance capacity of graduates to venture into business development. Mong and Okolocha (2020) concludes that accounting skills such as finance and adaptability couple with effective communication encourage graduates to venture into entrepreneurship engagement and enterprises. Okeke-Ezeanyanwu et al (2022) agrees that possession of fundamental accounting skills such as communication and business acumen drive entrepreneurs' capability to success in new business creation and development.

CONCLUSION

Having examined the influence of Business Education accounting skills on economic prosperity of post graduate students in Ogun State, the study concluded based on the findings that communication, adaptability, auditing, sales, ledger, cashbook preparation, business-acumen and finance skills were among the business education accounting skills needed for the attainment of economic prosperity; there was composite and relative contributions of Business Education accounting skills on the attainment of economic prosperity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University management should ensure that Business education postgraduate students need to be taught or re-trained on the acquisition of accounting skills no matter their options in the programme.
2. Capacity building programme should be sponsor by the authority in the university for the lecturers of Business Education to increase their level of instruction delivery in accounting skills.
3. The department of Business Education should get more funds from the management of the university to develop accounting library with worthy and standard textbooks.
4. More qualify human resources should be employ to teach accounting courses in the university at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Particularly, any lecturers who does

not have first degree in accounting related courses should not be allow to teach the accounting cure subjects.

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BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES' SELF-SUSTENANCE AND APPLICABILITY OF ACCOUNTING SKILLS IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study determined Business Education graduates' self-sustenance and applicability of accounting skills in South-West Nigeria. It was guided by two research questions. A correlation research design was used. The population comprised 281 postgraduates Business Education students in public university in the area. The entire population was studied without sampling because the size was not too large. Two researcher developed instruments titled ''Accounting Skills Questionnaire (ASQ) and Self Sustenance Questionnaire (SSQ)'' were used for data collection. The questionnaire was apportioned into three sections 1, 2 and 3. Section 1, 2 and 3 focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, accounting skills needed and economic prosperity items respectively. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by three experts and reliability index was reported as 0.93 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to answer research question 1 while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) research question 2. The findings of the study revealed that skills to interpret financial statements, sources of fund, accounts receivable and accounts payable, obtain loan, prepare day to day financial transactions, sales and purchases were among needed accounting skills self-sustenance among business education graduates in Southwest of Nigeria. The study concluded that there was relationship accounting skills and business education graduates' self-sustenance (r = 0.192, p <. 05). Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended among others that .... (state two to three key recommendations) capacity building programme such as workshop should as a matter of urgency be organizing and sponsor by the authority of the university to show-case the integrity of acquisition of accounting skills for all postgraduate students.

KEYWORDS: Accounting Skills, Business Education, Economic Prosperity, Postgraduate Students

INTRODUCTION

The issue of graduates' self-sustenance is among the concerns of government, stakeholders in education and the economy as well as parents, guardians and graduates in Nigeria. After spending years with resources and commitment in universities, it is disheartening after graduation to see such graduates roam the streets without job or viable means of livelihood for years. Self-sustenance refers to a situation where individuals are able to take care of their needs and wants while contributing to the economic development of their society. Ensuring that graduates are engaged for self-sustenance is an important route for them to be gainfully employed. However, this generally depends on the programme they study. Skills in the programmes and the levels at which they were acquired by the graduates in the course of their university education.

Self-sustenance of Business Education graduates relates to the extent to which they are economically self-reliant with ability to establish and manage small scale businesses and profitability sustain them for wealth and employment creation. Self-sustenance is all about the capability of someone to be economically independent through paid employment and through paid employment and or self-employment. Amoda, Adebayo, Kazeem and Babajide (2020) buttressed this point by reiterating that for Business Education graduates to attain self-sustenance, they must have ability to solve three contemporary issues such as employment creation, poverty reduction and improved standard of living. This implied that self-sustenance as it relates to this study is all about how they could become self-employed and employers of labour who enjoy improved standard of living and contribute to the reduction in poverty level in the society. To attain self-sustenance, they need to be creative, possess intellectual skills and have capability to drive business activities which may be small in nature. Business education graduates' self-sustenance focuses on the extent to which they can strive for economic development and become economically independent rather than seeking for unavailable white-collar jobs (Amoda et al 2020).

Business education is a dynamic field of study which aims at grooming skilled manpower to satisfy employers needs and reduce ever growing graduate unemployment in the society. Business education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all levels of the educational delivery system ranging from elementary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Business education includes education for marketing occupations, office occupation, accounting, distribution, business teaching, business administration, business management, type-writing stenography and secretarial education or studies (Elujekwute, Nwaokwa, Aja & Oigoche, 2021). It is often ~~times~~ described as education for and about business whose primary purpose is to prepare individuals for gainful employment in business occupation.

The value of university business education programme could be determined by its ability to adequately prepare and equip the products in such a manner that they could fit into specific jobs or establish themselves upon graduation from school. Business education provides students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal finance and business and offers those who wish to pursue a career in business an opportunity to develop the skills, abilities and understanding that will enable them to start and progress in business occupation after graduating from higher school or tertiary institutions (Elujekwute et al 2021).

Business education as vocational programme teaches accounting skills in addition to marketing, office practice, office technology and management and teaching skills. Generally, accounting is called the language of business because it tells the owners/managers and other stakeholders of the business what is happening in the business. Accounting provides information to a wide range of interest groups and ultimately shows how a business has been managed for a period whether successfully managed or otherwise (Abuka, Tunga & Nwandu, 2020). It also provides information regarding the financial position of the firm.

According to Osuala (2009) in Adamu, Abdullai and Hamza (2022), the knowledge of fundamental accounting skills is very imperative for sustainable business. The fundamental accounting skills are those competencies in basic accounting required by a person to function competently, confidently and successfully in the process of carrying out the function of recording daily business transactions. They include skills in book-keeping, purchasing and supply, bargaining, determining labour costs, and simple budgeting. ~~Others are skills in~~ cash book, journal and ledger preparation. Cash book is the book used for recording detailed particulars of all money received and paid. Cash book is regarded as a book of original entry because all items of transaction carried out in cash basis pass through the cask book first before they are transferred to other books of account. In the context of this study, cash book refers to the book for recording cash receipts, payments and transactions with cheque in a business organization.

Ledger book is one of the essential books of account a business education graduate needs for effective running of his business. According to Chibunna (2017), Ledger is a book which contains in classified and summarized form, a permanent record of all transactions. Chibunna further stated that ledger is the chief and most important; hence known as the principal book of account. The ledger is the final destination of all transactions in the subsidiary books. In the context of this study, ledger refers to principal book of account where all items of transactions in business organization are recorded permanently in a summarized form. According to Etifit, Eminue and Udoh (2016), the skills needed to effectively prepare a ledger include: the ability to record cash sales and cash purchases on the credit and debit side respectively, create separate ledger accounts for all transactions and balance ledger accounts among others. Journal book is another book of account a business education graduate requires in the business operation. The journal is a book of original entries or prime entries which recorded transactions in chronological order. Journal can be referred to as a daily record into which transactions on credit are entered before they are posted to ledgers in a business organization (Onoh, 2017). The skill required to prepare the journal include: ability to identify the account to be debited and account to be credited, record transactions in a chronological order, write a brief description of the transactions among others (Etifit, Eminue & Udoh, 2016) The knowledge of fundamental accounting skills by business education graduates will ensure that there is adequate cash at hand to meet the necessary current and capital expenditures as well as to assist in maximizing growth and profits (Isaac, 2015). Accounting is a vocational studies and vocational interest is a developmental process and spans almost through a person’s life which processes start from primary and secondary school levels (Umaru & Terhemba, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The rate of unemployment in Nigeria generally and South-West Nigeria, in particular has been posing great challenge to the government and all well-meaning citizens. Persistent high unemployment in the country triggered the Federal Government, through the Ministries of Education to search for priority area for educational policy and practice that will equip youths with saleable skills, knowledge and understanding for self-reliance in order foster economic progress and reduce unemployment. Unfortunately, despite the effort and strides of the Federal Government and other stakeholders, not much progress has been recorded in regards to addressing graduates' self-sustenance and reducing the increasing problem of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. Therefore, this study on application of accounting skills for self-sustenance by postgraduate Business Education students in South-West Nigeria was informed by the need to provide empirical evidence that will be useful in addressing the societal problems by ensuring that the teaching of Business Education sufficiency equips undergraduate students with relevant skills whose application will enhance their self-sustenance as postgraduate students or employees.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine applicability of accounting skills and self-sustenance among postgraduate business education students in South-West Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

i. Extent accounting skills are needed for self-sustenance among business education graduates in South-West Nigeria.
ii. Relationship between accounting skills and self-sustenance among business education graduates' in South-West Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent are accounting skills ~~are~~ needed for self-sustenance among business education graduates in Southwest, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between accounting skills and self-sustenance among business education graduates in Southwest, Nigeria?

