



## ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation among polytechnic students in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative survey design and used a structured questionnaire to collect data from a population of 6,671 students participating in entrepreneurship programmes at the Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin and The Polytechnic, Igbo Owu. The study estimated a sample size of 364 using the Raosoft online sample size calculator. Data analysis was carried out using Pearson's Correlation. The study found a significant positive correlation between

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATION AMONG POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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## Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a way of thinking that describes the drive and ability of a person to spot an opportunity within an entity and seize it in order to achieve predefined goal. People, their preferences and behaviors for starting, achieving, or operating an organization, as well as their involvement in a company's strategic decision-making processes, are all related to entrepreneurship. The advantages that entrepreneurs receive from innovations allow them to compete, adapt, and establish new markets that are made up of people from all social segments. Risks and independence are characteristics of entrepreneurial activity and creativity.

Idada and Alimi (2014) contend that exposure to entrepreneurship education, which should be followed by support services for the successful operation of their firms, influences the entrepreneurship skills that people possess. According to Ekankumo and Kemebaradikumo (2011), the purpose of entrepreneurship education is to give students, especially those enrolled in tertiary institutions, the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and motivation needed to create novel company concepts that result in employment.

In Nigeria, polytechnic education is crucial in fostering entrepreneurial education and innovation since it plays a key role in the teaching of technical and vocational skills and the body of research on the connection between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation is expanding. Understanding the extent to which entrepreneurship education programs in polytechnics are effective in encouraging entrepreneurial innovation is essential given the significance of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation in promoting economic development. It is worthy of mention at this juncture that there is a need for more research to evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian polytechnics and to identify how it influences the innovative capability of students. By analyzing the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial



access to entrepreneurial resources (AER), entrepreneurial mentorship (AEM), and entrepreneurial innovation (EI) among polytechnic students. The correlation coefficient between EI and AER was 0.586, indicating a moderate positive correlation, while the correlation coefficient between entrepreneurial innovation (EI) and access to entrepreneurship mentorship (AEM) was 0.721, indicating a strong positive correlation. These suggests that the higher the rate of students' access to entrepreneurship resources and mentorship, the higher the level of their entrepreneurial innovation. It was concluded based on the findings that access to entrepreneurial resources and mentorship are critical components of entrepreneurship education and that these components have a positive and significant correlation with entrepreneurial innovation among polytechnic mass communication students. It was therefore recommended among others that polytechnic management should ensure that entrepreneurship education programmes provide students with adequate resources and mentorship opportunities to enhance their entrepreneurial innovation.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurship Resources, Entrepreneurship Mentorship, Entrepreneurial Innovation

innovation among polytechnic graduates in Kwara State, this study aims to fill the existing knowledge gap in literature.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this work is the assess entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation with special attention on the relationship between them. The specific objective was to:

- i. Examine the perceived relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation among polytechnic students in Kwara State.

#### **Research Questions**

This study is focused on answering the following research question:

- i. Is there any significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation?

#### **Research Hypotheses**

For the purpose of this study, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation.

#### **Literature review**

##### **Concept of Entrepreneurship**

Numerous study areas, including economic, sociological, and psychological ones, have been used to study entrepreneurship. A process of allocating resources to produce new products and services is what is understood as entrepreneurship from an economic standpoint (Baumol, 2010). According to sociologists (Zahra, Wright, and Abdelgawad, 2014), entrepreneurship is viewed as a social phenomena that is influenced by institutional, institutionalized, and environmental elements. However, entrepreneurship from psychological point of view is seen as a personal quality that is impacted by traits including personality, drive, and risk-taking tendency (Zhao, Seibert, & Hills, 2015).



Finding new opportunities, producing value, and taking on the risks and benefits of business ownership and management are all part of the dynamic process known as entrepreneurship (Shane & Venkataraman, 2021). It is an important component of economic growth and development, especially in developing nations where it may significantly contribute to the eradication of poverty, the creation of jobs, and the creation of wealth (Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2021). According to Acs, Stam, Audretsch, and O'Connor (2017), entrepreneurship entails both starting new firms and transforming ones that already exist to cater to shifting consumer demands. Recent studies have emphasized its significance in fostering social and economic development and noted that it is a key driver of economic growth and development.

### **Entrepreneurship education**

The process of enhancing a person's knowledge, abilities, and mindset so they can see possibilities, launch, and run enterprises or other projects that benefit stakeholders is referred to as entrepreneurship education. It is a multidisciplinary discipline that combines academic and applied knowledge, hands-on learning, and mentoring to encourage individuals to be innovative, creative, and risk-takers. The improvement of entrepreneurial behavior, creativity, economic growth, and job creation is thought to result from entrepreneurship education.

