JOVTE, Vol. 14 No. 1 2026
DOI: https://doi.org/10.54117/jovte.v14i1.295

The Impact of Business Education on Youths' Empowerment, Economic Growth and National Development in Colleges of Education in Anambra State

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of business education on youths' empowerment, economic growth, and national development in Colleges of Education in Anambra State. Specifically, the study assessed the extent to which business education influences youths' empowerment, its impact on economic growth and national development, its role in entrepreneurial skills acquisition, and the challenges and opportunities it presents in the selected colleges. Adescriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 4,977 regular final-year Business Education students and their academic staff drawn from Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze, and Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe. Asample of 150 respondents was drawn using simple random sampling. Astructured questionnaire, validated by two experts and tested for reliability using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using mean scores with a cut-off point of 2.50. Findings revealed that business education significantly enhances youths' self-efficacy, confidence, and leadership skills; positively impacts entrepreneurial activity, job creation, and economic growth; equips youths with essential entrepreneurial skills including innovation, risk-taking, and financial management; and that colleges face challenges such as inadequate resources, limited qualified faculty, and outdated curricula. The study concluded that business education is pivotal for fostering youth empowerment and driving sustainable national development, and recommended curriculum updates, industry partnerships, government-supported entrepreneurship programmes, and adequate funding.

Keywords: Anambra State, Business Education, Colleges of Education, Economic Growth, Entrepreneurship, Youth Empowerment.

Introduction

Several views and opinions have over the years been put forward on the meaning and the place of business education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Business education is a comprehensive term referring to an educational process that involves, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of the economy and social life (Anya & Neukar, 2014). The broad educational goals of business education distinguish it from mere vocational training, which is directed at developing particular skills required for a specific occupation or group of occupations.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has acknowledged that approximately 80 percent of the country's youth are unemployed while 10 percent are underemployed (Salami, 2016). Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (2020) indicate that persons aged between 15 and 24 years had an unemployment rate of 41.6 percent, while those with post-secondary education recorded 21.3 percent unemployment. This underscores the urgency of education systems that translate into gainful employment and entrepreneurial activity. Business education, by its mandate, seeks to relate education to employment, job creation, and self-reliance. As Okorie (2021) observes, business education develops the mental and relationships.

For example, research by Pearce et al, (2018) highlights the growing diversity of family structures, with a rising number of adults identifying as unmarried and living alone or with unmarried partners. Similarly, studies in European countries have documented the increasing prevalence of non-traditional family forms, such as cohabitation and single-parent households (Hofäcker & Chaloupková, 2014). The influence of technology, globalization, and urbanization has also played a significant role in shaping modern family structures. Advancements in communication technology have made it easier for families to stay connected across distances, but they have also introduced new challenges, such as digital distractions and cyber bullying. Globalization has facilitated cultural exchange and migration, leading to greater cultural diversity within families and communities. Urbanization, meanwhile, has led to changes in living arrangements, with more people residing in urban areas and facing the pressures of urban life.

These trends have been documented in research examining the impact of technology on family life. For instance, studies have explored how digital communication tools affect family relationships, finding both positive and negative effects on communication patterns and family dynamics (Onyeator & Okpara, 2019). Similarly, research on globalization and urbanization has highlighted the influence of these trends on family structures and dynamics, including changes in social norms, values, and lifestyles (González-Ramos, 2020). Furthermore, socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in shaping modern family structures and dynamics. Economic inequalities, unemployment, poverty, and access to resources all influence family life and relationships. Families with higher socioeconomic status may have greater access to education, healthcare, and social support networks, while families facing economic hardship may experience increased stress and instability.