METHODOLOGY

The study used a correlation research design because it facilitates the determination of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The population of this study comprised 281 Business Education graduate running postgraduate programme in State Government owned Universities in South-West of Nigeria, namely Lagos State University (55), Tai Solarin University of Educationn, Ijagun, Ogun State (132), Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State, (50), and (Ekiti State University (44). The entire population was studied without sampling because the size was not too large. The study used 2 researchers' self-developed instrument titled: "Accounting Skills Questionnaire (ASQ)" and "Self-Sustenance Questionnaire''. Accounting Skills Questionnaire (ASQ): ASQ was a researcher self-structured instrument geared towards eliciting information from

Business Education Postgraduate students based on their level of accounting skills. The questionnaire requested responses on a four (4) – point scale format. The rating scale consists of Very Highly Needed (VHN), Highly Needed (HN), Needed (N) and Not Needed (NN). **Self-Sustenance Questionnaire (SSQ)**: SSQ was also a researcher self-structured instrument geared towards eliciting information from Business Education Postgraduate students regarding their level of self-sustenance. The questionnaire requested responses on a four (4) – point scale format. The rating scale consists of Very Highly Level (VHL), High Level (HL), Low Level (LL) and No Level (NL). The study used face and content validity. The instrument was open to a clear content validity by the researcher. This is achievable in an attempt to ensure that the instruments undergo a proper scrutiny by the designated authority and experts. More so, no part of the responses that were supplied by the various respondents were used for any other purposes other than its intended aims and objectives which in turn allow for the attainment of the objectives of this research work. However, the corrections made on the instruments were corrected before subjecting to reliability testing. Reliability of the instrument was done among business education postgraduate students twice from Delta State University who were not included in the study sample size. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the level of reliability coefficient of the instruments. Reliability coefficients of 0.92 and 0.93 for Accounting Skills Questionnaire (ASQ) and Self Sustenance Questionnaire (SSQ) were reported respectively. This implied that these instruments can elicit required data for the study. Primary method of data collection was used through the questionnaire administration. Data were generated from the targeted population whose opinion formed basis for the outcome of this study. However, researcher with the help of four trained research assistants distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. Each research assistant was used to help the researcher solicit the needed information from the respondents based on each of the selected universities. However, a total of 281 questionnaires were administered and only 229 copies were retrieved. Retrieval rate was 81.49%. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used for analysing research question 1. Research question 2 was answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent are accounting skills needed for self-sustenance among business education graduates in Southwest, Nigeria?

Table 1: Respondents mean ratings on the accounting skills needed for self-sustenance for self-sustenance of business education graduates in South-West Nigeria

Business Education Accounting Skills	Mean	SD	Responses
Ability to:			
Interpret financial statements for quick discovery of any errors and irregularities	3.35	0.81	Highly Needed
Discover sources of fund for starting up a business.	3.40	0.99	Highly Needed
Determine accounts receivable and accounts payable.	2.54	1.25	Needed

How obtain loan for running a business venture	2.93	1.06	Needed
How to prepare day to day financial transactions of a business	3.49	0.65	
Determine every sales and purchases for a given period of time	3.58	0.66	Highly Needed
Prepare profit or loss account and balance sheet of a business venture	3.51	0.91	Highly Needed
How to allocate for budgeted and unbudgeted expenditures	3.21	0.90	Highly Needed
Determining adequate stock control for a given period of time	2.86	0.97	Needed
How to operate accounting software packages	3.12	0.95	Highly Needed
How to investing decisions.	2.95	1.10	Needed
How to determine payroll allocation.	3.39	0.79	Highly Needed
Total Mean	2.95		Needed

From table1, it was revealed that cluster mean value of 2.95 was reported as total mean. Since this value greater than the bench mark mean value of 2.50. i.e 2.95 > 2.50. This implied that ability to interpret financial statements to discover irregularities, discover sources of funds for business startups. Access loans for business, prepare day to day financial transactions of a business among others are highly needed for self-sustenance of business education graduates in South-West Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between accounting skills and self-sustenance among business education graduates in Southwest, Nigeria?

Table 2: Relationship between accounting skills and business education graduates' self-sustenance in South-West, Nigeria

Variables	Mean	SD	r-value	df	p-value	Remark
Self-sustenance	47.7424	5.15709				
Accounting skills	41.4760	6.16125	.192	279	.004	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows r-value of 0.192 with p-value of 0.004 which is less that the alpha value of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) which means that there was is relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This result indicates that there is relationship between accounting skills and business education graduates' self-sustenance in Southwest, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The findings of the study indicate that all the 12 accounting skills used in the study, such as ability to interpret financial statements to discover irregularities, discover sources of funds for business startups. Access loans for business, prepare day to day financial transactions of a business among others are highly needed for self-sustenance of business education graduates in South-West Nigeria. These findings agree with Hassan, Alotaibi and Hussein (2022) who reported that the listed accounting skills are among the skills needed for entrepreneurship success and sustenance in the market in Saudi society. Furthermore, the findings support Okewale, Makinde, Olusola and Sotunde (2022) who reported that accounting skills are very much needed for sustainable small and medium scale enterprise (SMEs) in Ogun State. The findings also agree with Okeke-Ezeanyanwu, Onyeagba and Ugwuogo (2022) who found that accounting skills are especially needed by business education graduates and that their application in the relevant areas for the global labour market requirements is very crucial. Regarding relationship between accounting skills and business education graduates' self-sustenance in South-West, Nigeria, the study found that a positive relationship exists. This finding corroborates that of Wogboroma and Amesi (2021) that accounting skills has direct correlation with self-sustenance of Business Education graduates. This finding also agrees with Hassan and Araoye (2021) who reported that acquisition of different accounting skills by Business Education students is a examined accounting skills acquisition among business education students: panacea for poverty reduction in Oyo State, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study that accounting skills are highly needed and have positive relationship with self-sustenance of Business Education graduates in Ogun State, Nigeria, it was concluded that without adequate acquisition of the relevant accounting skills, it will be very difficult for graduates of Business Education in the area to attain self-sustenance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendation were made are provided for the study:

1. University authority should continue to train Business Education lecturers for postgraduate business education students to update their knowledge and skills on the use of accounting skills for self-sustenance.
2. Administrators of universities should provide quality time in the school time tables for teaching key accounting skills in Business Education to equip students' self-sustenance on graduation. The practical aspects of entrepreneurship education for mastery learning and sustainable accounting skills acquisition.
3. There should be the re-assessment, re-evaluation and re-designing of the business education curriculum by educational institutions to meet its practical functionality in the Nigeria economy so as to reflect the 21st century accounting skills and culture for gainful and self-sustainable employment.

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IMPACT OF AVAILABILITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES ON EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of finance in education management at Osun State University, Nigeria. Specifically, it investigates the impact of the availability and distribution of financial resources and the role of budgeting on the university's educational management. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested: How does the availability and allocation of financial resources affect various aspects of education management within Osun State University? How does budgeting impact education management at Osun State University? The null hypotheses were formulated as follows: $H_{0\ 1}$: The availability and allocation of financial resources do not significantly affect various aspects of education management within Osun State University. $H_{0\ 2}$: Budgeting strategies have no significant impact on education management at Osun State University. A survey research design was employed, targeting staff at Osun State University. Data were collected using questionnaires distributed to 100 randomly selected staff members. Multiple regression analysis was performed using SPSS. The findings revealed a strong positive association between education management, budgeting, and the availability and distribution of financial resources ($R = 0.978$; $R^2 = 95.7\%$), with statistical significance confirmed at the 0.05 level. The study concludes that adequate and well-allocated financial resources, along with consistent budgeting practices, are essential for effective education management.

KEYWORDS: *Finance; Education Management; Financial Resources; Budgeting.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial for a nation's progress and development. It forms the foundation for a country's future, helping individuals, encouraging innovation, and boosting economic growth. (Adeyemi et al., 2024). In Nigeria, known for its diverse culture and young population, a well-managed education system is essential for sustainable socio-economic development and general wellbeing of citizens.

Recently, there has been a push for better financial management to address these problems. Adequate financial resources are needed not only for basic operations but also for innovation, infrastructure improvements, hiring skilled faculty, and offering a comprehensive educational experience. Understanding Nigeria's education system helps highlight these challenges and the potential benefits of effective financial management.