Business, economics, psychology, and sociology are only a few of the disciplines that are included in entrepreneurship education, according to Fayolle et al. (2020). It aims to increase students' entrepreneurial competencies, such as their capacity for risk-taking, creativity, and leadership. Numerous educational institutions, including training facilities, colleges, universities, and schools, offer entrepreneurship education. There are many other ways it can be expressed, including through academic programs, extracurricular activities, incubators, accelerators, and entrepreneurship clubs.

Additionally, Kuratko and Audretsch (2020) point out that the evolving economic and technical landscape has made entrepreneurship education more crucial in recent years. People with an entrepreneurial mindset and skill set are needed because of the new opportunities and difficulties brought on by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the knowledge economy. As a result, entrepreneurship education is viewed as a means of preparing people for the workplace of the future as well as a means of promoting economic growth and social well-being.

A crucial area of study that promotes economic expansion, job creation, and social well-being is entrepreneurship education. It entails using a variety of educational venues and ways to help people develop their entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Entrepreneurship education helps people adapt to the evolving economic and technical landscape by fostering innovative thinking and entrepreneurial creativity.

### **Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Polytechnics**

Higher education in Nigeria, especially in polytechnics, is rapidly becoming required to include entrepreneurship courses. Polytechnics are technical colleges that provide vocational training and hands-on education with the goal of creating graduates with real-world knowledge and skills that are in line with societal needs. As a result, entrepreneurship education is especially pertinent to polytechnic education in Nigeria since it can give graduates the knowledge and skills they need to launch their own businesses and work for themselves.

With numerous efforts and programs targeted at encouraging entrepreneurship among students, there has been a growing interest in entrepreneurship education in Nigerian polytechnics in recent years. For instance, the National Policy on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Development, the YouWiN! Program, and the Entrepreneurship Development Centers are just a few of the programs and policies the Federal Government of Nigeria has established to support young entrepreneurs and promote entrepreneurship education.

Additionally, researchers are continuously exploring the efficiency of entrepreneurship instruction in Nigerian polytechnics. For instance, a study by Adeoye and Salau (2020) discovered that entrepreneurship education



has a favorable and significant impact on polytechnic students in Nigeria's entrepreneurial intents. According to the authors, entrepreneurship education can give students the know-how and abilities they need to spot business opportunities and foster the entrepreneurial mindset needed to launch and expand their own businesses.

The teaching of entrepreneurship in Nigerian polytechnics is not without its difficulties and detractors, though. Lack of funding and support for entrepreneurial education programs is one of the biggest problems. Many polytechnics lack the funds, facilities, and other resources needed to effectively conduct entrepreneurial education programs. More knowledgeable instructors in entrepreneurship are also required so that students can receive high-quality instruction and mentoring.

### **Entrepreneurial innovation**

Like other management related terms, the term “Entrepreneurial innovation” connotes different meanings to variable authors. According to Dutta and Lanvin (2020), entrepreneurial innovation is defined as the creation of new products, services, processes, or business models that are novel and have the potential to create economic value. In another definition by Müller et al. (2021), entrepreneurial innovation is conceptualized as the process of creating new products, services, or processes that have the potential to create value for customers and generate new sources of revenue for the firm.

In the view of Song, Wang, and Huang (2020), entrepreneurial innovation is seen as the process of developing and implementing new ideas, products, or services that address unmet market needs, create new markets, or improve existing products or services. While Christiansen (2020) sees it as the act of introducing something new or making changes to an existing product or service, business model, or industry that disrupts the status quo and creates economic value.

These definitions highlight the importance of creating economic value, addressing market needs, and disrupting existing industries through innovation. Entrepreneurial innovation is a critical aspect of entrepreneurship and is key to creating sustainable competitive advantage and achieving long-term success. The significance of producing economic value, meeting consumer wants, and upending established sectors through innovation is emphasized by these definitions. Creating a lasting competitive edge and attaining long-term success depend on entrepreneurial innovation, which is a crucial component of entrepreneurship.

### **Polytechnics methods for promoting entrepreneurial innovation**

Polytechnic education can play a vital role in encouraging and developing entrepreneurial innovation, which is essential for stimulating economic growth and development. Polytechnic curricula can incorporate entrepreneurship education to assist students develop the abilities, knowledge, and mindset necessary to succeed as entrepreneurs. Polytechnics are created to give students practical skills and knowledge pertinent to particular industries.

According to a study by Fazoranti et al. (2020), polytechnic education can have a significant impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions and innovative capabilities. The study found that students who received entrepreneurship education were more likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Students who attend polytechnic institutions may also have access to the networks and resources needed for successful entrepreneurship. For instance, polytechnics can give students access to business mentors, incubators, and accelerators, which can offer them invaluable advice and assistance as they grow their companies. In addition, polytechnics can give students the chance to engage in experiential learning through capstone projects, internships, and other practical experiences that can aid in the development of the practical skills required for success as entrepreneurs.



