

Post Oil Subsidy Regime: Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition Programme For Youth Empowerment In North Central Nigeria

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Abstract:

Post-oil subsidy regime: entrepreneurship skills acquisition program for youth empowerment in north-central Nigeria. Survey research using the Multi-Stage Cluster Sampling approach. 352 respondents were drawn from 3 selected higher institutions in 3 north-central states: Nasarawa State University-Keffi, Niger State College of Education Minna, and Kwara State University Malete. A well-structured validated questionnaire was used. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis. The result revealed the overall mean score of 3.14 of the twenty entrepreneurship skills needed by the respondents. The overall mean score of 3.12 of the five items was agreed the overall mean score of 3.12 of the twelve attitudinal statements listed as agreed. The cluster mean score of 3.05 shows serious challenges to skill acquisition. Attitude had the highest Beta value ($\beta=0.785$, $P<0.05$), and awareness ($\beta=0.199$, $P<0.05$). The findings supported the formulated hypothesis and rejected H_0 . Challenges had a low Beta value of ($\beta=0.06$, $P=0.23$) and failed to reject H_0 . However, attitude and awareness had a serious impact on the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program. Hence, Adj.R2 of 50.4% is an indication of 49.6% unexplained factors not considered. The study suggests a comprehensive effort to be employed for a skills acquisition program aimed at youth development

Key Word: Entrepreneurship; Empowerment; Skills acquisition; Subsidy regime; Youth

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I. Introduction

Amid the quest to scale up production and boost Nigeria's economy, the Federal Government is advised to channel money saved from the removal of subsidy on petrol to fund training of the citizens on vital skills for job creation. This fact holds particularly true for a developing nation like Nigeria, which is still grappling with the oil subsidy regime. Skills acquisition is key to reducing the high impact of subsidy removal in society. It is one of the proactive ways of ensuring the survival of individuals and invariably, economic growth and development of the nation. Ochieng & Ngware (2022) affirm that skill acquisition has emerged as one of the most effective development strategies African countries must embrace to train and modernize the technical workforce for rapid industrialization and national development. It is clear that without economic stability at individual and societal levels, there will not be sustainable peace and without peace, national security will be undermined and development hampered. There is no gain in saying the fact that education in Nigeria has been adopted as an essential element for growth, progress and national development economically, socially and politically (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). It directly contributes to the growth of national economy by improving the skills and productive capacity of citizens. This is why we can hardly see any industrialized country without a well-developed education and training system, a system that not only provides a rich variety of programmes or courses that respond to both personal and national development, but also seeks to remove barriers to learners' participation. These industrialized countries make heavy investments on education and training because of the roles that knowledge and skills play in modern economy. This modern economy emphasizes knowledge, skill acquisition, and technology which are imperative to the nation's development (Malik, 2018). The practice of relying on the government to provide white-collar jobs for graduates can no longer suffice. It takes an individual equipped with solid entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to survive in this era of unemployment. Therefore in ensuring undergraduates develop personal skills and qualities which will make them gain knowledge and understanding of

how the economy works and reacts to market forces, the provision of entrepreneurship education and training becomes very significant.

Egbefo & Abe (2017) stated that the Federal Government directed all institutions of higher learning in Nigeria to introduce the study of entrepreneurship as a compulsory course for all students, irrespective of the discipline. More so, the National Universities Commission has developed minimum academic standards for the teaching of entrepreneurship in the universities (Wordu & Nwanguma, 2024). The role of this education in the march towards the development and modernization of this nation cannot be ignored, because the knowledge gained from the skills acquired is geared towards self-reliance, wealth creation, job generation, and poverty eradication Statement of the Problem.

The reform of the fuel subsidy regime is fundamental to overhauling the Nigerian economy and achieving inclusive and sustainable economic diversification and growth (Usman, 2022). In recent years, fuel subsidies have taken up over a third of the recurrent budget, constituting a huge waste of resources that could have been spent more effectively on pro-poor interventions in the economy. However, our higher institutions of learning little has been provided direct entrepreneurship skills and training for the youth although those pursuing courses in vocational and technical courses, economics, and business faculties have some background.

