

**CREATIVE ECONOMICS EDUCATION AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS FOR NIGERIA'S
DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITIES OF BENIN
AND BENSON IDAHOSA, EDO STATE**

OROBOSA ABRAHAM IHENSEKHEN, Ph.D

Department of Economics, Banking and Finance,
Benson Idahosa University, Benin,
Edo State,

CHAMBERLAIN CHINSOM EGBULEFU, Ph.D

Department of Mass Communication,
Benson Idahosa University, Benin,
Edo State.

And

OGOCHUKWU NNEKA ONYENEKWE

Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication,
NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka,
Anambra State.

Abstract

The bedrock of any economic development is based on the innovative mindset of individuals in a given economic environment, hence an effective economics education is the starting point to teach and encourage the growth of entrepreneurial skills development that will help to reduce graduate unemployment, poverty, crime and social vices. The teaching of economics and entrepreneurial skills no doubt, create effective, logical, and analytical reasoning needed to solve business problems arising from variegated risks. In this regard, this paper examined the role creative economics education and entrepreneurial skills play in Nigeria's development with respect to Edo State. The population of this study comprised the undergraduate students' of

economics education departments of Benson Idahosa University and the University of Benin, Edo State. Survey research based on the stratified method was employed to draw sample size and a set of questionnaire was distributed and analyzed to ascertain the level of creative economics and entrepreneurial skills development acquired in the courses of the undergraduate of economics and economics education students in their training in order to enhance national development. The overall findings indicated that there exist positive and significant relationship between creative economics and entrepreneurial skills development among undergraduate students in Nigeria. The three statements used to evaluate the hypotheses of the paper, were affirmed to be statistically significant with respect to the 5% level for the calculated values of the Spearman rho correlation and R squared (Coefficient of determination) and the mean scores obtained. The implications of the findings are that lecturers should mentor students on how to be creative based on innovative assignments that would encourage innovations and creativity that will result in entrepreneurial skills and boost economic development. The study therefore recommends that student's final year projects should be based on new ideas and creativity, government should give financial incentives to students that are innovative in their studies, entrepreneurial skills development should be in all levels of learning and that emphasis should be on learning by doing in order to stimulate entrepreneurial skills for development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Creativity Economics, Entrepreneurial Skills, Unemployment, Empowerment and Development.

The Nigerian population figures during the 2006 census was 143 million people but now to a large extent has assumed a geometrical progression as it is believed to be over 200million people. The attendant consequences of such bloated population has given rise to graduate and secondary school leavers unemployment, crime, poverty and social vices that undermine Nigeria's economic, political and technological development. The way out of this quagmire seems to be the teaching of creative economics education and entrepreneurial skills in our tertiary institutions which have been introduced into the Nigerian education curriculum and are expected to make our graduates self-reliant and

entrepreneurs. According to Araya and Peters (2010) education in the creative economy explores the need for new forms of learning that are conducive to supporting learners' development in a society.

Linton and Klinton (2019) emphasized on students centered learning based on the innate ability of students to develop critical mind set outside the classroom framework resulting in creativity for development. However, creative economics education concerns how individuals use their initiative (power of imagination) to have new ideas that become useful for their innovation and abilities to take risk in a given economic environment. Gilmore and Comunian (2016) investigated the dimensions and dynamics of an expanding area of policy interest - the relationship between higher education and the creative economy. They concluded that there exist a relationship between the collaboration of individuals and their networking among the different sectors of the economy in terms of teaching, school curriculum, policy development, research and development and the exchange of knowledge

On the other hand, Iman (2012) saw the issue of entrepreneurial skills as a key policy strategy in developed countries and a means of reducing unemployment and a boost to economic development through innovations. Middleton (2010), Adebayo and Kolawole (2013) and Olokundan (2017) agreed that entrepreneurship education is the bedrock for future development of Nigeria and a door for wealth creation and a means to reduce unemployment in general. According to UNDP (2018) an entrepreneur is an agent of change who accelerates the generation, application and spread of innovative idea. Share (2010) viewed an entrepreneur as an individual who undertakes innovations, finances and displays business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into an economic good. We see an entrepreneur as an individual who recognizes a business opportunity and who organizes, manages and takes that risk of business enterprise focusing on the business opportunity.

