

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT: EVALUATING SME PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Globally, the youth have been considered as prime mover of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) due to their creative ability, energy and the drive to achieve. However, weak entrepreneurial climate has been a major constraint militating against the drive for self-reliance and economic autonomy and has resulted to increasing rate of unemployment, vandalism and other social vices among the youth. This study attempts to examine the relationship between government entrepreneurial programmers on youth SMEs participation in Nigeria. A survey of 250 questionnaires was undertaken through an online platform across the beneficiaries of federal governmental SMEs financial intervention schemes – Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (You Win). The data collected were analyzed utilizing correlation and multiple regression statistical tools. The study concludes that government intervention programmers such as financial, infrastructural and capacity building is paramount to new venture creation among the youth. The findings further reveal a significant positive correlation between availability of fund and new venture creation. The study recommends conscious youth entrepreneurial orientation and capacity development programmers through the outlets of Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). Furthermore, more financial intervention schemes such as grants and soft/special loans should be provided to young entrepreneurs as this will alleviate a major constraint to new venture creation which is poor access to finance.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Intervention, Small and Medium scale Enterprises (SMEs), Innovation, Youth empowerment, Graduate unemployment

Introduction

Issues relating to youth empowerment for self-reliance have become very crucial in the economic advancement of most developing nations. The economic growth between the developed and less developed nations has become more evident in recent times based on youth continuous support and involvement in Small and Medium Enterprises in the developed nations as compared to less developed and developing nations (Mosk, 2010). This hence creates a gap between SMEs outputs in the two instances. In bridging this gap, many less developed countries of the world have adopted different policy measures. The Asian tigers- Hong Kong, Indonesia,

Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand have adopted the SMEs measure as a tool for job creation, poverty reduction and the rapid economic development in the area cannot be over emphasized (Fatai, 2011).

In an attempt towards youth liberation and development, most governments have embarked on policies and programme that supports youth empowerment and self-reliance considering the dynamic increase in the youth population. As emphasized by Oni and Daniya (2012), government of most countries especially developing nations have in the past invested so much efforts and resources in establishing policies intended to uplift entrepreneurship and youth empowerment. This has fostered new business creation and the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises in many ways. Literatures have further demonstrated that the increasing growth of new ventures has not only added more products and services to the market and stimulated market competition, but also provided more employment opportunities and improved the quality of life of people (Hall and Charles & Jones 1999).

Until early 1960s, many economists viewed entrepreneurship development and continued existence of small-scale industries in less developed countries were justified by scarcity of capital and administrative experience (Zhao, Seibert & Hills, 2005). It was often argued that with economic growth, the small, traditional type of enterprise would, in one sector after another, be superseded by modern forms of large-scale production (Barnes, 2010). In order to ensure an orderly transition, small industries were seen to deserve support, but mainly in sectors where modern methods could not be immediately applied. Hence the superiority of entrepreneurial development and SMEs strategies at promoting growth through employment generation, lessening of rural-urban migration and ultimately poverty reduction is generally acknowledged by many scholars. In view of the above, developing new ventures has been viewed as both a revitalization tool for developed economies and a driving force for developing and less developed nations (Zhao et al. 2005).

The percentage of labour force that is without job is alarming while the army of the under employed youths is frightening. According to World Bank (2013) the official unemployment rate has steadily increased from 12% of the working age population in 2006 to 24% in 2011. As at 2012, the unemployment rate in Nigeria was 29.3%, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2012), while 44.6% of the working age population in Nigeria was categorized as being either unemployed or out of the work force. Aladekomo (2010) emphasized that one of the major ways to get out of poverty is through getting a sound education that will enable the present generation to compete favorably with their counterparts in other countries. Having a healthy society the youth sector of the population needs to be rediscovered and reintegrated into the main stream. From the forgoing, the Federal Ministry of Education made entrepreneurship Education compulsory to all students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria effective 2007/2008 academic session.