There is a lack of entrepreneurial spirit among youth, they always focus their minds on job search without thinking of how they could use the knowledge they have acquired to create jobs. The inability to structure a programme that will attract and hold youth interest in the pursuit of entrepreneurship skills has constituted its ineffectiveness among the youth. There is also a lack of administrative concern, youth laziness, and lack of feelings, interest, finance, and lack of infrastructural support for entrepreneurship skills programmes (Apkoguma, 2021). These young people are made up of a greater percentage level of Nigeria's economically active populace. Despite the efforts made by the government investing in pro-poor policies more generally as a result of the increased fiscal space created by subsidy reform. Skill acquisition is Paramount to entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. Okolo, Edeme & Emmanuel (2018). Skills acquisition contributes greatly to the development of a positive attitude toward work, developing entrepreneurial ability, building self-reliant young people, reducing the pains and hardship in society. Against this backdrop we examine the impact of entrepreneurship skills acquisition program on post oil subsidy regime in North Central Nigeria, specifically to;

1. identify the different entrepreneurship skill areas needed for the youth empowerment in north central Nigeria
2. ascertain the level of youth awareness in different entrepreneurship skill areas for youth empowerment in north central Nigeria
3. examine the attitude of youth towards entrepreneurship skills acquisition program in north central Nigeria
4. examine the challenges experienced by youths entrepreneurship skills acquisition program
5. examine the impact of awareness, attitude and challenges on entrepreneurship skills acquisition program

Research questions

1. What are the different entrepreneurship skill areas needed for the youth empowerment in north central Nigeria?
2. What is the level of youth awareness in different entrepreneurship skill areas for youth empowerment in north central Nigeria?
3. What are the attitude of youth towards entrepreneurship skills acquisition program in north central Nigeria?
4. What are the Challenges experienced by youths entrepreneurship skills acquisition program?
5. What is the impact of awareness, attitude and challenges on the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program?

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: Entrepreneurship Skills acquisition program has significant influence on youth attitude.

Ho2: Entrepreneurship Skills acquisition program has significant influence on youth awareness

Ho3: Entrepreneurship Skills acquisition program has significant influence on challenges experienced by youth.

Theoretical Review

Psychological Theory of Entrepreneurship

The theory was put forward by David McClelland a psychologist and emeritus Professor at Harvard who offers that entrepreneurs possess a need for achievement that drives their activity. Also, Julian Rotter put forward a locust of control theory that people with a strong internal locus of control believe their actions can influence the world and research supports most entrepreneurs possess the trait. According to the psychological/ trait theory, entrepreneurship gets a boost when society has a sufficient supply of individuals with the necessary psychological characteristics. The psychological theory of entrepreneurship focuses on the individual and the mental or emotional elements that drive individuals entrepreneurially (Feng & Chen 2020). The psychological characteristics of entrepreneurs are the need for achievement, foresight, and the ability to face challenges. These characteristics are developed during the upbringing of the individual and are geared toward achieving self-reliance and excellence. Adeyinka, (2020) defined personality traits as stable qualities that a person shows in most

situations and that they are enduring inborn qualities or potentials of the individual that naturally make him an entrepreneur. Some of the characteristics or behaviours associated with entrepreneurs are that they tend to be more opportunity-driven, demonstrate a high level of creativity and innovation, and show a high level of management skills and business know-how.