Understanding Mother and Son Relationships

Understanding mother and son relationships involves delving into various psychological aspects, power dynamics and hierarchy, and communication patterns, social media, traditional masculinity norms, setting boundaries, managing expectationsand conflict resolution strategies inherent in these relationships as illustrated in Figure 2. These elements shape the nature of the relationship and significantly impact its dynamics. Psychological aspects play a central role in shaping mother and son relationships. A securely attached son, who experienced warmth and support from his mother during childhood, is more likely to form positive and trusting relationships with his mother. Conversely, an insecurely attached son, characterized by feelings of anxiety or avoidance, may struggle to establish a healthy rapport with his mother, potentially leading to conflicts or tension within the family (Olutola et al, 2017).

Furthermore, power dynamics and hierarchy play a significant role in mother and son relationships. Traditional family structures often placed mothers in positions of authority and control within the family unit. However, as societal norms have evolved, power dynamics have shifted, leading to more egalitarian relationships. Sons may assert themselves more in familial decision-making, challenging traditional hierarchical roles. Research by Cherry and Gerstein (2021) explores the impact of traditional masculinity norms on men's relationships with their mothers, which can influence their interactions with their mothers. Understanding these power dynamics is essential for navigating conflicts and fostering healthy relationships within the family.

Communication patterns and conflict resolution strategies are critical components of mother and son relationships. Effective communication is essential for addressing conflicts and misunderstandings before they escalate. Open and honest communication, coupled with active listening, can help build trust and understanding between family members. Research by Dozier et al, (2013) suggests that setting boundaries and managing expectations are also critical components of effective communication within these relationships. By establishing clear communication channels and addressing issues as they arise, families can prevent conflicts from escalating and maintain harmonious relationships.

physical qualities of people, increasing their skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for utilizing natural resources and promoting self-employment.

In Anambra State, Colleges of Education play a pivotal role in producing teachers and middle-level manpower through business education programmes. Yet the entrepreneurial spirit, skills, and attitude development remain largely lacking in business education as presently mounted in many tertiary institutions. The need to promote entrepreneurial training alongside conventional business skills is therefore pressing. A typist with adequate skills but without entrepreneurial training may not succeed in opening a business centre due to inadequate managerial capability, just as adequate funding without the requisite competence would produce a similar outcome (Oborah, 2016). This study therefore investigates the impact of business education on youths' empowerment, economic growth, and national development in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.

For clarity, this study conceives youth empowerment as the process of equipping young people with the confidence, skills, and opportunities needed to take control of their own economic and social lives (Okafor, 2020); economic growth as the sustained increase in the output of goods and services within an economy over time; and entrepreneurship as the process of identifying, creating, and exploiting business opportunities to generate value and employment (Schumpeter, 2014). Theoretically, the study is anchored on Schumpeter's (2014) Theory of Innovation, which holds that innovation and entrepreneurship are the central drivers of economic development, and on Bandura's (2017) Self-Efficacy Theory, which posits that an individual's belief in their own capability directly shapes their motivation and willingness to take entrepreneurial risks. Together, these theories provide a basis for examining how business education builds both the innovative capacity and the self-belief that youths require for entrepreneurial success. Empirically, Okafor (2020) found that business education programmes in Anambra State's tertiary institutions positively influenced youth empowerment, although notable gaps in practical, hands-on training persisted. The present study builds on this empirical foundation by extending the enquiry to entrepreneurial skills acquisition and the specific challenges and opportunities facing Colleges of Education in the state.

Statement of the Problem

Irrespective of the various policies and programmes aimed at increasing youth employment and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria, the country still faces significant challenges in creating sufficient job opportunities for unemployed youths. Colleges of Education in Anambra State face constraints in providing effective business education due to inadequate resources, limited qualified faculty, and outdated curricula, resulting in graduates with weak practical entrepreneurial skills. The motivation for this study is to contribute to the growing literature on the impact of business education on youths' empowerment, economic growth, and national development, with a view to examining whether empowering youth through business education has significantly contributed to entrepreneurship growth and economic diversification in Nigeria.