Providing jobs for a growing youth population is unarguably one of the most pressing challenges confronting many developing nations. In Nigeria, job creation has been inadequate to keep pace with the expanding working

age population. Hence, unemployment rates have been steadily increasing and younger Nigerians are encountering increasing difficulty in finding gainful employment (World Bank, 2013). More so, the rate of youth vandalism, rape incidence, arm robbery cases, hooliganism, political thuggery and other social vices have increased in recent times (Oni, 2012). Several studies have adduced the above to the problem of unemployment in Nigeria (e.g. Safiriyu & Njogo, 2012; Gbandi & Amissah, 2014; Eme, 2014). In the same manner, several studies have been conducted with regards to the impact of government policies on the promotion of entrepreneurial and youth empowerment (Mason & Brown, 2011; Greene 2012; Ihugba, Odii & Njoku, 2014). While some studies have shown that government policy is positively related to entrepreneurship (Mason & Brown, 2011; Greene, 2012), on the contrary, other studies have found that government policy is negatively related to entrepreneurial promotion (Minniti, 2008; Ihugba, Odii & Njoku, 2014). Consequently, the above shows that there is contradiction of opinion on the impact of government policy towards entrepreneurial development and youth empowerment especially in the developing countries. Interestingly, as important as this subject matter is, only few studies have examined the relationship between government financial intervention and youth empowerment and new venture creation in Nigeria. Considering the above, there is a need for an empirical investigation to clarify the above arguments and to justify if government intervention programmes truly empower the youth towards entrepreneurial consciousness which is the aim of this investigation.

Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of government financial intervention on youth entrepreneurial development and new business creation. Specifically, this investigation was carried out with a focus on two sub-objectives:

- i. To examine if government entrepreneurial development strategies have improved entrepreneurial consciousness among the youth.
- ii. To examine if availability of funds translate to creating more businesses among the youth.

Research Questions

From the research objectives above, these research questions were raised:

- i. Do government entrepreneurial development strategies improve entrepreneurial consciousness among the youth?
- ii. Does availability of funds translates to creating more businesses among the youth?

Research Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following two hypotheses were formulated:

- i. Government entrepreneurial development strategies have not significantly improved entrepreneurial consciousness among the youth.
- ii. Availability of funds does not in any way translated to creating more businesses among the youth.

Conceptual Framework and Literature Review*Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship*

The concept of entrepreneurship was first established in the early 1700s and the meaning has evolved ever since (Edioye, 2012). The term „entrepreneur“ is reported to have first appeared in the French dictionary, Dictionaire Universal de Commerce of Jacques de Bruslons in 1723 (Odey, 2013). It is a French loan word whose various definitions by various authors through the ages have been convergent than divergent points (Akpan, Effiom and Ele 2012). Traced to its root, entrepreneur is derived from a French word „entreprendre“, meaning “to undertake”. The term “entrepreneur” seems to have been introduced into economic theory by Cantillon in 1755 but, Say (1803) first accorded the entrepreneur prominence. While Jean-Baptiste relates entrepreneurs to economic agent that mobilizes the means of production (land, capital and labour), Schumpeter 1934 relates entrepreneurs to innovators who shatter the status quo of existing products and services to set up his/her own. He (Schumpeter) argues that to be able to do this a person must have high need for achievement, be a risk taker, initiator with internal locus of control. The focus of other contemporary research reveals the essence of opportunity recognition and resources mobilization. In this view, Brush; Williams and Yarkena (2003) opine that the terms „creation“ and „opportunity“ provide a unifying means of understanding entrepreneur. In the same vein, Bygrave and Zacharakis (2008) described entrepreneur as innovators who recognizes business opportunities and mobilizes resources in order to create an enterprise around the identified opportunities. Thus an entrepreneur is someone who perceives and opportunity; mobilizes the needful resources and create an organization with or without the intention of making profit. For the purpose of this research, this definition of entrepreneur is adopted. On the other hand, Gartner (1989) describes „entrepreneurship“ as the process of identifying new opportunities and transferring them into marketable ideas, products and services to the creation of an organization. He (Gartner) purported that exploring what entrepreneurs do when embarking on the creation of organizations, not only adds greatly to our knowledge of entrepreneurship but to comprehending the individual behind this behaviour. Lazear (2005) defines entrepreneurship as "the process of assembling necessary factors of production consisting of human, physical, and information resources and doing so in an efficient manner" and entrepreneurs as those who "put people together in particular ways and combine them with physical capital and ideas to create a new product or to produce an existing. Montanye (2006) describes entrepreneurship as a factor of production, linked to innovation and risk taking, where entrepreneurial compensations are tied to uncertainty and profits.