As a result of the huge costs incurred in tackling the effect of unemployment especially graduate unemployment, the Nigeria government through the National University Commission (NUC) and The Federal Ministry of Education repositioned the Nigerian educational policy towards job and wealth creation by introducing the teaching of

entrepreneurship development skills in tertiary institutions. In view of the fore-going, this study intends to extend the frontier and scope of data with regard to this issue of creative economics and entrepreneurial skills development in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

There is no gain saying that Nigeria has bloated unemployment rate which is estimated to be over 40% of her youth population without jobs. In this regard, it is now seen as a waste of time to acquire university education since there are no chances that one would be employed after graduation. This ugly situation has to a great extent encouraged crime, poverty, corruption, and social unrest etc. The way out of this predicament seems to be self-reliance through entrepreneurial skills acquisition and the study of creative economics education which Nigeria has inculcated into her educational curriculum. Taking cognizance of the attendant vices emanating from unemployment in Nigeria, several authors have written on the possible ways out of this quagmire such as Aja-Okorie and Adali (2013), Uhumwangho and Osayomwanbor (2014), Vidagan and Arriba (2016). Having not studied how the teaching of creative economics education and entrepreneurial skills can be employed to encourage innovation and self-reliance among our graduates and secondary school leavers the gaps created by these studies is what the present study intends to fill.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to ascertain the need for creative economics education and entrepreneurial skills and how it can assist in curtailing unemployment and social vices in enhancing Nigeria's economic, social, political and technological development. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Find out if creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo State.

2. Ascertain if the study of economics provide a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills stimulation in undergraduates in Edo State.
3. Determine if creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills is a means for creating more jobs through innovation in Edo State.

Research Questions

The research questions raised for this study are:

1. Is creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo State?
2. Does the study of economics provide a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills stimulation in undergraduates in Edo State?
3. Is creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are raised in this study:

1. H₀: Creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is not a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo State.
2. H₀: The study of economics does not provide a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills stimulation in undergraduates in Edo State.
3. H₀: Creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills is not a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo State

Methodology

This paper employed the survey method and questionnaire was used to elicit responses from the sampled size of 52 (40 from University of Benin and 12 from Benson Idahosa University) from 260 population study comprising 200 from University of Benin and 60 from Benson Idahosa respectively.

The fifty – two (52) questionnaires distributed to respondents’ were all retrieved as shown below.

University	Department	Population	Sample
University of Benin	Economics	120	24
University of Benin	Economics Education	80	16
Benson Idahosa University	Economics	40	8
Benson Idahosa University	Economics Education	20	4
	Total	260	52

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

The stratified random sampling techniques was employed in obtaining the fifty-two (52) students which is (20%) of the population of both economics and economics education students of the two universities studied (Cesar &Carvalho, 2011). The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section A contained the demographic data while section B contained questions concerning creative economics and entrepreneurial skills development which provided answers to the research questions. Section B was based on the Likert Scale format. The Spearman’s rho Correlation was used in analyzing the data based on a decision rule of the calculated coefficient of determination R^2 in order to evaluate the impact of creative economics teaching and entrepreneurial skills development. Positive or negative coefficient indicates low or high impact. Hence, values below 30% are said to be low, 30% - 70% is regarded as moderate and 70%-100% is said to be high, the hypothesis decision was based on the 0.05 level of significance.

Conceptual Framework

The study of economics as a subject dates back to the era of Adam Smith in 1776 and its needs in society cannot be over emphasized. Dwivedi (2018, p 6.) defined economics as a social science which studies how individuals, household, firms, industries and nations maximize their gains from limited available resources and opportunities. The subject economics is very important because it helps in building analytical models, create a set of analytical methods and offer clarity to the different concepts applied in business analysis which helps managers to avoid conceptual pit falls. Thus, creative economics education enhances the

decision-making of individuals and managers in the process of selecting the best out of alternative opportunities available to the individuals and firms.

According to UNESCO the National Policy on Cultural Rights (2014-2023), Strategic Action Numbers 2; which deals with “Economics Revitalization of Culture” included “Creative Economics” to enhance creativity and cultural production locally, regionally and nationally in connection with social and economic development processes. The issue of creative economics education is to stimulate the promotion and development of creativity in diverse forms, facilitating new spaces for cultural creation. Countries should key into this strategy in order to boost private led economy aimed at sectorial growth to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030. Araya and Peters (2010) posited that education in the creative economy explores the desire, for new kind of learning, and education that is most conducive that stimulate the learner’s development in a creative environment. The present shift in terms of learning is the shift in digital networks to key factor of production from capital to innovation.