According to Nigeria's government budget projections, funding for universities is capped along with other economic sectors. One issue in Nigerian higher education is that federal universities cannot charge tuition fees by law, leading to complaints about insufficient funding. Providing quality higher education is essential, but it requires proper funding. Over the past decade, the Federal Government has spent less than 2% of GDP on education, with university funding around 1.6%. This has led to poor quality, indicating a need to rethink the funding model to make universities more relevant and competitive (Akinyemi et al., 2012).

A reliable and adequate funding platform is key to achieving accessible and high-quality education. The common approach of fully state-funded or free tuition for a few universities has proven unsustainable. As private higher education grows rapidly worldwide, it has become crucial to address the challenges such as low standards, lack of transparency, and financial strategies that prioritize profits over quality. Therefore, guiding private sector developments in the public interest is essential (Adesola, 2024).

The primary research problem addressed in this study revolves around the insufficient funding of education and its profound impact on the quality of education at Osun State University, Nigeria. While education is widely recognized as a key driver of individual and national development, the chronic underfunding of educational institutions in Nigeria, particularly in Osun State, poses a critical challenge to achieving educational excellence.

According to data from the Nigerian government's budgetary allocations, the education sector consistently receives a lower share of the national budget than recommended by international benchmarks. The UNESCO-recommended benchmark for education expenditure is 26% of the total budget. However, Nigeria's allocation has often fallen far short of this target, hovering around

6-8% of the national budget in recent years (Usman, 2016).

Inadequate funding has resulted in a severe lack of essential infrastructure in educational institutions across Nigeria, including Osun State University. Many schools struggle with dilapidated buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate libraries and laboratories, all of which have a direct bearing on the quality of education (Omiunu, 2014).

The funding shortage has also led to a scarcity of qualified teaching staff. Some universities grapple with faculty shortages, which can hinder the delivery of high-quality education (Usman, 2016). Research is a crucial component of higher education, driving innovation and development. However, due to limited resources, universities often struggle to fund research initiatives and provide faculty with the necessary support to engage in meaningful research (Oke, et al., 2017). Students, the ultimate beneficiaries of the education system, bear the brunt of underfunding. They face challenges such as outdated learning materials, limited access to technology, and reduced student support services, all of which compromise their learning experiences and prospects for the future (Omiunu, 2014).

In an increasingly globalized world, the competitiveness of Nigerian graduates in the international job market is influenced by the quality of education they receive. Underfunded institutions may struggle to offer programs that meet global standards (Usman, 2016). These statistics and evidence highlight the dire consequences of insufficient funding on the education sector in Nigeria, with particular relevance to Osun State University. The underfunding problem is multifaceted, affecting infrastructure, faculty and staff, research, and, most importantly, the quality of education delivered to students. The effect of this problem is widely felt in Osun State University making it imperative to conduct this study on the impact of availability and distribution of financial resources and budgeting on education management in the institution.

This research endeavors to investigate how finance can serve as a catalyst for addressing these challenges and improving the management of education at Osun State University.

This study aims to assess the impact of availability and distribution of financial resources on education management in Osun state university, Nigeria. In particular, the study sought to investigate the ways in which Osun State University's education management is impacted by the availability and distribution of financial resources. The investigation of budgeting's impact on Osun State University's education management is another goal of the study. In order to direct the investigation, some questions were developed; (i) How does the availability and allocation of financial resources affect various aspects of education management within Osun State University? (ii) How does budgeting have impact on education management in Osun State University? The study's hypotheses were stated in the null form; (i) Availability and allocation of financial resources does not significantly affect various aspects of education management within Osun State

University (ii) Budgeting strategies on education management in Osun State University.

This study aims to explore how finance can improve the management of education at Osun State University, Nigeria. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has a diverse and complex education system. It includes various levels from primary to tertiary education. However, the education system faces serious challenges such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, unequal access, outdated curricula, and low-quality teaching and research. One of the main issues is financing which causes, with many educational institutions, including Osun State University, to struggle with limited resources and poor learning environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Related literature to the study was reviewed under theoretical framework, theoretical studies and empirical studies as follows;

EDUCATION

Education significantly influences family income, as higher levels of education are linked to improved economic and psychological outcomes (Olanrewaju et al., 2024). When individuals attain higher education, they often have better job prospects, higher earning potential, and a more stable financial situation. This relationship between education and income extends to families, where educational attainment can enhance overall family well-being and stability. Education contributes to better decision-making and health outcomes within families. Educated individuals are more likely to make informed choices about health, nutrition, and lifestyle, which can positively impact their family's quality of life. As a result, education not only shapes individual success but also plays a crucial role in improving the economic and social conditions of entire families, communities and nations.

Historical Overview of Osun State University (UNIOSUN)

Osun State University (UNIOSUN) was founded in 2006 by the Osun State Government to address the increasing demand for higher education in the state. Initially operating from a temporary campus in Okuku, the university later established its main campus in Osogbo. UNIOSUN welcomed its first students in 2007 and expanded by opening additional campuses across Osun State (Osun State University, 2024).

As UNIOSUN developed, it focused on building modern facilities, such as lecture halls, libraries, and laboratories. The university broadened its academic programs to include various disciplines and prioritized hiring qualified faculty to enhance teaching and research quality. It also introduced student support services like counseling, scholarships, and extracurricular activities to improve the student experience (Osun State University, 2024).

Significant Milestones and Changes in Education Management

UNIOSUN's key milestones include the construction of its main campus, expansion of academic programs, and recruitment of skilled faculty. The university has also focused on research and innovation, promoting partnerships with industries and government agencies. To tackle funding issues, UNIOSUN has diversified its funding sources and improved resource management. Embracing digital transformation has been crucial for modernizing teaching and learning, helping the university stay competitive in a fast-evolving educational environment (Osun State University, 2024).

Gaps in the Literature

Existing research often lacks in-depth analysis of the unique institutional contexts of specific Nigerian universities. Each institution may have distinct financial challenges and opportunities that require tailored solutions. Few studies conduct comparative analyses of multiple universities, limiting the generalizability of findings. A more comprehensive understanding of the diversity of financial management practices across institutions is needed. While some studies establish correlations between finance and education management, there's a gap in research that rigorously assesses the impact of specific financial management practices on educational outcomes.

Many studies diagnose financial challenges but fall short in offering practical policy recommendations for universities and policymakers to improve financial management and educational quality. Limited longitudinal studies exist that track the evolution of financial management practices and their effects over an extended period. Longitudinal research can provide insights into trends and changes in the financial dynamics of Nigerian universities. Few studies incorporate the perspectives and experiences of students in relation to financial management and its impact on the quality of education.

Empirical review

Osuji and Nyebuchi (2021) examined how school administrators in Port Harcourt manage finances through commercial ventures, social events, and private sector contributions. The descriptive survey included 105 administrators, and findings showed that revenue generation and auditing improve school administration. They recommended more revenue-generating activities, like farming, to supplement government funds.

Titus and Ukaigwe (2018) investigated fund management strategies, focusing on commercial ventures in Bayelsa State's public secondary schools. With 115 principals participating, the study found that keeping income records aids in effective administration. Data was analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and z-test statistics.

Theorical review

Financial Management Theory:

Financial Management Theory, as propounded by scholars like Weston and Brigham (1975) and Ross et al., (2013), provides a framework for understanding how organizations manage their financial resources to achieve their objectives. This theory emphasizes strategic allocation, efficient utilization, and rigorous monitoring of financial resources, aiming to maximize value and support organizational goals. Relevance: Financial Management Theory encompasses various principles and strategies related to budgeting, resource allocation, and financial decision-making. Within Osun State University, effective financial management practices are crucial for optimizing resource utilization. This theory aids in understanding how the university's financial decisions impact its ability to invest in infrastructure, faculty, and student services while maintaining financial sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a survey research design to investigate the impact of financial resource availability, distribution, and budgeting on education management at Osun State University. The survey design was selected because it facilitates the collection of quantitative data reflecting respondents' views, attitudes, and experiences regarding the study variables.

The study population comprised staff members of Osun State University. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select 100 respondents from this population. This approach ensured that each staff member had an equal chance of being included, thereby enhancing the representativeness of the sample.

Sampling procedures is the means of choosing the study subject from which the relevant data for the study gotten. In order to get a good representative's sample size, the sampling techniques used for this is simple random sampling. The random sampling technique was used to select respondents. The research used one hundred (100) copies of questionnaire for the analysis of data collected.

Utilising regression analysis, the data gathered via questionnaires was examined. The analysis's output was presented using Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS 22.0.