YouWiN Competition – the nexus for youth SMEs Participation

In Nigeria, the definition of SMEs is based on three major criteria via operating cost, turnover and employees capacity. Accordingly, a small scale enterprise is such whose total operating cost excluding cost of land but including working capital is above N1 million but not exceeding N10 million (Central Bank of Nigeria, 1995). A small-scale business is such with total cost excluding land but including working capital above N1 million but

not exceeding N10 million with a labour size of not exceeding 15 paid employees (National Council of Industry, 1996). SMEs are panacea to numbers of problems in developing nations. Owualah (1996) argues that SMEs may be regarded as the „university“ where young entrepreneurs usually receive their trainings, while Safiriyu and Njogo (2012) posit that SMEs promote even growth in an economy. As described above, SMEs are a fundamental part of the economic fabric in developing countries, and they play a crucial role in furthering growth, innovation and economic autonomy of the youth. SMEs are unarguably part of capacity building, drivers of innovation and ultimately means of poverty reduction in many developing nations. It has been further argued that Sub-Saharan Africa today faces an unprecedented opportunity based on its increasing labour force, while half of the population is under 25 years of age, and each year between 2015 and 2035, there will be half a million more 15-year-olds than the year before Africa Development Forum (ADF, 2014). Considering the steady increase of youth population in Africa therefore, it is essential to align government entrepreneurial programmes with youth SMEs participation. Having realized this in Nigeria, the federal government established YouWiN platform for youth capacity building and seed-capital provision. The Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN) Programme is a collaboration programme of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Communication Technology, the Ministry of Youth Development and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. An annual Business Plan Competition (BPC) for aspiring young entrepreneurs in Nigeria was launched, in line with the Federal Government's drive to create more jobs for young Nigerians. The main objective of (YouWiN) Programme is to generate jobs by encouraging and supporting aspiring entrepreneurial youth in Nigeria to develop and execute business ideas that leads to job creation. The programme provides aspiring youth with a platform to show case their business acumen, skills and aspirations to business leaders, investors and mentors in Nigeria. More so, to provide business training for up to 6,000 aspiring youth entrepreneurs spread across all geo-political zones in Nigeria; encourage expansion, specialization and spin-offs of existing businesses in Nigeria; and to enable young entrepreneurs to access a wide business professional network and improve their visibility. The competition has run for three years and a total of close to 4,000 participants have been awarded the grant.

Entrepreneurial Development Strategies in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship education programmes

Adekola and Kumbe (2012) education is a world-wide phenomenon and a potential tool for human capital and societal development. Entrepreneurship education is otherwise referred to as the education for sustainable development. According to UNESCO (2000), the focus of entrepreneurship education is education that seeks to equip people towards creation a sustainable future. In essence, entrepreneurship education guides students to recognize opportunities and how to convert such opportunity to profitable ventures. This description of entrepreneurship education is further shared by Kourilsky (1995). Accordingly, entrepreneurship education has three distinctive features which are considered as the central pillars of entrepreneurship. These are opportunity

recognition, resource mobilization and management. Consequently, entrepreneurship education is such that focused on recognition of opportunity and generation of business (idea, service or product) to address the opportunity; the marshalling and commitment of resources in the face of risk to pursue the opportunity; and the creation of an operating enterprise Aladekomo (2011). In order to have a healthy society, the youth sector of the population needs to be rediscovered and reintegrated into the main stream. Having realized this, the federal government through the federal ministry of education made entrepreneurship education compulsory to all students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria effective 2007/2008 academic session (Uduak and Aniefiok, 2011). The purpose of entrepreneurship education is to enable learners to acquire basic knowledge; entrepreneurial skills; opportunity driven attitudes and mental re-engineering which all together equip individuals starting a new business (Osualah, 2009).