Vidagan and Arriba (2016) examined the opportunities for the use of art as educational resource to encourage creativity in the teaching of economics especially the issues concerning critical analysis, imagination, interpretation of reality and the anticipation of change. The study revealed that the result of creativity in economics is still very low. On the other hand, entrepreneurial skills acquisition education was entrenched in Nigeria’s educational curriculum in 2006 by the National Universities Commission to be in line with global trend in education. According to Egwu (2011) an entrepreneur is an individual who identifies opportunity where others cannot, a visionary, a problem solver, a creative genius, wealth generator, an innovator, and inventor and one who produces jobs for others in a society. Consenting, Utomi (2012) affirmed that entrepreneurship is the persistent pursuits of available opportunities to create wealth through the discovery of new ideas, new products, new services that fills the identified need by customers.

In his views, Efe (2014) indicated that entrepreneurship education can be used as a means for wealth creation, poverty reduction, ensuring social-economic empowerment, sustained self and national development. Lackeus (2015) revealed that the idea of infusing entrepreneurship into education and economics programme has created much enthusiasm in the last few decades in order to increase economic growth, job creation, self-reliance, individual empowerment and improved well-being. Furthermore, Uhumwangho and Osayomwanbor (2014) observed that entrepreneurship as a core course in our universities is seen as a key drive of the economy because entrepreneurially focused persons create business that brings wealth and jobs creation.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the theory propounded by Kenneth Arrow (1962); he came up with the concept of learning by doing which stimulate productivity that is actualized through the art of practice, self-perfection and innovations through improved productivity by regularly repeating the art or action overtime. This theory is relevant to this study because the teaching of creative economics and entrepreneurial skills call for innovative learning that translates into self-reliance and productivity in the long run through learning by doing.

Presentation of Results and Discussion

Table 1: Gender of Respondents.

Personal variables	UNIBEN		BIU		Total	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male	14	10	3	1	28	53.85	53.85	53.85
Female	10	6	5	3	24	46.15	46.15	100.00
Total	24	16	8	4	52	100	100	

Source: Field Survey 2020.

The descriptive statistics of the personal variables indicated that 53.85% were male students and 46.15% were female. Thus, the male students are more as revealed by the sampled populations used in this research being the larger population in economics education.

Table 2: Entrepreneurial skills are taught and encouraged by economics lecturers'

University	Options	SA	A	SD	D	Total
UNIBEN	Economics	12	8	2	2	24
UNIBEN	Economics Education	8	3	3	2	16
BIU	Economics	6	2	-	-	8
BIU	Economics Education	3	1	-	-	4
	Total	29(55.8%)	14(26.9%)	5(9.6%)	4(7.7%)	52(100%)

Source: Field Survey 2020.

The above table indicates that 55.8% representing 29 respondents strongly agreed and 26.9% (14) agreed that entrepreneurial skills is being taught and mentored by lecturers to students in order to stimulate the growth of innovations and economic activities in Nigeria, thereby resulting in the reduction of poverty and unemployment. However, 9.6% (5) strongly disagreed, 7.7% (4) disagreed. In all, 17.3% (9) indicated that entrepreneurial skills are not taught and encouraged by economics lecturers while 82.7% affirmed that entrepreneurial skills are taught and encouraged by economics lecturers. Based on the analysis of results obtained, we affirm that entrepreneurial skills is taught and mentored by lecturers in economics as part of the creative way of teaching economics in the Nigerian university system.

Table 3: Research Question One: Is creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo state?

Number of respondents	SA	A	S	D	mean	r	R ²	Critical value	Decision
52	15(28.9%)	37(71.1%)	-	-	3.10	0.775	60%	0.05	Agreed/moderate positive sign effect

Field Survey 2020

The data above indicates that out of 52 respondents 28.9% (15) strongly agreed while 71.1% agreed that creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo state.

Table 4: Research Question Two: Does the study of economics provide a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills simulation in undergraduates in Edo state?