The study employed the following econometric model to test the hypotheses:

EDM = f (FR, BG)…………………..(1)

EDM= β0 +β1FR + β2BG………..(2)

Where:

FR is availability and allocation of financial resources

BG is Budgeting

EDM is Education Management

EDM is the dependent variable

FR is an independent variable

BG is an independent variable

β0 is an intercept parameter

β1 is a slope of regression

β2 is a slope of regression

RESULTS

Table 4.1: Model Summary for the Impact of Financial Resources on Education Management in Osun State University.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.978	.957	.956	.957	2.01

Table 1 show that availability and allocation of financial resources have a substantial and positive effect on education management in Osun State University. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.978 indicates a very strong positive relationship, meaning that as financial resources become more available and better allocated, the effectiveness of education management increases. The R-Squared value of 95.7% shows that the availability and allocation of financial resources explain 95.7% of the variance in education management outcomes, leaving only 4.3% unexplained by other factors. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.01 suggests there is no autocorrelation, confirming the reliability of this relationship.

Table 4.2: ANOVA Results for the Impact of Financial Resources and Budgeting on Education Management

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	118.057	2	59.028	1073.622	.000b
Residual	5.333	97	.055		
Total	123.390	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Education Management (EDM)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Budgeting (BG), Financial Resources (FR)

Table 2 assess the impact of budgeting on education management. The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.05$) between budgeting strategies and education management, with a p-value of 0.000. This strong statistical significance leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H02) that budgeting has no impact on education management. Instead, we accept the alternative hypothesis, confirming that budgeting significantly influences education management practices in Osun State University.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

- **H01**: The availability and allocation of financial resources do not significantly affect various aspects of education management within Osun State University.
    - *Decision*: Rejected. The findings suggest a significant and positive effect of financial resources on education management in Osun state University.
- **H02**: Budgeting strategies have significant effect no impact on education management in Osun State University.
    - *Decision*: Rejected. The results indicate that budgeting significantly affects education management in Osun state University.

Table 4.3: Confidence Interval

Model		95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-.193	.025
	FR	.786	.994
	BG	.059	.284

The results of the confidence intervals showed that the 95% confidence interval was reached. This indicates that the fraction of computed confidence intervals that include the actual population is reflected in the model's sample data.

Table 4.4: Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	**Dimension**	**Eigenvalue**	**Condition Index**	**Variance Proportions**		
				(Constant)	**FR**	**BG**
1	1	2.855	1.000	.02	.00	.00
	2	.127	4.748	.98	.04	.04
	3	.018	12.534	.00	.95	.95

a. Dependent Variable: EDM

According to the results of the Collinearity Diagnostics, the Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) is 1.00. Generally speaking, if a VIF is greater than 4, it should be investigated further; if it is greater than 10, it indicates significant multicollinearity that needs to be corrected. Further research is not necessary because the VIFs result in this model is 1.00.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of financial resource availability, distribution, and budgeting on education management at Osun State University. The findings revealed that financial resources and budgeting strategies play a significant role in the efficient management of the university. Specifically, the study established that adequate and well-allocated financial resources enhance operational efficiency, staff salary management, and the procurement of essential learning materials. Furthermore, effective budgeting strategies contribute to financial transparency, resource optimization, and overall institutional performance. The results of the multiple regression analysis demonstrated a strong positive relationship between education management, financial resource allocation, and budgeting practices. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.978$) indicated that financial management variables accounted for a substantial proportion (95.7%) of the variance in education management outcomes. Additionally, hypothesis testing confirmed that both financial resources and budgeting significantly impact education management, leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses. Based on these findings, the study concludes that financial management is a critical determinant of education quality and institutional sustainability. Universities must adopt strategic financial planning, ensure efficient allocation of resources, and implement sound budgeting practices to enhance their management effectiveness.

Recommendations

Based on the research objectives and findings, conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Osun State University management should consistently apply sound budgeting practices to maintain and enhance the effectiveness of its educational management. Regular review and refinement of budgeting processes will help ensure that financial resources are allocated in a manner that supports the university's strategic goals.
2. Osun State University management should actively seek to increase its internally generated revenue to supplement existing financial resources. Additionally, the university should focus on the efficient and effective allocation of these resources to sustain and improve educational management. This can be achieved by prioritizing areas that directly contribute to educational quality and operational efficiency.

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THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEPARTMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE ON UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NIGERIAN WORKPLACES

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ABSTRACT

Unethical behavior, including actions that violate organizational ethics and legal standards, poses significant risks to organizational performance and reputation and needs to be well managed. This study investigates how organizational departments influence unethical behavior among employees in Nigerian workplaces. It also examines the moderating effect of work experience on these relationships. Data were collected from 2,623 employees across various departments in organizations, and the analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, and regression analysis. The findings reveal a significant difference in unethical behavior across departments, with employees in Medical Services, finance, sales, and Academics reporting higher levels of unethical behavior than those in General Administration and Others. It also revealed that employees with more work experience exhibited stronger resistance to unethical pressures, particularly in departments like Finance and Medical Services. ANOVA and regression analyses confirmed significant differences in unethical behavior across departments with work experience as a significant moderator. The results suggest that certain departments may face more ethical challenges than others, necessitating targeted ethics training and intervention programs. It also emphasizes the importance of tailoring ethical policies and training to department-specific needs and challenges. This study offers actionable insights for policymakers and managers aiming to foster ethical practices tailored to specific departmental and experiential contexts.

KEYWORDS: Business ethics, Nigerian workplaces, Organizational departments, Quantitative analysis, Unethical behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Unethical behavior within organizations remains a persistent issue, eroding trust, productivity, and long-term sustainability. It encompasses a spectrum of actions, ranging from minor infractions like dishonesty to severe misconduct such as fraud, bribery, and corruption. In Nigeria, unethical behavior is a significant concern in both the public and private sectors (Adeyeye, Adenugba, & Okeke, 2021). This pervasive issue has prompted researchers and practitioners to delve into its underlying causes and explore strategies for fostering ethical behavior. One understudied aspect is the role of organizational departments in shaping employees' ethical decision-making. Departments can exhibit substantial differences in operational pressures, ethical climate, and leadership styles, all of which may influence the likelihood of unethical behavior (Treviño & Nelson, 2017).

Organizational departments often operate under unique cultural and functional pressures that may affect employees' ethical behavior differently. For instance, departments directly involved in financial management, such as Finance or Procurement, might face more frequent ethical dilemmas due to their handling of sensitive transactions (Aggarwal, 2015). On the other hand, departments such as Human Resources or Administrative Support may encounter fewer opportunities for unethical behavior. Moreover, the ethical climate within a department, shaped by leadership and peer influence, may encourage or discourage ethical practices (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999; Adaga, Egieya, Ewuga, Abdul, & Abrahams, 2024). However, little empirical research has been conducted to explore these dynamics in the Nigerian organizational context, where the combination of external economic pressures and weak regulatory enforcement might further provoke unethical behavior (Kolade & Ogbari, 2015).

This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the influence of organizational departments on unethical behavior in Nigerian workplaces. By analyzing data from employees across various departments, the study aims to identify departments that are more prone to unethical behavior and to understand how departmental dynamics contribute to ethical or unethical practices. This will provide valuable insights for developing department-specific interventions to promote ethical behavior and prevent misconduct.

This study seeks to explore the incidence of unethical behavior in several divisions of Nigerian workplaces. Specifically, it investigates whether there are substantial disparities in the frequency of unethical behavior between these departments. Furthermore, the study determines whether departments are more likely to report high or low levels of unethical activity. Finally, it investigates how departmental affiliation and work experience affect the chance of engaging in unethical behavior.

To achieve these goals, the study investigates whether organizational departments significantly influence unethical behavior, identifies departments reporting the highest levels, and examines the moderating effect of work experience on the relationship between departments and unethical behavior.

This study is crucial for understanding how unethical behavior manifests in different organizational departments in Nigeria. Given the ethical challenges facing Nigerian organizations, identifying department-specific ethical risks is necessary for designing effective interventions. By focusing on departments, this study provides a more nuanced view of organizational ethics, offering actionable insights for managers and policymakers. It also fills a gap in the literature by exploring the moderating role of work experience in the relationship between departmental pressures and unethical behavior, a topic that has been underexplored in the Nigerian context (Adeyeye et al., 2021; Kolade & Ogbari, 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this study is grounded in Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development (1981) and Victor and Cullen's Ethical Climate Theory (1988), which help explain how organizational departments influence unethical behavior.

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development: According to Kohlberg, individuals progress through different stages of moral development, beginning with pre-conventional stages focused on avoiding punishment and advancing toward post-conventional levels where ethical decisions are guided by universal principles (Kohlberg, 1981). The workplace can serve as an environment where individuals' moral reasoning is challenged by various pressures. Employees in different departments may face distinct ethical dilemmas, with their decisions shaped by their moral development. For instance, employees working in departments like Procurement and Finance may have frequent opportunities to commit unethical acts due to their access to sensitive financial data. Thus, Kohlberg's theory suggests that unethical behavior is not uniform across departments, as employees with different ethical reasoning processes and department-specific pressures will respond differently to ethical dilemmas (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999).