Youth Entrepreneurial Capacity building

Entrepreneurial capacity building has been proved to be essentially in any entrepreneurial process (Gundal, 2014). Benjamin (1995) adopted value-oriented approach and observed that

"The youth of a nation are trustees of prosperity". This to a large extent is valued universally. In Nigeria today, and according to vision 2010 – 2020 target the youths can safely be said to constitute over 65% of the total population (Otokiti, 2012). These youth are burning with ambition for growth, desire for achievement and immense potentials for economic autonomy; hence their importance in sustainable economic development cannot be overemphasized. It has been observed that a process of creating self-awareness and the development of individual capacity for creative and innovative thinking, decision making and action implementation to exploit various entrepreneurial opportunities is the focus of entrepreneurial capacity building (Teixeira and Pato, 2013). It can be unarguably established that in any entrepreneurial process, individual capacity in form of skills, knowledge, and experience among others plays an important role. On this basis, Eme (2014 p.6) describes an entrepreneur as "an individual who has the ability or capacity to identify opportunity where others see nothing and also being able to mobilize the necessary resources to translate such idea into viable businesses". In recognition of the importance of entrepreneurial capacity building among the youth, the federal government through the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) initiated Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP) and Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP). While CAP is to enable participants acquire entrepreneurial skills and vocational capabilities, the MAP was to assist graduates who have completed their mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and who are yet to secure full-time employment. More so, agencies such as NDE, SMEDAN and Chambers of Commerce and Industry were specifically set up to provide entrepreneurial capacity development programmes for the youth.

Infrastructural Development

Generally in developing nations, provision of infrastructural facilities is usually grossly inadequate in correspondence with increasing population growth (Ghali, 2014). The Oxford dictionary, 2005 edition defines infrastructure as “the basic systems and services that are necessary for a country or an organization to run smoothly, for example, buildings, transport, water and power supplies”. Small businesses in developing nations, Nigeria inclusive encounter various challenges in respect to poor availability of infrastructure. Studies have shown that aside poor access to finance, a major challenge facing SMEs is electricity followed by road network (World Bank, 2013). In the same vein, Forster (2001) opines that good transport, electricity and communication systems are essential to the operation of any business. Adequate provision of necessary infrastructure to a community makes that community more business friendly and more attractive to entrepreneurs who are practicing or the potential entrepreneurs. More so, providing a conducive environment for training in entrepreneurial skills and capacity building is essential for latent entrepreneurs (Idogho and Eshiobo, 2012; Oteije-kehinde, 2013). Four factors that normally receive attention of most practicing and potential entrepreneurs are talent (ability of an individual to recognize market opportunities) Opportunity- defined as the ability to fill a need in the community; capital (the financial resources to fill such a need); the know-how (opportunity to network in order to gain expertise and technical knowledge) and infrastructure (basic system or services that support business transaction (Smilor, 1997). Based on the foregoing, it can be further argued that without paying adequate attention to infrastructural requirements for a smooth operation of rural entrepreneurial ventures, any attempts by the government to promote rural entrepreneurial development and poverty reduction in Nigeria cannot yield the expected results. In an attempt to address rural infrastructure in Nigeria, the federal government has over the years embarked on infrastructural development projects.

Policy and Technical Supports

Chukwuemeka, Nnsewi and Okigbwo (2008) posit that public policy is a government decision to achieve a purpose. On the other hand, policy only lays down the general directive rather than detailed instructions or strategies to follow to achieve the objective (Oyedele, Ozimede and Salihu 2013). Entrepreneurial policies are therefore pronouncement of government intentions by people in positions of public trust, demanding governmental actions or inactions and having impact either negative or positive, on the majority of the members of a given society. Entrepreneurial policy supports were provided by the government through such agencies as Small and Medium Enterprises Equity Investment Scheme (SMEEIS), Central Bank of Nigeria Entrepreneurship Development Centres (CBN/EDC), Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Chambers of Commerce and Industries, Entrepreneurship Development Policy (EDP) run by the National Directorate of Employment

(NDE), Industrial Development Centres (IDC) among others. Oyedele et al (2013) further argue that other incentive programs that are technical in nature, such as the provision of manpower training, appropriate machinery selection and installation, machine repairs and maintenance, and extension services are also essential for entrepreneurial development. These services were provided by institutions such as the Center for Industrial Research and Development (GIRD), the Center for Management Development (CMD), Project Development Agency (PRODA) and the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC).