The general aim of this study is to ascertain the impact of business education on youths' empowerment, economic growth, and national development in Colleges of Education. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Investigate the extent to which business education influences youths' empowerment in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.
2. Examine the extent to which business education impacts economic growth and national development among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.
3. Determine the extent to which business education enhances entrepreneurial skills acquisition among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State.
4. Identify the major challenges and opportunities faced by Colleges of Education in Anambra State in providing effective business education that promotes youths' empowerment and economic growth.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does business education influences youths' empowerment in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?
2. To what extent does business education impacts economic growth and national development among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?
3. To what extent does business education enhances entrepreneurial skills acquisition among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?
4. What are the major challenges and opportunities faced by Colleges of Education in Anambra State in providing effective business education that promotes youths' empowerment and economic growth?

Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design, which Nworgu (2015) defines as a study that samples individual units from an already known population through questionnaire construction and methods for improving the accuracy of responses. The study was carried out in two selected Colleges of Education in Anambra State: Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, and Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze.

The population for the study comprised all regular final-year Business Education degree students and the academic staff members teaching them in the selected institutions, totaling 4,977. Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze accounted for 3,711 students while Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe accounted for 1,266 students. A sample of 150 respondents was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula, $n = N \div (1 + N(e)^2)$, at an 8 percent margin of error, and drawn from the two schools using simple random sampling. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire on a four-point Likert style scale with two sections: Section A sought personal data of respondents while Section B sought information regarding the research questions, with response options of Strongly Agree (SA = 4), Agree (A = 3), Disagree (D = 2), and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1). The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by two lecturers in the Department of Business Education and a measurement and evaluation specialist. Reliability was established through the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Data were analyzed using mean scores, with a cut-off point of 2.50, derived from the mean of the four response values on the scale ($4 + 3 + 2 + 1 \div 4 = 2.50$); any item scoring 2.50 and above was regarded as accepted, while any item scoring below 2.50 was regarded as rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does business education influences youths' empowerment in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?

Table 1: Extent to Which Business Education Influences Youths' Empowerment in Colleges of Education in Anambra State (N = 150)

S/N	Item Statements	Σfx	X	Remark
1	Business education enhances students' belief in their ability to succeed in business and entrepreneurial endeavors, fostering self-efficacy and motivation.	513	3.42	Agreed
2	Acquiring business skills and knowledge boosts students' confidence in their ability to manage and run businesses, making them more likely to take entrepreneurial risks.	572	3.81	Agreed
3	Business education develops leadership skills such as decision-making, problem-solving, and communication, essential for empowering youth to take charge.	570	3.80	Agreed
4	Business education instills an entrepreneurial mindset enabling students to identify opportunities, innovate, and create value, leading to self-sufficiency.	552	3.68	Agreed
5	Business education provides students with practical skills and experience, enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings.	588	3.92	Agreed
	Average Mean		3.73	Agreed

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 shows that all mean scores are above the cut-off point of 2.50, with an average mean of 3.73. Item 5, on the provision of practical skills and experience, recorded the highest mean (3.92), while item 1, on fostering self-efficacy and motivation, recorded the lowest mean (3.42), though still well above the cut-off. This indicates that respondents agreed that business education significantly enhances youths' self-efficacy, confidence, and leadership skills in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, with practical, hands-on exposure standing out as its strongest contribution.

Research Question 2: To what extent does business education impacts economic growth and national development among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?

Table 2: Extent of Impact of Business Education on Economic Growth and National Development among Youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State. (N = 150)

S/N	Item Statements	Σfx	X	Remark
6	Business education inspires and equips youths with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to start and run their own businesses, fostering entrepneurial activity.	546	3.64	Agreed
7	By acquiring business skills and knowledge, youths are empowered to create jobs for themselves and others, reducing unemployment and contributing to economic growth.	539	3.59	Agreed
8	Business education contributes toconomic growth by developing a pool of entrepreneurial and innovative youths who can drive economic development.	496	3.31	Agreed
9	Business education provides youths with practical skills such as financial management, marketing, and leadership, essentil for success in entrepreneurship.	594	3.96	Agreed
10	By promoting entrepreneurial activity and job creation, business education contributes to sustainable development and reduces poverty among youths.	570	3.80	Agreed
	Average Mean		3.66	Agreed