They are optimistic, emotionally resilient, and have mental energy, they are hard workers, show intense commitment and perseverance, thrive on the competitive desire to excel and win, tend to be dissatisfied with the status quo, and desire improvement, entrepreneurs are transformational in nature, they are lifelong learners and use failure as a tool and springboard and maintain locus of control. Cheng, Cheung, Chio & Chan, (2013) refer to locus of control as an individual's perception about the underlying main cause of events in his life. The entrepreneur's success comes from his/her abilities and also from outside support. The outside support is the external locus of control while the individual effort is the internal locus of control. Corpuz, Sullano & Dela (2022) explained the need for achievement that human beings need to succeed, accomplish, excel, or achieve. The focus is on personal traits, motives, and incentives. This is the case for entrepreneurs who are driven by this need to achieve and excel. However, the locus of control is correlated with variables such as risk-taking, need for achievement, and tolerance for ambiguity. The entrepreneur believes in his or her capabilities to commence and complete things and events through his or her actions (Segaf, 2023). Since the entrepreneur has a locus of control and believes in his capabilities he or she develops the concept of establishing an enterprise with the full confidence that the enterprise will succeed and generate income. According to Girma, Kuma & Bedemo (2023), findings on risk-taking strengthen earlier empirical studies which indicate that aversion to risk declines as wealth rises that is, one's net assets and the value of future income.

II. Material And Methods

Study area

North Central Zone is made up of six states (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja as shown in figure 1. While the states have 114 Local Government Areas with a total population of over 20 million, the FCT has 6 council areas with a population of about 1.41 million. The zone is agrarian as the main employer of labour is agriculture with few commercial centers in the form of modern and local markets. Crops produced in the zone include yam, rice, sorghum, maize, acha, beeniseed, fruits, vegetables, etc. The temperatures are usually measured between 6 and 24 times a day and summarized as an average. The average annual temperature in the greater region of North Central is 28 degrees Celcius. It is highest in March at 32 °C and lowest in August.



Figure 1: Map showing the middle belt region of Nigeria

Survey research design is used and most appropriate in this study. In adopting the survey design, statistical tools will be used to test the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. In this study, a Multi-Stage Cluster Sampling procedure was adopted. The states in north central Geo-political Zone constituted the basis for the Cluster Sampling (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, and Federal Capital Territory). This gave a total of six (6) States and the FCT that will be clustered into three (3) Niger, Kwara, and Nasarawa to represent the geo-political area in the zone. Furthermore, the population of the study is selected higher institutions students from the three selected States, Nasarawa State University-Keffi, College of Education-Akwanga, Federal University of Technology Minna, and Niger State College of Education Minna, Kwara State University Malete.

The selected institutions are situated in the three geo-political regions to capture the desired population and sample size of the study. The study targeted the Entrepreneurship skill acquisition students of the institutions from 2023 to 2024. The sample size is determined using Taro Yamani's formula. The sample size of this research

is calculated using the Taro Yamane formula with a 0.05 error level. To ensure that the valid questionnaire upon retrieval will be equal to the total sample size, 10% (32) of the sample size (352) will be calculated and added to the sample size $32+320=352$ questionnaires was administered, as adopted by Israel (2013). The questionnaire was used to collect data and this was divided into two sections. Section 'A' sought information about the Bio-data of respondents, while section 'B' sought information on various entrepreneurship skills. A four-point Likert scale of SA, A, D, and SD, was used to measure the items in the instrument. The face and content validity of the instrument was established. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the test-re-test method to establish the stability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient value obtained was 0.75. Descriptive and Regression analysis technique was used to test the hypothesis and the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to carry out the analysis.

III. Result

Research questions 1: What are the different entrepreneurship skill areas needed for the youth empowerment in north central Nigeria?