Financial Interventions

Jibrilla (2013) posits that since independence, promoting small and medium scale enterprises as the foundation of economic progress has been recognized in Nigeria by every regime. Hence, different efforts have been made by successive government in the area of promoting entrepreneurship and developing the SMEs sector. In this respect, government has contributed through policy, technical/infrastructural and financial supports (Gbenga & Oluremi, 2011). Among major constraints facing SMEs development globally is access to finance (Ayyagari, Demirguç –Kunt, Maksimovic, 2012). In recognition of this, several financial institutions in charge of microcredit and policy instruments such as Nigeria Agricultural Co-operative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB), Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (NBCI), National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) all defunct, Bank of Industry (BoI) among others were established to provide financial facilitates for the expansion of SMEs (Jibrilla, 2013). Accordingly, government financial incentives are in three major categories:

- a. Seed-capital Grants: Government and non-government organizations sometimes give grants to potential entrepreneurs to start small businesses (Osadele, 2007). This is an allowance that a government or an organization gives to support small business creation in the country. In Nigeria, seed-capital grants are awarded under different entrepreneurial development platforms and it cut across both government and private. Seed-capital grants awarded by corporate organizations cut across indigenous and multinationals enterprises under the platforms of SMEs development. On the other hand state and local governments through their different youth empowerment programmes.
- b. Soft Loan: the federal government through the Central Bank of Nigeria and Bank of Industry under the platform of SMEs promotion and youth entrepreneurship development made a provision for soft loans with single percentage interest rate (CBN, 2013). A typical example of this arrangement is the N220billion Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development Fund recently launched by the CBN. The aim of the fund is to provide wholesale credit at 3 percent interest to financial institutions, for onward lending to MSMEs at 9 percent interest over a maximum period of five years.
- c. Special Loan: This is a facility given to the entrepreneur with obligation to pay the sum and accrued interest at an agreed date under special terms and conditions (Isern, Agbakoba, Flaming, Matilla and Tarazi 2009). The special loans are usually granted through public private partnership arrangement. Often it may include

international financial corporations such as the World Bank, Africa Development Bank, International Finance Corporation or non-governmental organizations e.g. Asante Africa Foundation, African Leadership Foundation, MTN Foundation, Tony Elumelu Foundation etc. According to Isern et al (2009), special loan is not accessible as other forms of loan as the awarding party may endure that the intending awardees undergo certain training and development programmes before the award of such grants.

Theoretical Framework

Several theories have been used in literatures in relation to government intervention in private enterprises. However, the Keynesian theory is considered more appropriate for this study. Keynesian economics were first presented by the British economist John Maynard Keynes 1936. This theory offers useful insight to the understanding of the effect of government interventions on private enterprises. The relevancy of this theory is its ability to provide the basis for government involvement in economic activities through various private enterprise incentives and developments (Ogechukwu, 2011).

The Keynesian economics argues that private sector decisions sometimes lead to inefficient macroeconomic outcomes and therefore advocates active policy responses by the public sector. Keynesian economics advocates a mixed economy, predominantly private sector, but with a large role of government and public sector (Osadede, 2007). Keynesian economists often argue that private sector decisions sometimes lead to inefficient macroeconomic outcomes which require active policy responses by the public sector, in particular, monetary policy actions by the central bank and fiscal policy actions by the government, in order to stabilize output over the business cycle. Keynesian economics advocates a mixed economy – predominantly private sector, but with a role for government intervention for creating a viable business environment (Jibrilla, 2013).