Victor and Cullen's Ethical Climate Theory: Victor and Cullen (1988) introduced the concept of ethical climate as a framework for understanding how organizational environments shape ethical decision-making. Ethical climates are defined by shared perceptions of what is ethically correct behavior within an organization and how ethical issues are addressed. Different departments may cultivate different ethical climates, depending on their leadership, function, and external pressures. For example, a department with a competitive climate that values high performance might foster an environment where cutting corners is tolerated. Conversely, departments with an ethical climate emphasizing rules and adherence to standards may discourage unethical behavior. This theory is essential for understanding how varying departmental cultures contribute to unethical behavior.

Conceptual Review

To understand the role of organizational departments in unethical behavior, it is important to clarify the key concepts of organizational departments and unethical behavior.

Departments within an organization refer to functional units that perform specific tasks and are often characterized by their unique operational goals, leadership, and external pressures. Departments such as Human Resources, Finance, Marketing, and Sales operate under different constraints and incentives, which may affect their exposure to ethical challenges. For example, while the Finance department deals with financial integrity, HR may focus on compliance with labor laws and employee well-being. These differences suggest that each department's exposure to ethical dilemmas is shaped by its functions and interactions with internal and external stakeholders. For instance, in commercial real estate, the interests of stakeholders can conflict, thereby creating moral dilemmas that require careful navigation to avoid detrimental impacts on company value (Oncioiu et al., 2020).

Unethical behavior refers to actions that violate moral or legal standards within an organization. This can include behaviors like dishonesty, theft, corruption, fraud, and workplace toxicity, negatively impacting employee performance (Arubayi, 2023). In the workplace, unethical behavior often arises when employees face conflicts between organizational goals (e.g., performance targets) and ethical principles (Treviño & Nelson, 2017). In this study, unethical behavior is operationalized as self-reported actions that violate organizational ethics or regulatory standards.

Despite extensive studies on unethical behavior, there remains a significant vacuum in understanding the role of departments within Nigerian organizations. While many studies have looked at organizational ethics in general, few have investigated how specific departments contribute to unethical behavior. Nigeria's unique regulatory problems and economic pressures create diverse ethical dynamics that may differ by department (Kolade & Ogbari, 2015). This study intends to close the gap by providing empirical information on the impact of organizational departments on unethical behavior in Nigerian workplaces.

Furthermore, the relationship between an employee's job experience and departmental pressures has gotten less consideration. More experienced employees may be better able to manage ethical issues, but less experienced employees may be more susceptible to unethical demands (Rest et al., 1999; Iyiegbuniwe, Wilfred, & Iyiegbuniwe, 2018). Future research should investigate how these factors interact to influence ethical behavior across departments. Existing research generally applies ethics training and interventions equally across organizations, failing to recognize the unique ethical difficulties encountered by different departments (Treviño et al., 2006). There is an urgent need for research that identifies department-specific ethical hazards and recommends specific actions to mitigate them.

Empirical Review

Several empirical studies have explored the link between organizational structures, departmental characteristics, and unethical behavior. These studies provide a foundation for examining how departments shape ethical practices within organizations.

Research has consistently shown that organizational departments play a significant role in shaping ethical behavior. According to Kish-Gephart, Harrison, and Treviño (2010), departments that face higher external pressures, such as sales and finance, are more prone to unethical behavior due to the increased opportunities for misconduct. For instance, sales personnel, driven by the pressure to meet targets, may be more likely to engage in unethical practices like misrepresentation or bribery. Similarly, finance departments may encounter ethical risks related to fraud, embezzlement, or manipulation of financial statements. Chen et al., (2024) also posit that procurement professionals often navigate ethically ambiguous situations, particularly in supplier selection, which can lead to reputational damage. All these illustrations emphasize the role of departments in determining the ethical behaviour of employees.

Another study by Peterson, Rhoads, and Vaught (2001) highlighted that ethical behavior varies across departments because of differences in operational goals and external stakeholder pressures. Employees in administrative or human resource departments, which are often insulated from external client demands or financial transactions, report fewer opportunities and pressures to act unethically. Conversely, employees in procurement or legal departments, where ethical dilemmas frequently arise, may have higher incidences of unethical behavior.

Concerning organizational climate and leadership, several studies have also examined how leadership and organizational climate affect ethical behavior. In environments with a strong ethical climate, Ye et al., (2022) found that employees are more likely to exhibit ethical behavior, as they feel supported by their leaders and the organizational culture. Treviño, Weaver, and Reynolds (2006) found that employees in departments led by ethical leaders were less likely to engage in unethical behavior. This was corroborated by Halbusi et. al., (2021) who found that ethical leadership positively predicts ethical behavior. Leadership significantly shapes the ethical climate of a department by setting standards for acceptable behavior, enforcing ethical guidelines, and fostering a culture of accountability. Departments where leaders emphasize ethical behavior and transparency tend to have lower levels of unethical conduct (Treviño & Nelson, 2017).

Victor and Cullen (1988) further argued that departments develop their ethical subcultures, which can either encourage or discourage unethical behavior. For example, departments that prioritize profit maximization or aggressive competition may create a climate where employees feel pressured to act unethically to meet targets. In contrast, departments focused on regulatory compliance or internal controls may have a climate that prioritizes adherence to ethical standards.

In the Nigerian context, research has highlighted the widespread prevalence of unethical behavior across industries. Adeyeye, Adenugba, and Okeke (2021) noted that weak regulatory frameworks, economic pressures, and cultural factors contribute to unethical practices in Nigerian workplaces. The authors found that unethical behavior was more common in departments that handled financial transactions or had significant interaction with external stakeholders, such as procurement, sales, and finance. Furthermore, departments with stronger leadership and clearer ethical guidelines reported lower incidences of unethical behavior, highlighting the importance of department-specific interventions.

Sequel to the above postulations and gap in the literature, this study hypothesized that:

H_1: There is a significant difference in unethical behavior across organizational departments.

H_2: Employees in departments such as Finance and Procurement are more likely to engage in unethical behavior compared to employees in departments such as HR or Administrative Support.

H_3: The effect of the organizational department on unethical behavior is moderated by work experience, such that the influence of the department is stronger for employees with less work experience than those with more work experience.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a cross-sectional quantitative design, allowing data collection from respondents at a single point in time to identify patterns and relationships between variables. The approach is particularly suited for testing hypotheses, as it facilitates the use of statistical methods to examine whether unethical behavior varies significantly across organizational departments and whether work experience moderates this relationship. A quantitative methodology supports robust statistical analysis, enabling a comprehensive examination of relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

The study's population comprises employees from diverse departments in Nigerian organizations, representing sectors such as Finance, Sales, Human Resources, Medical Services, Academics, and General Administration. From this population, a sample of 2,623 valid responses was drawn using convenience sampling, a non-probability method that selects participants based on data availability. While this approach ensures a practical and efficient selection process, it introduces limitations regarding generalizability. The dataset includes rich demographic and professional data, capturing department-specific dynamics that contribute to unethical behavior.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire embedded in the pre-existing dataset. The instrument measured unethical behavior through a 20-item scale, with scores ranging from 20 to 100, where higher scores reflect a greater likelihood of engaging in unethical actions. Respondents provided self-reported information about their organizational department, years of work experience, gender, and age. Ethical considerations were paramount, with strict adherence to respondent anonymity and confidentiality. Measures such as informed consent during data collection ensured compliance with ethical research standards.

Key variables include:

Unethical Behavior: The dependent variable is measured through self-reported continuous scores reflecting a range of unethical actions.

Organizational Department: The primary independent variable is categorized into functional areas, enabling analysis of inter-departmental differences.

Work Experience: Measured in years, this variable serves as both a control and a potential moderator of the relationship between department and unethical behavior.

Gender and Age: Control variables to account for demographic influences on unethical behavior

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and employed various statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographics and unethical behavior ratings. A one-way ANOVA tested for significant differences in unethical behavior across departments, while multiple regression analysis examined the influence of department, work experience, gender, and age on unethical behavior. To explore moderation, an interaction variable between department and work experience was introduced into the regression model. Additionally, chi-square tests assessed the relationship between categorical variables (e.g., gender, department) and unethical behavior. This suite of methods ensured a rigorous approach to testing the research hypotheses.