Table 1. Revealed that 88.7% of the respondents agreed to Vulcanizing skill while 10.6% disagreed (mean=3.07); 89.7% agreed to farming skill while 10.2% disagreed (m=2.97); 89.7% agreed to Soap making skill while 10.4% disagreed (m=2.98); 91.1% agreed to Barbing skill while 10.2% disagreed (m=3.03); 90% agreed to disagree Mechanic skill while 10% disagreed (m=3.01); 89.7% agreed to Catering skill while 10% disagreed (m=3.01); 91.7% agreed to Decoration skill while 8.3% disagreed (m=3.01); 91.7% agreed to Car washing skill while 8.3% disagreed (m=3.01); 92.3% agreed to Hair making skill while 7.7% disagreed (m=2.97); 92% agreed to Shoe making skill while 8% disagreed (m=2.99); 90% agreed to Laundry skill while 10% disagreed (m=2.98); 89.2% agreed to Ceramic making skill while 8% disagreed (m=2.98); 90.3% agreed to Livestock rearing skill while 9.7% disagreed (m=2.96); 91.5% agreed to Garment making skill while 8.5 disagreed (m=2.98); 90.8% agreed to Plumbing skill while 9.2% disagreed (m=2.99); 90.9 agreed to Electrical skill while 9.3% disagreed (m=2.99); 90.5% agreed to Computer repairs skill while 9.5% disagreed (m=2.99); 90.6% agreed to Graphic designing skill while 9.5% disagreed (m=2.98); 88.8% agreed to Confectionaries (Snacks and Drinks production skill while 11.1% disagreed (m=3.03). Therefore, the Table revealed the overall mean score of 3.14 for the twenty entrepreneurship skills needed as agreed by the respondents. This is because the mean ratings of the items are above 2.50 which is the acceptance level as indicated in the table.

Table 1. Respondents Entrepreneurship Skill Programme

	Items	SA	A	DA	SD	Mean	Remarks
1	Vulcanizing skills	62 (17.7)	251 (71.7)	35 (10.0)	2 (0.6)	3.07	Agreed
2	Farming skills	43 (12.3)	271 (77.4)	18 (5.1)	18 (5.1)	2.97	Agreed
3	Soap making skills	41 (11.7)	272 (77.7)	25 (7.1)	12 (3.4)	2.98	Agreed
4	Barbing skills	42 (12.0)	227 (79.1)	29 (8.3)	2 (0.6)	3.03	Agreed
5	Mechanic skills	43 (12.3)	272 (77.7)	31 (8.9)	4 (1.1)	3.01	Agreed
6	Furniture skills	46 (13.1)	268 (76.6)	30 (8.6)	6 (1.7)	3.01	Agreed
7	Catering skills	21 (6.0)	302 (86.3)	23 (6.6)	4 (1.1)	2.97	Agreed
8	Decoration skills	32 (9.1)	289 (82.6)	29 (8.3)		3.01	Agreed
9	Car washing skills	34 (9.7)	287 (82.0)	27 (7.7)	2 (0.6)	3.01	Agreed
10	Hair making skills	16 (4.6)	307 (87.7)	27 (7.7)		2.97	Agreed
11	Shoe making skills	28 (8.0)	294 (84.0)	26 (7.4)	2 (0.6)	2.99	Agreed
12	Laundry skills	33 (9.4)	282 (80.6)	30 (8.6)	5 (1.5)	2.98	Agreed
13	Ceramic making skills	38 (10.9)	274 (78.3)	31 (8.9)	7 (2.0)	2.98	Agreed
14	Livestock rearing skills	28 (8.0)	288 (82.3)	25 (7.1)	9 (2.6)	2.96	Agreed
15	Garment making skills	24 (6.9)	296 (84.6)	29 (8.3)	1 (0.2)	2.98	Agreed
16	Plumbing skills	37 (10.6)	281 (80.3)	23 (6.6)	9 (2.6)	2.99	Agreed
17	Electrical skills	30	288	30	2	2.99	Agreed

		(8.6)	(82.3)	(8.6)	(0.6)		
18	Computer repairs skills	32 (9.1)	285 (81.4)	30 (8.6)	3 (0.9)	2.99	Agreed
19	Graphic designing skills	30 (8.6)	287 (82.0)	30 (8.6)	3 (0.9)	2.98	Agreed
20	Confectionaries (Snacks and Drinks production skills)	55 (15.7)	256 (73.1)	32 (9.1)	7 (2.0)	3.03	Agreed
						3.14	

Research question 2: What is the level of youth awareness in different entrepreneurship skill areas for youth empowerment in north central Nigeria?