Research Methodology

The focus of this study is to examine the impact of government entrepreneurial development programmes on youth entrepreneurial consciousness adopts a survey research design as primary data was gathered through a self-administered questionnaire. Kothari (1978) asserts that it is unusual to be able to deal with the whole population in a survey thus a sample is essential. The population of interest for this study consists of 1200 beneficiaries of Youth Enterprise with

Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN) scheme, 2nd Edition, obtained from YouWiN Secretariat

Federal Ministry of Finance, Abuja. A survey of 280 questionnaires was dispersed online on the YouWiN platform. The questionnaire was designed to generate responses on questions relating to relevant variables – government entrepreneurial development strategies, youth empowerment and entrepreneurial consciousness. The questions were based on a 5-point Likert attitudinal scale of 5 -Strongly Agree, 4 -Agree, 3 -Undecided, 2 -Disagree and 1 -Strongly Disagree. Out of the 280 questionnaires sent via e-mails, a total of 175 which is 62.5% retrieval rate were correctly filled and returned. The data were analyzed by SPSS 16.0 version, using simple

percentage and multiple regression statistical tools. The reliability of the data were tested using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test and the result shows 0.725 which means that the instruments used in gathering the data were reliable and therefore exhibited internal consistency among items (questions) measuring each construct in the questionnaire.

Model Specification

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + E$$

Where;

Y = Dependent variable representing youth SMEs participation

X = 1 to 3 represent dependent variable representing government entrepreneurial intervention programmes

X₁ = Capacity Building (CP)

X₂ = Infrastructure Development (ID)

X₃ = Financial Intervention (FI)

E = Error term, (0, 1) normally distributed with mean 0 and variance 1. $\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$, are the parameters to be estimated to fit the regression line.

β_0 = is the intercept on the Y- axis.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS I

Ho: Government entrepreneurial development strategies have not significantly improved SMEs participation among the youth.

H₁: Government entrepreneurial development strategies have significantly improved SMEs participation among the youth.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.893 ^a	.887	.807	.31678	2.691

a. Predictors: (Constant), CB,ID,FI

b. Dependent Variable: Entrepre Consciousness

Table 1.1 reveals that the coefficient of multiple determinations is 0.887; the implication of this is that about 88.7% of the variation in youth entrepreneurial development is explained by variables in the model; that is Capacity Building (CB) Infrastructure Development (ID) Financial Intervention (FI), while the remaining 11.3% is explained by other factors which are not included in the model. The regression equation (model formulated) appears to be very useful for making predictions since the value of R^2 is close to 1.

Table 1.2

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	312.204	3	85.441	837.406	.0000 ^a
	Residual	48.694	76	.088		
	Total	360.898	79			

a. Predictors: (Constant), PS,RF,MB

b. Dependent Variable: SG

Table 1.2 the calculated ANOVA table is analyzed to see if *any* of the variables are significant. The F-statistic is compared with 3 and 96 degrees of freedom using stats tables. From the ANOVA table, $F = 838.179$, and p -value = $0000 < 0.05$ (sig.). Since p -value < 0.05 (critical value), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This implies that at least one of the predictors is functional for predicting youth entrepreneurial consciousness in the sampled population. Therefore the model is useful good fit for the data).

Table 1.3 The **Coefficients** tableCoefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.606	.192		-6.797	.000
	CB			.196		.040
	ID	.266	.098	.022	2.695	.000
	FI			.070		.002
		.418	.093		4.191	
		.583	.091		5.915	

a. Dependent Variable: Entrep Consciousness

The table 1.3 “Coefficients” provides information effect of individual variables (the “Estimated Coefficients” or “beta”) on the dependent variable. The coefficient of Capacity Building (CB) is

2.695 with p-value of 0.040 less than 0.05% (critical value), the coefficient of Infrastructure Development (ID) is 4.191 with p-value of 0.000 less than the 0.05% (critical value) and the coefficient of Financial Intervention (FI) is 5.915 with p-value of 0.002 less than the 0.05% (critical value). This implies that each of the variables has

contributed to the model. Hence there is significant relationship between internal control system and fraud detection in Nigerian commercial banks.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS II (Correlation Analysis)

Ho: Availability of funds does not in any way translate to new businesses among the youth.

H₁: Availability of funds translates to creating new businesses among the youth.