Number of respondents	SA	A	S	D	mean	r	R ²	Critical value	Decision
52	24(46.2%)	28(53.8%)	-	-	3.46	0.865	75%	0.05	Agreed/high positive sign effect

Field Survey, 2020

Table 4 reveals that 46.2% strongly agreed and 53.8% agreed that the study of economics provided a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills simulation in undergraduate students in Edo state.

Table 5: Research Question Three: Is creative economics for entrepreneurial skills a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo state?

Number of respondents	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	r	R ²	Critical value	Decision
52	4(7.7%)	47(90.4%)	1(1.9%)	-	3.06	0.76	59%	0.05	Agreed/moderate positive sign effect

Field Survey, 2020

The data in Table 5 above shows that 7.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 90.4% agreed while 1.9% strongly disagreed that creative economics for entrepreneurial skills is a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo state.

Test of Hypotheses

1. H₀: Creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is not a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo State.

The result of the estimation for research question one indicated a mean value of 3.10 which is greater than 2.5 critical mean value and the Spearman's coefficient (r) and coefficient of determination (R²) values were observed to be statistically significance at the 5 percent level. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected resulting in the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis which states that creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo state.

2. H₀: The study of economics does not provide a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills stimulation in undergraduates in Edo State.

The statistical estimation of research question two showed that the calculated mean value of 3.46 is greater than the assumed critical value of 2.5 that was affirmed by the values of r and R² at the 5 percent level of significance led to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis which states that the study of economics provide a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills simulation in undergraduates in Edo state.

3. H₀: Creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills is not a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo State.

The estimation of research question three indicated that the calculated mean value of 3.06 is greater than the assumed critical value of 2.5 that was acknowledged by the values of r and R² at the 5 percent level of significance led to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis which states that the creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills is a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo state.

The values of mean, Spearman's coefficient and coefficient of determination were found to be statistically significance at the 5 percent level; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis which states that creative economics for entrepreneurial skills is a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo state was accepted.

Discussion and Analysis of Findings

Based on the statements employed through the use of questionnaire, the statistical/empirical estimations showed that five of the research questions employed passed the test of significance at the 5% level which ascertained that creative economics have an effect on entrepreneurial skills development needed to stimulate economic development in Nigeria as observed from Edo State. The calculated Spearman's rho correlation coefficient (r) and the coefficient of determination (R^2) were able to prove that the variables employed were explained and that there exist a positive effect between creative economics teaching and entrepreneurial skills development with respect to the various hypotheses applied.

Taking cognizance of the empirical result, we therefore reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternative hypotheses indicating that creative economics has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial skills development among economics undergraduate students in Edo state. The empirical results, obtained in this study is in line with previous studies of Igomu, Elaigwu, Igomu and Ajah (2018) and Aja, Onoh, and Igwe (2018) in which they concluded that entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities is a right step towards reducing graduate unemployment and achieving above sustainable development in Nigeria .

With respect to the results obtained in this study the following findings were made:

- That teaching of creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is a push factor for entrepreneurial mind set for vibrant private sector led economy in Edo state.
- That study of creative economics provides a solid foundation for numerical/statistical ideas for entrepreneurial skills stimulation among undergraduate students in Edo state.

- That creative economics education for entrepreneurial skills is a means of creating more jobs through innovation in Edo state.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has situated that creative economics has a significant effect on entrepreneurial skill development in Nigeria especially among the undergraduate students of economics in the Nigerian university system via Edo state. The results obtained from the findings indicated that there exist a positive and significant lineage between creative economics teaching and entrepreneurial skills development based on the statements examined in the study.

In line with the study we therefore suggest that:

- Lecturers should mentor students on how to be creative based on assignments that would encourage innovations and creativity
- Final year students' projects should be based on issues of new ideas and creativity in order to stimulate entrepreneurial skills development.
- Entrepreneurial skills centers should be well equipped and competent lecturers employed to ensure effective practical teaching of students'.
- Government should provide incentive for undergraduate entrepreneurial students'.
- Entrepreneurial skills development should be encouraged in all levels of education in primary, secondary and the tertiary institutions and the curriculum should emphasize practical teaching. .

Finally, it is hoped that if creative economics and entrepreneurial education skills is given the attention it deserves that Nigeria will soon find herself among the list of developed countries where self-reliance and technological acquisition are considered paramount by all and sundry.

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