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2026

Table 2 shows that all mean scores for items 6 through 10 exceed the cut-off point of 2.50, with an average mean of 3.66. Item 9, on the provision of practical skills such as financial management, marketing, and leadership, recorded the highest mean (3.96), while item 8, on developing a pool of entrepreneurial and innovative youths for economic development, recorded the lowest mean (3.31). This demonstrates that respondents agreed that business education positively impacts entrepreneurial activity, job creation, and economic growth among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State, with practical skill-building rated as its most visible effect.

Research Question 3: To what extent does business education enhances entrepreneurial skills acquisition among youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State?

Table 3: Extent to Which Business Education Enhances Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition among Youths in Colleges of Education in Anambra State (N = 150)

S/N	Item Statements	Σfx	X	Remark
11	Business education encourages youths to think creatively, develop innovative ideas, and find novel solutions to business challenges.	519	3.46	Agreed
12	Youths learn to assess and manage risks, make informed decisions, and take calculated risks to achieve business objectives.	519	3.46	Agreed
13	Business education equips youths with financial management skills including budgeting, accounting, and financial analysis.	530	3.53	Agreed
14	Youths acquire skills in marketing and sales, including market research, branding, and customer engagement.	519	3.46	Agreed
15	Business education develops leadership and strategic management skills including planning, organizing, and decision-making to effectively manage and grow businesses.	570	3.80	Agreed
	Average Mean		3.54	Agreed

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2026

Table 3 reveals that all mean scores for items 11 through 15 exceed the 2.50 cut-off, with an average mean of 3.54. Item 15, on leadership and strategic management skills, recorded the highest mean (3.80), while items 11, 12, and 14, on creativity and innovation, risk assessment, and marketing and sales, were tied for the lowest mean (3.46). Respondents agreed that business education equips youths with the entrepreneurial skills of innovation, risk-taking, financial management, marketing and sales, and leadership and strategic management, with leadership development standing out as the most strongly acquired skill.

Research Question 4: What are the major challenges and opportunities faced by Colleges of Education in Anambra State in providing effective business education that promotes youths' empowerment and economic growth?

Table 4: Major Challenges and Opportunities Faced by Colleges of Education in Anambra State in Providing Effective Business Education (N = 150)

S/N	Item Statements	Σfx	X	Remark
16	Insufficient funding, outdated facilities, and lack of modern technology hinder the delivery of quality busines education.	576	3.84	Agreed
17	Shortage of experienced and qualified faculty members with expertise in business education constrains effective teaching and mentoring.	522	3.48	Agreed
18	Outdated curricula fail to address contemporary business needs, making graduates less competitive in the job market.	500	3.33	Agreed
19	Inadequate opportunities for internships, entrepreneurship training, and hands-on experience limit students' practical skills development.	519	3.46	Agreed
20	Students' socio-economic backgrounds and environmental factors such as poverty and lack of resources affect their ability to focus on studies and entrepreneurial pursuits.	570	3.80	Agreed
	Average Mean		3.58	Agreed

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4 shows that all mean scores for items 16 through 20 exceed the cut-off of 2.50, with an average mean of 3.58. Item 16, on insufficient funding, outdated facilities, and lack of modern technology, recorded the highest mean (3.84), while item 18, on outdated curricula, recorded the lowest mean (3.33). Respondents agreed on the existence of challenges including inadequate resources, limited qualified faculty, outdated curricula, insufficient practical experience opportunities, and socio-economic constraints as major barriers to effective business education in Anambra State Colleges of Education, with funding and infrastructure standing out as the most pressing concern.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study demonstrate the extent to which business education positively influences youth empowerment in terms of self-efficacy, confidence, and leadership skills among students in Colleges of Education in Anambra State. This aligns with previous research by Okafor (2020) and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2019), which highlights the impact of business education on developing entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. The finding that business education enhances self-efficacy is consistent with Bandura (2017), who established that increased self-efficacy translates to higher confidence levels and willingness to take entrepreneurial risks. Business education's role in developing leadership and decision-making skills is further corroborated by Yukl (2016) and Ensley et al. (2016), who emphasized the centrality of leadership to entrepreneurial success.