Table 2. Revealed the respondent's level of awareness of entrepreneurship skills acquisition. From the table, 93.7% are aware of entrepreneurship through the course while 6.3% are not (Mean=1.94). And 93.4% are aware of entrepreneurship through National Orientation Agency (NOA) while 6.6% are not (mean =1.93). More so 91.1% are aware of entrepreneurship through media while 8.9% are not (mean=1.83) 91.1% are aware of entrepreneurship through the media while 8.9% are not (mean=1.91). In the same vein, 82.6% became aware of entrepreneurship through pleasure reading and public lectures while 17.4% did not (mean=1.83). This implies that the majority of the respondents are fully aware of the programme. The Table also revealed the overall mean score of 3.12 for the five items as agreed. This is because the mean ratings are above 1.50 which is the acceptance level as indicated

Table 2. Respondents Awareness Level of Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition

	ITEMS	Yes	No	Mean	
1	Entrepreneurship is among the departmental courses offered	259 (74.0)	91 (26.0)	1.74	
2	Entrepreneurship is among the general courses offered	228 (93.7)	22 (6.3)	1.94	
3	I became aware of entrepreneurship through the media.	319 (91.1)	31 (8.9)	1.91	
4	I became aware of entrepreneurship through pleasure reading and public lectures.	289 (82.6)	61 (17.4)	1.83	
5	I became aware of entrepreneurship through National Orientation Agency (NOA)	327 (93.4)	23 (6.6)	1.93	
				1.87	

Research question 3: What are the attitude of youth towards entrepreneurship skills acquisition program in north central Nigeria?

Table 3 indicates the attitude of respondents towards entrepreneurship skill acquisition. From the Table; 84.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Entrepreneurship skills give room for innovations while 15.4% disagreed (m=3.41); 80.6% of the students disagreed that the programme is a waste of time and resources 19.4% of them agreed to the statement (m=3.29); 87.1% of them agreed to the statement that they are more prepared for the future if acquired a skill 13.7% disagreed (m=3.42); 87.1% of the student agreed that learning a skill will enhance my wellbeing while 13.7% disagreed (m=3.45); 88.2% of the student disagreed that the programme believe the programme exposes hidden talents in them while 11.7% disagreed to the statement (m=3.47); 80.3% agreed that Skills acquisition is the most important priority in my life while 19.7% disagreed (m=3.38); 18.6% of the student agreed that Skills acquisition programme is government propaganda while 81.4% of them disagreed (m=3.38). However, 78.9% of the respondents agreed that the programme can reduce attention on white collar jobs while 21.2% disagreed (m=3.33); 81.7% of the respondents agreed that the Skills taught in entrepreneurship class can provide jobs for them while 18.3% disagreed (m=3.37); and 80.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement that entrepreneurship programme helps them contributed to their society through the skill acquired while 19.2% disagreed to the statement (m=3.41); 82% of the respondents agreed to the statement that they don't mind spending any amount to acquire a skill while 18% disagreed (m=3.46); 88.8% of the student disagreed that the programme prefers to acquire a skill rather than choosing other option while 11.2% of the student disagreed with the statement (m=3.52). Therefore, the Table revealed the overall mean score of 3.12 of the twelve attitudinal statements listed towards the oil subsidy regime as agreed. This is because the mean ratings of the twelve items are above 2.50 which is the acceptance level as indicated in the table. This implies that the majority of the respondent are feeling the economic hardship as a result of the subsidy removal as such turn to have a favourable attitude towards the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program.