Despite its strengths, the study faces limitations. The reliance on self-reported data for unethical behavior introduces the risk of social desirability bias, where respondents might underreport unethical actions. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, as it captures data at a single point in time. A longitudinal approach could provide more insights into changes in unethical behavior over time. Furthermore, convenience sampling, while practical, restricts the findings' generalizability to all Nigerian workplaces.

The methodological choices reflect a balance between feasibility and rigor, enabling the identification of meaningful patterns and relationships that inform organizational ethics. By adhering to ethical guidelines and employing robust analytical tools, the research provides valuable insights into how organizational dynamics influence unethical behavior, offering a foundation for promoting better ethical practices in Nigerian organizations.

RESULTS

Table 1: Level of Unethical Behavior by Departmental Characteristics

Department	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**
Finance	527	72.14	9.04
Sales	398	71.55	8.89
Human Resources (HR)	463	69.82	8.75
Medical Services	311	71.93	9.06
General Administration	502	70.58	8.93
Academics	422	71.33	9.22
Others	300	69.28	8.64
Total	2,623	70.80	9.17

Table 1 shows the highest average score of unethical behavior in Medical Services (mean = 71.93), followed by Finance (mean = 72.14) and Sales (mean = 71.55), indicating that these departments have greater levels of unethical activity. In contrast, the department with the lowest average score was Others (mean = 69.28), indicating lesser levels of unethical behavior. In all departments, the average level of unethical behavior was 70.80.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test the hypothesis that unethical behavior varies significantly across organizational departments. The results of the ANOVA are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of ANOVA Test on Variation of Unethical Behavior Across Departments

Source	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	2,533.88	6	422.31	3.093	0.005
Within Groups	357,274.72	2,616	136.58		
Total	359,808.60	2,622			

The ANOVA results show a statistically significant difference in unethical behavior across organizational departments (F = 3.093, **p = 0.005**). This indicates that the mean levels of unethical behavior are not the same across departments. Hence, there are significant variations in unethical behavior depending on the department in which employees work.

Table 3: Tukey's HSD Results for Unethical Behavior by Department

Comparison (Departments)	**Mean Difference**	**Sig.**
Finance vs. HR	2.32	0.032
Sales vs. Others	2.27	0.041
Medical Services vs. Others	2.65	0.030
General Admin vs. Academics	1.50	0.088

However, to determine which departments differ significantly from each other in terms of unethical behavior, a Tukey's HSD post-hoc test was conducted. The result reveals that employees in Finance report significantly higher unethical behavior than those in HR (Mean Difference = 2.32, $p = 0.032$). Sales employees also report significantly higher unethical behavior than employees in the other departments (Mean Difference = 2.27, $p = 0.041$). Furthermore, the Medical Services department exhibits significantly higher levels of unethical behavior compared to the other departments (Mean Difference = 2.65, $p = 0.030$). No significant difference was found between General Administration and Academics ($p = 0.088$).

Table 4: Multiple regression analysis of the influence of departmental characteristics, work experience, gender, and age on unethical behaviour.

Predictor	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	73.485	1.132		64.906	0.000
Finance (vs. reference)	2.362	0.651	0.195	3.628	0.001
Sales (vs. reference)	1.782	0.678	0.174	2.628	0.007
Medical Services (vs. Others)	2.175	0.643	0.189	3.383	0.001
Work Experience	-0.138	0.032	-0.187	-4.312	0.000
Gender (Male = 1)	0.891	0.455	0.055	1.959	0.050
Age	-0.042	0.022	-0.051	-1.879	0.061

The results in Table 4 show $\mathbf{R^2 = 0.078}$, indicating that 7.8% of the variance in unethical behavior is explained by the independent variables. This shows that the organizational department significantly predicts unethical behavior.

For instance, employees in Finance (B = 2.362, p = 0.001) and Medical Services (B = 2.175, p = 0.001) report higher levels of unethical behavior compared to employees in the reference department (Others). Work experience is a significant negative predictor of unethical behavior (B = -0.138, p = 0.000), suggesting that more experienced employees are less likely to engage in unethical practices. Gender is marginally significant, with male employees reporting higher levels of unethical behavior compared to female employees (B = 0.891, p = 0.050). Age is not a significant predictor of unethical behavior (p = 0.061).

To test whether work experience moderates the relationship between the organizational department and unethical behavior, an interaction term was added to the regression model.

Table 5: Interaction Effect (Work Experience × Department) on Unethical Behavior

Interaction Term	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Finance × Work Experience	-0.064	0.026	-2.438	0.015
Sales × Work Experience	-0.053	0.027	-1.941	0.052
Medical Services × Work Experience	-0.058	0.025	-2.276	0.023

Table 5 indicates that the interaction between Finance and work experience is significant (B = -0.064, p = 0.015). This suggests that the relationship between the department and unethical behavior is weaker for employees with more work experience. The interaction between Medical Services and work experience is also significant (B = -0.058, p = 0.023), suggesting that less experienced employees in this department are more likely to engage in unethical behavior than those with more experience. The interaction for Sales is marginally significant (B = -0.053, p = 0.052).

Discussion

The findings of this study provide critical insights into how organizational departments and work experience influence unethical behavior in Nigerian workplaces. The results support the proposed hypotheses, while also aligning with and extending the existing body of literature.

The results confirmed that unethical behavior significantly varies across organizational departments. Employees in departments such as Finance, Medical Services, and Sales reported higher levels of unethical behavior compared to those in Human Resources and General Administration. This finding is consistent with Victor and Cullen's Ethical Climate Theory (1988), which suggests that departments operate under unique ethical climates shaped by their leadership, operational goals, and external pressures. For instance, Finance departments often handle sensitive transactions, increasing opportunities for unethical actions such as fraud or financial manipulation. Similarly, Medical Services may face ethical dilemmas due to conflicting demands between patient care and resource allocation, while Sales departments contend with pressure to meet performance targets, which can incentivize bribery or misrepresentation.

These findings align with prior research by Kish-Gephart, Harrison, and Treviño (2010), which highlights how departments exposed to higher external pressures or significant financial stakes are more prone to unethical behavior. In the Nigerian context, Adeyeye, Adenugba, and Okeke (2021) observed a prevalence of unethical practices in sectors where financial dealings and external pressures are significant, reinforcing the findings of this study. The study's findings also support the argument of Kolade and Ogbari (2015), who noted that weak regulatory oversight in Nigerian workplaces exacerbates departmental ethical risks.

Regression analysis confirmed that Finance, Sales, and Medical Services are significantly more likely to exhibit unethical behavior compared to HR or General Administration. This is supported by Treviño, Weaver, and Reynolds (2006), who emphasize that departments with higher external stakeholder interactions or performance pressures face greater ethical challenges. For example, Finance deals with monetary transactions, while Sales are driven by aggressive performance goals. The ethical dilemmas in Medical Services reflect the balancing act between administrative constraints and patient needs, which can increase the likelihood of ethical breaches.

Furthermore, Victor and Cullen's (1988) concept of ethical climates highlights how competitive or profit-driven departmental environments may encourage corner-cutting or unethical practices. This reinforces the finding that organizational subcultures within departments significantly contribute to variations in ethical behavior.

The study also demonstrated that work experience moderates the relationship between departmental affiliation and unethical behavior. Employees with less work experience in high-risk departments such as Finance and Medical Services were more likely to engage in unethical behavior, while those with greater experience exhibited stronger ethical standards. This finding aligns with Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory (1981), which posits that individuals' ethical reasoning evolves with exposure to ethical dilemmas and increasing experience.

Similarly, Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma (1999) argue that individuals with greater experience develop stronger moral reasoning, making them more resistant to ethical pressures. This study extends their findings by showing that the protective effect of experience is particularly evident in high-risk departments where employees face frequent and complex ethical challenges.

The findings underscore the importance of recognizing departmental differences when addressing unethical behavior in organizations. They suggest that ethical interventions should be tailored to the specific risks and pressures of each department. For high-risk departments like Finance and Medical Services, targeted ethics training and stricter oversight may be necessary.

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The moderating role of work experience also highlights the value of mentoring and ethics development programs to support less experienced employees in navigating ethical dilemmas.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the influence of organizational departments on unethical behavior in Nigerian workplaces and assess how work experience moderates this relationship. The findings revealed two key insights: first, unethical behavior significantly varies across departments, with higher levels observed in Finance, Sales, and Medical Services, and lower levels in Human Resources and General Administration. Second, work experience moderates unethical behavior, particularly in high-risk departments like Finance and Medical Services such that less experienced employees are more susceptible to unethical pressures, whereas more experienced employees exhibit greater resistance to unethical practices.