Moreover, by encouraging students to think creatively and take risks, polytechnic education may support a culture of innovation. Polytechnic institutions can support the development of an entrepreneurial and creative minds by giving students the chance to work on real-world issues and create creative solutions. Incorporating entrepreneurship education into polytechnic curricula and giving students access to resources and networks are two ways that polytechnics can support an innovative culture and stimulate economic growth.

### **Theoretical review**

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory is a popular perspective in the field of strategic management that suggests that a firm's resources and capabilities are the key drivers of its competitive advantage. The theory posits that firms need to have unique, valuable, and difficult-to-imitate resources and capabilities to create and sustain competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). RBV highlights the importance of identifying and leveraging a firm's key resources and capabilities to gain a competitive advantage in the market.

RBV suggests that a firm's resources can be categorized into tangible and intangible resources. According to Barney (1991), tangible resources refer to physical assets, such as land, buildings, equipment, and financial resources. Intangible resources, on the other hand, refer to non-physical assets, such as knowledge, skills, patents, trademarks, and brand reputation. In addition, RBV highlights that firms need to have the right capabilities to leverage their resources effectively, including organizational routines, processes, and systems. In the context of entrepreneurship education, RBV can help identify the key resources and capabilities that are necessary for entrepreneurial success. For example, a study by Van Gelderen, Thurik, and Bosma (2020) found that entrepreneurship education programs that focus on building entrepreneurial skills, such as opportunity recognition and resource management, can have a positive impact on the entrepreneurial intentions and activities of participants.

RBV is also relevant to entrepreneurial innovation, as it highlights the importance of having access to critical resources and capabilities that enable firms to create and sustain value. For example, a study by Adedoyin, Akinlabi, and Akomolafe (2021) used RBV to analyze the impact of intellectual capital on the innovative performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Nigeria. They found that firms that had higher levels of intellectual capital, including knowledge management systems, patents, and trademarks, were more likely to engage in innovative activities.

Overall, RBV provides a useful framework for understanding the role of resources and capabilities in entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation. By identifying the key resources and capabilities that are necessary for success, RBV can help entrepreneurs and policymakers develop strategies to acquire and leverage these resources effectively.

### **Empirical Review**

The study of Olokundun et al. (2020) sought to look into the connection between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. The population of the study, which employed a quantitative research approach, was made up of Nigerian undergraduate students. The sample size was 440, and a structured questionnaire was used to gather the data. The study discovered an association between entrepreneurial education and intention among Nigerian undergraduate students.

Another study by Umar and Ayuba (2021) looked at the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of students at Nigerian vocational and technical schools. The population of the study is made up of students of Nigerian vocational and technical education, while a quantitative research approach is adopted. The sample size was 364 and a structured questionnaire was used to elicit the required data. The study concluded based on its findings that, entrepreneurial education significantly affected the entrepreneurial intent of Nigerian students in vocational and technical school.



A study conducted by Adegbite, Sanni, and Adegbite (2021) examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial performance among Nigerian small and medium-sized businesses. The study adopted a quantitative research design which a population that constitutes Small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria. A sample of 300 small and medium sized business owners were selected as sample members and respondents from which required data were gathered. The study established a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial performance among Nigeria's small and medium-sized businesses.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a quantitative survey design using a structured questionnaire for eliciting required data from the respondents. The population is made of all 3,826, 2,631 and 214 students of the Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, and The Polytechnic Igbo-Owu respectively who are participating in the entrepreneurship programmes of their respective schools, making a total population of 6,671 used in this study.

However, for the determination of the adequate sample that is of a good representation of the study population, the Raosoft (2014) online sample size calculator is used for the determination of the required sample size. This online sample size calculator was assessed on the internet by visiting <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>. Haven used this method, a total sample size of 364 was estimated to be appropriate for selection from the total population of 6,671. The total required respondents to be selected from each of the Polytechnic is determined based on the following estimates:

#### **Federal Polytechnic, Offa**

$$\frac{3,826}{6,671} \times 364 = 209$$

#### **Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin**

$$\frac{2,631}{6,671} \times 364 = 143$$

#### **The Polytechnic Igbo-Owu**

$$\frac{214}{6,671} \times 364 = 12$$

Therefore, the total population and estimated sample selected from each of the Polytechnic estimated above is summarized in the following table:

**Table 1: Student Population and Sample Size Estimated**

Estimates	Federal Polytechnic, Offa	Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin	The Polytechnic, Igbo-Owu	Total
<b>Population</b>	3,826	2,631	214	6,671
<b>Sample</b>	20	143	12	364

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The sample size was determined at 0.05 error term, indicating 95% confidence in the estimated sample size. Hence, from the total population of 6,671 student entrepreneurship participants, 364 students were selected across the polytechnics in Kwara State.