Table 3. Respondent Attitude towards Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition

Attitudinal Statements		SA	A	DA	SD	Mean	Remark
1	I believe Entrepreneurship skills gives room for innovations	212 (60.6)	84 (24.0)	39 (11.1)	15 (4.3)	3.41	Agreed
2	I feel the programme is a waste of time and resources	198 (56.6)	84 (24.0)	39 (11.1)	29 (8.3)	3.29	Agreed
3	I would be more prepares for the future if acquired a skill	221 (63.1)	84 (24.0)	28 (8.0)	20 (5.7)	3.42	Agreed
4	Learning a skill will enhance my wellbeing	221 (63.1)	84 (24.0)	28 (8.0)	17 (4.9)	3.45	Agreed
5	I believe the programme exposes hidden talents in me	214 (61.1)	95 (27.1)	33 (9.4)	8 (2.3)	3.47	Agreed
6	Skills acquisition is the most important priority in my life	227 (64.9)	54 (15.4)	43 (12.3)	26 (7.4)	3.38	Agreed
7	Skills acquisition programme is government propaganda	39 (11.1)	26 (7.7)	82 (17.7)	223 (63.7)	3.38	Agreed
8	I feel the programme can reduce attention on white collar job	227 (64.9)	49 (14.0)	38 (10.9)	36 (10.3)	3.33	Agreed
9	Skills taught in entrepreneurship class can provide jobs for me.	224 (64.0)	62 (17.7)	34 (9.7)	30 (8.6)	3.37	Agreed
10	I Would like to contribute to my society through the skill acquired	233 (66.6)	50 (14.3)	44 (12.6)	23 (6.6)	3.41	Agreed
11	I don't mind spending any amount to acquire a skill	244 (69.7)	43 (12.3)	42 (12.0)	21 (6.0)	3.46	Agreed
12	I prefer to acquire a skill rather than choosing other option.	236 (67.4)	75 (21.4)	24 (6.9)	15 (4.3)	3.52	Agreed
						3.12	

Research question 4: What are the Challenges experienced by youths towards entrepreneurship skills acquisition program?

Data in Table 4 show that out of the eight items on the challenges to entrepreneurship skill acquisition among youth, the respondents agreed to all items with mean scores ranging between 3.01 and 3.17 as challenges to skill acquisition among youth. The cluster mean score of 3.05 shows that on the whole, these are serious challenges to skill acquisition among youth which cannot encourage sustainable national development.

Table 4. Respondents Challenges Experienced

ITEMS		SA	A	DA	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Poor supervision skills acquisition programme	88 (25.1)	235 (67.1)	26 (7.4)	1 (0.3)	3.17	Agreed
2	Lack of sufficient facilities	27 (7.7)	312 (89.1)	10 (2.9)	1 (0.3)	3.04	Agreed
3	Inconsistence policies	27 (7.7)	307 (87.7)	10 (2.9)	6 (1.7)	3.01	Agreed
4	Incompetence of the facilitators	27 (7.7)	305 (87.1)	17 (4.9)	1 (0.3)	3.02	Agreed
5	Lack of motivation from stakeholders	24 (6.9)	313 (89.4)	12 (3.4)	1 (0.3)	3.03	Agreed
6	Profit making nature of the facilitators	24 (6.9)	307 (87.7)	16 (4.6)	3 (0.9)	3.01	Agreed
7	Harnessing of raw local materials	40 (11.4)	284 (81.1)	19 (5.4)	7 (2.0)	3.02	Agreed
8	Inadequate training materials	83 (23.7)	235 (67.1)	25 (7.1)	7 (2.0)	3.13	Agreed
						3.05	

Research question 5: What is the impact of awareness, attitude and challenges on the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program?

Analysis of regression was conducted to determine the most significant factor that has an impact on the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program. The data is presented in Table 5. The results from the findings show that attitude has the highest Beta value ($B=0.785$, $P<0.05$). The findings supported the formulated hypothesis, therefore, we reject H_0 . Followed by awareness with ($B=0.199$, $P<0.05$) the findings also supported the hypothesis, therefore, we reject H_0 . However, the challenges have a very low Beta value of ($B=0.06$, $P=0.23$) and have no significant impact on the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program. The findings did not support the formulated hypothesis, therefore, we failed to reject H_0 . The findings concluded that attitude and awareness have an impact on entrepreneurship skills acquisition program. Hence they score an Adj.R2 of 50.4% as shown in Table 5. The 50.4% AdjR2 is an indication that there are another 49.6% unexplained factors that are not considered in this study. There is a high probability that other factors played a part in the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program.