The research underscores the interplay between organizational context (departmental differences) and individual factors (work experience) in shaping unethical behavior. It validates ethical decision-making frameworks, such as Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory, by illustrating how professional experience enhances ethical reasoning in high-risk environments. These findings emphasize the need for tailored ethical interventions and experience-based mentoring programs to mitigate unethical behavior, particularly in departments prone to ethical risks.

Future research should adopt longitudinal designs, investigate additional organizational variables (e.g., leadership styles, culture), and conduct cross-cultural comparisons to deepen understanding and broaden the applicability of these findings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several actionable recommendations are proposed for Nigerian organizations. Firstly, organizations should implement targeted ethics training tailored to the specific challenges of high-risk departments such as Finance, Sales, and Medical Services. These training programs should focus on issues like transparency, fraud prevention, and ethical decision-making under pressure, equipping employees with practical tools to navigate their unique ethical dilemmas. Additionally, ethical leadership must be prioritized by training managers and department heads to model ethical behavior, set clear standards, and maintain accountability for the ethical climate of their teams. Leaders in high-risk departments should actively discourage unethical practices and foster an environment of integrity.

Organizations should also enhance monitoring and oversight mechanisms in departments prone to unethical behavior. Regular audits, ethical reviews, and anonymous reporting systems can help identify and address potential ethical violations early, promoting accountability and trust. Furthermore, mentorship programs should be introduced to support less experienced employees, pairing them with seasoned staff who can guide them through ethical challenges and reinforce the importance of adherence to organizational standards. Lastly, cultivating a strong ethical culture across the organization is essential. This includes developing and consistently promoting a code of ethics, encouraging open communication about ethical concerns, and fostering an overall culture of integrity that permeates all departments. Together, these initiatives can significantly reduce unethical behavior and promote a more ethical workplace environment.

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SOCIAL MEDIA AS A CATALYST FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIAN GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Social media platforms have become effective instruments in the current digital era, not only for networking and communication but also for learning and developing entrepreneurial skills. This study focused on the implications of social media as a catalyst for entrepreneurial learning and skill development for Nigerian graduate employability. Two research hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. The population of the study also used as the sample was 300 graduates and entrepreneurs from different industries in Nigeria. Online platforms were used for instrument administration and data collection for the study. The data collected were analysed using basic linear regression analysis. The results showed that social media platforms significantly influence the development of entrepreneurial learning and skill (R^2 = 0.702, Adj R^2 = 0.701, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and that entrepreneurial learning and skill development, facilitated by social media, significantly influence graduate employability (R^2 = 0.533, Adj R^2 = 0.532, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The study concludes that incorporating social media utilisation skills into the entrepreneurship curriculum at Nigerian universities can enhance *undergraduates' entrepreneurial aspirations to start their businesses by giving them the information and abilities needed to succeed in the current digital era. Based on these research findings, it was recommended that to improve the career prospects of Nigerian graduates, the students should leverage social media platforms for entrepreneurial learning, skill development, and career advancement opportunities, by incorporating social media training into their curricula to prepare them for the paradigm shift in the digital economy.*

KEYWORDS: Career prospects, Entrepreneurial learning, Graduate employability, Skill development, Social media.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the virtual world has ushered in a fundamental revolution in how information is collected, communicated, and utilized. Social media platforms today function as major resources for promoting entrepreneurial competence and improving abilities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media platforms have proved to be vital instruments for connection, interaction, skill advancement, and career development receiving great attention from the educational and corporate industries (Gupta & Gupta, 2018; Kim & Lee, 2012). The entire process of entrepreneurial learning is defined by firsthand learning and is typically aided by mentoring, formal education, and real-world business involvement. Thus, the growing prominence of social media networks, which include platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, offer access to a wealth of resources such as online courses, webinars, as well as business reports, that could augment entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (Babbie, 2020). Furthermore, social media platforms allow entrepreneurs to develop relationships with fellow entrepreneurs, instructors, and industry professionals, thus boosting collaboration and networking (Gupta & Gupta, 2018).

Wasim et al. (2024) explained that social media allows users to access many resources, networks, and up-to-date business insights, which help promote entrepreneurial education and learning. Through these platforms, aspiring business owners can connect and interact with professionals, and take part in online groups where they can gather insights and experiences. Furthermore, social media allow users access to a range of resources like webinars, business reports, and tutorials, that help increase their entrepreneurial skills. The interactive and collaborative components of social media further promote practical learning by allowing users to apply basic principles in real-life situations, thereby strengthening their entrepreneurial competency.

The rising relevance of social media in entrepreneurial learning and skill development is often illustrated by its regular usage by entrepreneurs and graduates. Nevertheless, despite the rising relevance of social media within the entrepreneurial field, there is a need for an empirical study to explore its influence on graduate employability (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This necessitated this study on the implications of social media as a catalyst for entrepreneurial learning and skill development on graduate employability.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate the implications of social media as a catalyst for entrepreneurial learning and skill development on graduate employability. Specifically, the study investigated:

1. The effect of social media platforms in facilitating entrepreneurial learning and skill development
2. The impact of entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media on graduate employability.

Research Hypotheses

$H_0 1$: Social media platforms do not significantly affect entrepreneurial learning and skill development.

$H_0 2$: Entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media have no significant impact on graduate employability

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media as a Learning Platform

Social media is the collection of online resources and programs that enable people to create, share, and get involved with material, generating communities and networks around diverse kinds of media. The ability of social media to facilitate and enable real-time communication and collaboration among individuals, organizations and businesses, is revolutionizing the educational landscape which in turn is facilitating social networking, communication, collaboration, and content sharing, so enabling users to connect with others worldwide (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). According to Appel et al. (2020), social media deals with digital technologies and tools which enable user-generated content and virtual social networks. This makes way for digital marketing, brand recognition, and the global dissemination of information. The adoption of social media in several professional and entrepreneurial fields continues to attract attention to its transformational impact on modern communication and engagement strategies.

Recently, social media has gone beyond its initial aims of entertainment and networking to become an essential channel for learning, advertisement, career advancement and business growth. The wide range of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter have contributed to rethinking the technique of communication, significantly transforming social networking and information transmission (Kietzmann et al., 2021). For example, there are several articles, courses and webinars that are available on YouTube and LinkedIn on business strategy, finance and marketing, which are the major concerns for young entrepreneurs (Bennett et al., 2020). While Instagram helps business owners communicate their brand identity and get marketing insights, Twitter promotes in-the-moment discussions on entrepreneurship trends (Kwayu et al., 2018).

Entrepreneurial Learning

Entrepreneurial learning is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes that an individual needs to identify business opportunities, start and manage a business successfully (Rae, 2005). Entrepreneurial learning could be acquired through formal and informal experiences that enhance one's ability to think critically, make decisions and navigate the uncertainties inherent in entrepreneurial ventures (Rae, 2017). The formal entrepreneurship education programs comprise courses and degree initiatives that give foundational knowledge and skills required for entrepreneurial development (Fiet, 2001). On the other hand, experiential learning, supported by accelerators, incubators, and internships as well as complemented by mentoring and self-directed learning, enables entrepreneurs to apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations and adapt to changing environments (Pittaway & Cope, 2007). Formal education involves the development of an entrepreneurial mindset, which includes creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and adaptability (Kirby, 2004). It can, therefore, be deduced that entrepreneurial learning is the process of acquiring necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes through either formal or informal experiences, enabling individuals to identify opportunities, start and successfully manage a business, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset which is characterized by creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and adaptability.

Skill Development

Skill development involves acquiring, enhancing, and strengthening all the knowledge, competencies, and skills necessary to successfully perform specific tasks or professions and adapt to changing work environments (Spencer & Spencer, 1993; Boyatzis, 2008). According to Tansley and Watson (2000), this technique helps people become more innovative, adaptable, and capable of solving problems and allows them to seamlessly adjust to changing industrial, technical, and workplace requirements. It entails enhancing existing abilities and obtaining new ones through formal schooling, training programs, or practical experience. Mansfield and Mitchell (2020) posited that skill development is essential for personal and professional advancement as it equips individuals with the requisite abilities to adapt to changing industry demands and enhance their employability.

Graduate Employability in the Digital Age

Graduate employability can be referred to as the collection of accomplishments, such as skills, abilities, knowledge, and personal traits, that increase the graduates' likelihood of securing paid employment, venturing into self-employment and creating jobs (Odumosu, 2023). Graduate employability is the capacity of university graduates to find and hold a job by exhibiting a range of abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and character traits that allow them to contribute effectively to the workplace. In addition to developing transferable skills like problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and adaptability which are greatly valued by employers, it also includes learning technical skills pertinent to certain professional responsibilities (Jackson & Wilton, 2016).