Furthermore, the validity of the study instrument was ascertained using face and content validity. While its reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Method which estimated a coefficient of .825. According to



Chelsea (2015), the most appropriate, scientific and logical method for detecting possibility of biases and inconsistencies in data. Using this method, Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than .70 were deemed acceptable and serve as an indication that the instrument has high level of internal consistency and reliability. While Cronbach's alpha coefficient less than .07 were considered an indication that the instrument lack reliability and filled will inconsistencies in responses supplied by the respondent. Since the estimated Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of .825 is greater than .70, the study instrument is therefore reliable and has high level of internal constituency.

Lastly, the data gathered using the research instrument were analyzed using Pearson's Correlation as an inferential statistical tool. This is because the interest is on establishing the relationship the relationship between two variables. These statistical test was carried out with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20.

### Data Analysis and Results

In this section, analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the study respondents were presented. It is worthy of mention here that while 364 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, the research was only able to retrieve 348. This is better summarized in the following table:

**Table 2: Response Rate**

Responses	Frequency	Percentages
<b>Returned</b>	348	95.6%
<b>Missing</b>	16	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	364	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table 2 above, 348 copies of the administered questionnaire were returned, while the remaining 16 copies were not returned by the respondents. this indicate 95.6% response rate and 4.4% missing response.

### Hypotheses testing

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial innovation.

This hypothesis was tested to ascertain the relationship between entrepreneurship education which is the independent variable and entrepreneurial innovation which is the dependent variable. However, entrepreneurship education was measured using 'Access to Entrepreneurship Resources' and 'Entrepreneurship Mentorship'.

**Table 3: Correlations Matrix**

		AER	AEM	EI
<b>AER</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.583**	.586**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.041	.038
	N	348	348	348
<b>AEM</b>	Pearson Correlation	.583**	1	.721**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041		.026
	N	348	348	348
<b>EI</b>	Pearson Correlation	.586**	.721**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.038	.026	
	N	348	348	348

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's Analyses, 2023

Based in the data presented in table



The Pearson's correlation matrix in Table 3 presents the correlation coefficients between the three variables, AER (Access to Entrepreneurial Resources), AEM (Entrepreneurial Mentorship), and EI (Entrepreneurial Innovation). Of particular interest is the relationship between the dependent variable, EI, and the independent variables, AER and AEM.

The correlation coefficient between EI and AER is 0.586\*\* (p-value < 0.01), indicating a moderate positive correlation between these variables. This suggests that the higher the rate of access to entrepreneurship resources students are accorded, the higher would be their entrepreneurial innovation. This result implies that, by polytechnics providing entrepreneurship students with better access to resources, such as training equipment, machineries, exposure to sources of business funding, networks, and information, may lead to higher levels of entrepreneurial innovation among the students. Students with greater access to entrepreneurship resources are likely to have more opportunities to develop and implement innovative ideas. The correlation coefficient between EI and AEM is even stronger, at 0.721\*\* (p-value < 0.01), indicating a strong positive correlation between these variables. This suggests that the higher the rate of students' access to entrepreneurship mentorship, the higher would be the level of their entrepreneurial innovation (EI). This result implies that mentorship programs play an important role in fostering entrepreneurial innovation among polytechnic students. Polytechnic students of entrepreneurship who receive mentorship from professional entrepreneurship lecturers, experience experienced entrepreneurs or business leaders are more likely to benefit from their knowledge, experience, and network, which can help them to develop and implement innovative ideas.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study has demonstrated that there is a positive and significant correlation between access to entrepreneurial resources, entrepreneurial mentorship, and entrepreneurial innovation among polytechnic students. The results suggest that entrepreneurship education programs should emphasize the provision of resources and mentorship to students to enhance their entrepreneurial innovation. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing evidence that access to entrepreneurial resources and mentorship are critical components of entrepreneurship education.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested for polytechnic management, entrepreneurship lecturers, students, and government:

Polytechnic management should ensure that entrepreneurship education programs provide students with adequate resources and mentorship opportunities to enhance their entrepreneurial innovation. This can be achieved through partnerships with industry and government agencies to provide students with access to funding, equipment, and networks.

Entrepreneurship lecturers should incorporate mentorship programs into their courses to enable students to benefit from the knowledge and experience of experienced entrepreneurs and business leaders. This can help students to develop and implement innovative ideas and improve their entrepreneurial skills.

Students should take advantage of the resources and mentorship opportunities provided by their polytechnics to enhance their entrepreneurial innovation. Students can also seek out mentorship and networking opportunities outside of their polytechnic to enhance their entrepreneurial skills.

Government should invest in entrepreneurship education programs and provide funding and support for polytechnics to provide students with access to resources and mentorship opportunities. This can help to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the economy and contribute to economic growth and development.

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