Table 5 Impact of Awareness, Attitude and Challenges on the Entrepreneurship Skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.709	0.111		15.349	.000
ATT	.380	0.026	0.785	14.620	.000
AWN	.095	0.019	0.199	4.928	.000
CHL	.054	0.046	0.061	1.192	.234

IV. Discussion

The reason for the total acceptance may be due to the harsh conditions the youth are subjected to as a result of the subsidy removal. This is in line with Ayoade (2016) the need for entrepreneurship skill acquisition started emerging in the -mid-1980s when there was political instability and inconsistencies in the socioeconomic policies of successive governments. Consequently, the acquisition of relevant skills by the youth of nations is stressed as one of the critical factors for industrial and by extension, economic development. Ochieng & Ngware (2022) affirm that skill acquisition has emerged as one of the most effective development strategies that African countries need to embrace to train and modernize the technical workforce for rapid industrialization and national development. This is an indication that the majority of the students have a high level of awareness.

Therefore, an inference could be made that the majority of the sampled students exhibit entrepreneurship skills which showed their level of awareness. This is in line with Obialor & Ayandele (2022) opined that the attitude of an individual is a function of the strength of each of several beliefs, the person holds about the various aspects or attributes of an idea, object, or situation and the evaluation the person gives to each belief as it relates to the idea or object. Given this Adebayo and Kavoos (2016) posited that attitude plays a vital role in youth perception toward entrepreneurial skills acquisition, hence, investigating attitude is a common research to deduce entrepreneurship interest among the youth. Thus, it can be inferred from the respondents' responses that they have a favorable attitude toward the entrepreneurship skill programme.

The challenge to be addressed is the pattern of funding the training of the training programme. Funds should be budgeted and such funds should be channeled to the appropriate use. When funds for skills acquisition programme are not made available or when made available are diverted to other areas or taken possession of by a single individual, the aim of the funding will not be realized. When funds are properly channeled to the rightful area, every other aspect of the training and education will be adequately executed. In alignment with the above, Bonareri (2024) noted that funds earmarked be accessible, and the desired objective for the training of the youths in entrepreneurship skills would be positively felt. However, resource personnel may lack the prerequisites to handle the trainees and this can lead to a lack of interest on the part of the trainees. This challenge should be carefully addressed as it is the bedrock for the survival of the training programme.

The regression estimate coefficient is used to test the impact of the factors on the entrepreneurship skills acquisition program as shown in table 4. From the analysis of the findings, the model indicates the significance of two factors as their p-values were less than the alpha value of 0.05. This is an indication that respondents have the cognisance of the importance of the programme which made them have favourable attitude towards it. This corroborates with the findings of Adelakun, Lawal, Oyegbami, & Oyedokunn (2019) that youths have favourable attitude towards skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development because of the innovations embedded in it, which make them always explore new ideas that will enhance their livelihood activities and make them be self-reliant instead of depending on the white-collar jobs. However, this corroborates the findings of Nnodim, Nlebem & Michael (2015) that lack/inadequate training facilities inhibit youths from participating in agricultural-related skills and entrepreneurship development.

V. Conclusion

Skill acquisition programmes for youths have impacted youth development in north-central Nigeria. Most of the beneficiaries are now have a favourable attitude and fully aware of the programme as they acquired or show interest in all the skills presented for the acquisition programme. Therefore, the study recommends

1. A skills acquisition programme intended to promote youth growth should be a comprehensive initiative that gives unemployed youths the tools for a sustainable life as well as the confidence to strive for greater self-improvement.
2. Orientation programs should be organized to discourage youths from engaging in violent behavior in society and to educate them about small-scale business.
3. The government should ensure that skill acquisition programme centers are well equipped so as to ensure a suitable and conducive learning environment.

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