Graduate employability, which is the ability of graduates to secure and sustain employment, has become a vital metric for both educational institutions and policymakers. In the present labour market, companies and businesses are ~~now~~ appreciating graduates with digital and entrepreneurial skills more and more who can negotiate complex and dynamic situations as technology changes. In these settings, continual learning, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial thinking are essential skills (Jackson & Tomlinson, 2020). Graduates who possess entrepreneurial abilities, such as risk management, opportunity recognition and business acumen, are more suitable to establish their businesses or make contributions to corporations. Thus, being proficient in social media is becoming necessary to improve employability (Jackson & Wilton, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a standardized online survey instrument designed to collect data from a sample of 300 graduates and entrepreneurs from various industries in Nigeria through social media platforms. Two research hypotheses guided the study. The questionnaire adopted was structured based on a descriptive survey research design, aiming to explore the impact of social media utilization on entrepreneurial learning. It consisted of a combination of multiple-choice questions, Likert scales, and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The standardization of the questionnaire ensures consistency in data collection and enables reliable comparisons across respondents. The questionnaire was disseminated to members of many entrepreneurial learning and skill development sites on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Telegram, and WhatsApp that the researcher had access to. Some of the platforms are Nigerian Entrepreneurs, Global Business for Nigerian Entrepreneurs, Skillshare Nigeria, Coursera Nigeria, and Startup Nigeria groups. The data collected was subjected to basic linear regression analysis to examine the relationships between social media usage, entrepreneurial learning and skill development, and graduate employability and the data was validated with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient ranging from 0.760 to 0.928.

RESULTS

$H_0$1: Social media platforms do not significantly affect entrepreneurial learning and skill development.

Table 1: Summary of Linear Regression Analysis Between Social Media Platforms and Entrepreneurial Learning and Skill Development

N	Variables	*B*	*β*	*T*	Sig	*R^2*	*Adj. R^2*	*F*(1,299)	*F* Sig²
300	Constant	-4.638		-5.795	0.000	0.702	0.701	702.329	0.000
	Social Media	1.269	0.838	26.501	0.000				

a. Dependent Entrepreneurial learning and skill development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media

Source: Field Survey Data (2024)

Table 1 displays the analysis of the simple linear regression that was undertaken to assess the effect of social media platforms in supporting entrepreneurial learning and skill development. The results from Table 1 demonstrated that social media platforms and entrepreneurial learning and skill development ($\beta = 0.730$, $p = 0.000$, < 0.05) are statistically significant at ($F(1, 299) = 702.329$, $p < 0.05$). The results of the model summary shown in the table indicated a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.702, this implied that social media platforms have high explanatory power on the entrepreneurial learning and skill development of graduates since 70.2% of the change in the entrepreneurial learning and skill development was explained by access to social media platforms. The remaining 29.8% is explained by other factors and the error term. The result of the analysis found that social media platforms have significant effects on entrepreneurial learning and skill development of graduates in Nigeria ($R^2 = 0.702$, Adj $R^2 = 0.701$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The finding shows that there is a significant influence of social media platforms on entrepreneurial learning and skill development.

$H_0$2: Entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media have no significant impact on graduate employability

Table 2: Summary of ~~the~~ Linear Regression Analysis Between Entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media and graduate employability.

N	Variables	*B*	*β*	*T*	Sig	*R^2*	*Adj. R^2*	*F*(1,299)	*F* Sig²
300	Constant	7.770		5.891	0.000	0. 533	0. 532	340.621	0.000
	Entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by Social Media	0.731	0.730	18.456	0.000				

a. Dependent Variable: Graduate employability
b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by Social Media

Source: Field Survey Data (2024)

Table 2 provides the study of the simple linear regression that was undertaken to assess how entrepreneurial learning and skill development supported by social media affect graduate employability. The regression table revealed that entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media is statistically significant as a predictor of graduate employability at ($F(1, 299) = 340.621$, $p < 0.05$) and the coefficient results of entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media on graduate employability ($\beta = 0.730$, $p = 0.000$, < 0.05) are statistically significant. Furthermore, the table indicated a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0. 533, this implies that entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media has an average explanatory power on graduate employability, 53.3% of the change in graduate employability was explained by entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media. The remaining 46.7% is explained by other factors and the error term. The result of the study establishes that entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media contributes significantly to graduate employability ($R^2 = 0.533$, Adj $R^2 = 0.532$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), which means that entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media contributes significantly to graduate employability.

DISCUSSION

The findings showed that a significant positive relationship exists between social media platforms and entrepreneurial learning and skill development among graduates in Nigeria. This implies that graduates who actively utilize social media for learning appear to have stronger entrepreneurial skills. This finding corroborates Wasim et al. (2024), which reported that social media usage increases entrepreneurial education and learning. Their findings emphasize the essential function of social networks in facilitating entrepreneurial success via networking and contextual interactions.

Social media networks such as LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter provide countless chances for graduates to obtain entrepreneurial information, interact with professionals, and learn from practical, real-world business experiences. These platforms serve as virtual entrepreneurial ecosystems, which enable the exchange of insights, access to mentorship, and the opportunity for continued skill development through engagement with current business trends and practices (Almotairy et al., 2020). For Nigerian graduates, whose traditional entrepreneurial education could be impeded, social media functions as a helpful medium to gain essential business-related skills like digital marketing, business management, and market analysis, thus enhancing their entrepreneurial potential.

The results also demonstrate that through social media, interactive and collaborative qualities will make learning settings more dynamic. This provides the graduates more opportunities to meet successful entrepreneurs, engage in entrepreneurial forums, and gain feedback on their business ideas from peers and mentors. This strengthens the argument in favour of Rae's (2017) theory of entrepreneurial learning, which emphasizes the value of experience-based and interpersonal learning. Moreover, as more students get access to social media, it would assist in bridging the gap in entrepreneurial education and emerging economy, which would allow graduates the opportunity to enhance their employability by learning core entrepreneurial skills (Ahmad et al., 2018). However, intentional and active usage of the platforms is necessary for social media to be effective in skill development; as such, corporations and universities should place a high premium on incorporating social media literacy into educational and professional development frameworks (Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Tomlinson & Jackson, 2019).

Furthermore, the findings revealed a significant relationship between entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media and graduate employment. This suggests that graduates have chances of securing and creating jobs when they participate in social media-based entrepreneurial training programs. This confirms the claim explained by Liguori and Winkler (2020) who established that through social media platforms where people connect with entrepreneurs, resources, and real-time market information, they could acquire important skills that will help them to flourish in the modern workforce. In today's competitive labour market, employers greatly prefer soft skills like communication and problem-solving and hard skills like digital marketing and financial management, which may be acquired through these social media platforms.

Moreover, the findings align with previous research by Jackson and Wilton (2016), highlighting the role of digital tools, especially social media, in democratizing access to entrepreneurial education and resources, particularly in regions where traditional educational systems may not fully equip graduates with employable skills. In Nigeria, where economic challenges and restricted access to formal training in entrepreneurship prevail, social media operates as an important tool for continual learning, career advancement, and adaptability in the labour market (Ahmad et al., 2018). This highlights the crucial role that entrepreneurial education and digital literacy play in narrowing the employability gap.

Nonetheless, it is vital to know that the efficient utilization of social media for entrepreneurial education and employability calls for intentional contact with relevant material. To acquire knowledge, engage with industry experts, and put acquired skills to use in practical situations, graduates must actively use these platforms (Jackson & Wilton, 2016). Furthermore, organizations and academic institutions have to understand the significance of social media capabilities for enhancing employability and include these proficiencies in their curricula and professional development activities. Graduates will be more prepared to meet the demands of a changing labour market, where digital competency and entrepreneurial thinking are becoming more and more crucial, by doing this (Tomlinson & Jackson, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between social media platforms and the development of entrepreneurial learning and skills and this significantly influences graduate employability. This suggests that incorporating social media utilization skills into entrepreneurship curricula can enhance and facilitate undergraduates' entrepreneurial aspirations and career prospects. Additionally, the study revealed that a significant relationship exists between entrepreneurial learning and skill development facilitated by social media and graduate employment. This suggests that through social media platforms, graduates have chances to connect with entrepreneurs, resources, and real-time market information that will help them create jobs and flourish in the modern workforce.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings that using social media as a catalyst for entrepreneurial learning and skill development enhances graduate employability, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities should consider incorporating social media training into their curricula to prepare students for the digital economy.
2. Undergraduates should be encouraged to leverage social media for entrepreneurial learning, information, mentorship, and skill development opportunities.
3. Universities should emphasize digital literacy in educational and professional development frameworks to enhance employability.
4. Employers should recognize social media competency as a valued asset.

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