On the impact of business education on entrepreneurial activity and economic growth, the study's findings align with Okafor (2020) and the GEM (2019), which document a positive relationship between business education and entrepreneurial activity. The finding that business education leads to job creation is supported by Acs, Audretsch, and Lehmann (2017), who established that entrepreneurial youth are more likely to create employment for themselves and others. The study's results also support the argument by Kuratko (2015) and Neck and Greene (2014) that business education can address youth unemployment and underemployment by equipping youths with entrepreneurial skills, a finding particularly relevant to Nigeria's unemployment context.

The finding that business education effectively equips youths with entrepreneurial skills including innovation, risk-taking, financial management, marketing, and leadership aligns with the conclusions of Ezeani, Ifeonyemetalu, and Ezemoyih (2014) and Akande (2021). These studies confirm that business education, when properly delivered, prepares graduates for the practical demands of managing and growing enterprises. The present study also corroborates Schumpeter's (2014) classical position that innovation and entrepreneurship are central drivers of economic development, and that business education is the vehicle through which these capacities are cultivated in youth.

The challenges identified, including inadequate resources, limited qualified faculty, outdated curricula, insufficient practical experience, and socio-economic constraints, are consistent with findings by Kuratko (2015), Neck and Greene (2014), and the GEM (2019). These barriers explain the gap between the potential of business education and its actual outcomes in Anambra State Colleges of Education. However, the study also identified significant opportunities, including partnerships with industries and government agencies, technology integration, and the expansion of entrepreneurship incubation programmes, all of which can transform business education into a more potent instrument for youth empowerment and economic development.

Conclusion

Business education in Colleges of Education in Anambra State plays a crucial role in youth empowerment, economic growth, and overall national development. This educational discipline equips students with essential entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy, and business management knowledge that are vital for self-reliance and employment generation. By fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among the youth, business education reduces unemployment rates and promotes the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are the backbone of economic growth in the state. The curriculum's focus on practical skills ensures that graduates are not merely theoretically sound but are ready to engage the business world, contributing to economic diversification and resilience.

However, the effectiveness of business education in achieving these outcomes is constrained by inadequate resources, limited qualified faculty, outdated curricula, and insufficient practical exposure. Addressing these challenges through targeted policy interventions, increased funding, and strategic partnerships is essential for unlocking the full potential of business education as an instrument for youth empowerment and sustainable economic development in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings presented in Tables 1 to 4 in response to the four research questions and objectives of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Colleges of education should introduce structured confidence-building components such as mentorship, public speaking, and leadership exercises to strengthen youths' self-efficacy, while sustaining the hands-on teaching methods already producing strong empowerment outcomes.
2. Government and Colleges of Education should co-fund innovation-focused schemes such as business plan competitions and start-up grants, to build a stronger pool of entrepreneurial and innovative youths capable of driving measurable economic growth.
3. The curriculum should give more deliberate, hands-on attention to creativity/innovation, risk assessment, and marketing/sales through simulations, live sales projects, and case studies, since these were the weakest entrepreneurial skill areas identified, while also being regularly updated to reflect current business trends and technologies.
4. Colleges should establish structured internship and industry-attachment programmes, alongside formal partnerships with industry and government agencies, to deepen practical exposure and create pathways for mentorship, funding, and business support for graduates.
5. Government and college management should prioritize funding for facilities, learning materials, and modern technology, and ensure adequate qualified faculty with ongoing professional development, since these emerged as the most pressing challenges to effective delivery.
6. Digital literacy, technology integration, and entrepreneurship incubation support (mentorship, seed funding, business development services) should be embedded into the business education ecosystem, supported by a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress over time.

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