The availability of fund variables used for testing the hypothesis were: Grants (Gr) and Loans

Correlations

Model R			EC	Grants	Loans
SP	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.790	.698
				.000	.000
			175	175	175
Grants	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	.790	1	.509
			.000		.012
			175	175	175
Loans	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	.698	.509	1
			.000	.012	
			175	175	175

b. Dependent Variable: SMEs participation

In the table above, correlation between Loans and grants equals 0.509 and this is highly significant. The same holds for SMEs Participation (SP) and Loans = 0.698, and Entrepreneurial Consciousness (EC) and Grants = 0.790. These correlation coefficients are highly significant. These show that the relationship between the variables are strongly positive correlated.

Discussion of Findings

The result of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between government entrepreneurial developments programmes and youth entrepreneurial drives. This implies that the more government engages in entrepreneurial developments programmes, the higher the likelihood of youth involvement in entrepreneurial activities such as SMEs engagement. This validates the studies of Eme (2014) and Gulani and Usman (2013).

While the formal posits that there must be a collaborative effort by all the stakeholders toward youth entrepreneurial capacity building if the vision of poverty reduction and employment generation must be achieved, the later argue that more government policy of initiating various intervention funds for entrepreneurial development should be encouraged for youth empowerment.

The finding of hypothesis one reveals that government entrepreneurial development strategies such as capacity building, infrastructure development and financial intervention schemes strongly influence youth entrepreneurial consciousness and development. This means each of these variables contributes to youth entrepreneurial development; thus they must be continuously improved upon and better managed for enriched result. These findings agree with the findings of Aremu and Adeyemi, (2011); Okpara, (2011); Onakoya, Fasanya and Abdulrahman (2013); and Gbandi and Amisah (2014) who have all acknowledged the essential roles of government interventions on entrepreneurial and SMEs development in Nigeria, and further observed that government must consciously increase measures on capacity building, infrastructure, policy frameworks and financial interventions.

The finds of hypothesis two show that there is a significant positive correlation between entrepreneurial consciousness and availability of funds. In other words, this implies that increase in access to seed capital inform of grants and loans leads to a corresponding increase in the likelihood of new business creation among the youth. This finding agrees with the findings of Gulani and Usman (2013), and Ayyagari et al (2012). While the former found that access to finance is a major problem of SMEs in Nigeria and if the government would make a special provision for seed-capital to entrepreneurs, it will to a large extent alleviate their major impediment. The later emphasized that shortage of finance as the most pressing challenge confronting the development of entrepreneurial and SMEs activities in African continent.

Conclusion

This study has reviewed evidence from related literature of previous researches in order to develop a better and informed perspective on government intervention programmes on youth entrepreneurial consciousness in Nigeria. The literature reviewed acknowledged that government participation in private enterprises development is essential as this serves as an integrative effort towards entrepreneurial development, youth empowerment, job creation and ultimately poverty reduction. Based on the findings obtained from the analysis of the hypotheses, it could be concluded that entrepreneurial capacity building, infrastructure development and financial intervention schemes significantly impacted on developing and sustaining youth entrepreneurial consciousness in Nigeria. This implies that the more government engages in private enterprise development strategies the higher their stance at reducing unemployment and poverty. The findings also leads to the conclusion that there exists a significant relationship between financial intervention schemes such as grants (private and government) and loans (soft and

special) and entrepreneurial consciousness among the youth. This means, the higher or easier access to finance the higher the probability new business creation among the youth.

Recommendations

The study recommends youth entrepreneurial orientation and capacity development programmes through the outlets of Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). More so, financial intervention should only be provided to businesses as against individuals as this will ensure judicious use of such facility(s).

- i. Adequate and needful attention must be giving in the areas of capacity building and skills upgrade for the youth through government institutions such as Chambers of Commerce, National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) etc.
- ii. More Schemes such that provide financial incentive to as seed capital for creative business ideas such as YouWiN scheme at national level and QUICKWIN project in Kwara state and YES in Niger state should be encouraged and promoted especially at among the youth.
- iii. The federal government should provide separate financial intervention for basic infrastructural development in Nigeria through a special collaboration with international financing organization such as World Bank, African Development Bank, International Finance Corporation among as this will promote entrepreneurial activities and ease the operations of SMEs.
- iv. Furthermore it is recommended that government should through the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and Bank of Industry (BoI) provide accessible soft loans and to young entrepreneurs through affordable and reliable windows as this will offset poor access to finance for business startup among the youth.

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