

INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA

¹ADEFAJO, Nurudeen Adewale; ²OYENIYAN, Adebola Adebanye and
³IYANDA, Aisha Olajumoke

¹Computer Science Education Department, School of Secondary Education Sciences,
Federal College of Education, Iwo, Osun State

adefajona@fceiwo.edu.ng

²Department of Business Education, School of Vocational and Technical Education
Federal College of Education, Iwo, Osun State

oyeniyanaa@fceiwo.edu.ng

³Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences
University of Ilorin, Ilorin

aishat iyanda@gmail.com

Abstract

In the face of rising youth unemployment alongside the growing number of graduates, innovative entrepreneurship has emerged as a key strategy for enhancing employability and enterprise development. This study examines the relationship between innovative entrepreneurship and youth employment in Southwest Nigeria, focusing on how innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and technological entrepreneurship do influence skill acquisition and job creation. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 8,220 final-year students from selected universities in Lagos, Ogun, and Oyo States. A sample size of 385 respondents was selected using Taro Yamane (1967) formula. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire, whose validity and reliability were established, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.75. Data analysis was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the aid of SPSS version 25. Findings revealed a strong positive and significant relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition ($r = 0.741$, $p = 0.011$). In addition, technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship showed a moderately strong and significant relationship with job creation ($r = 0.680$, $p = 0.001$). The study concludes that innovation-oriented entrepreneurial training and technological adoption significantly enhance youth skill development and employment outcomes. It recommends that universities should intensify practical entrepreneurship education while policymakers and stakeholders should support access to technology, funding, and innovation infrastructure. These measures can foster sustainable youth employment and drive inclusive economic growth in Nigeria.

Keywords: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Youth Employment, Skill Acquisition, Technology

Introduction

Youth unemployment has become one of the most pressing socio-economic challenges facing many countries around the world, particularly in developing economies such as Nigeria.

The increasing number of graduates leaving tertiary institutions each year has not been matched with corresponding job opportunities in the formal labour market. As a result, a large proportion of youths remain unemployed or

underemployed, despite possessing educational qualifications. This situation has raised serious concerns among policymakers, educators, and development experts, as youth unemployment continues to contribute to poverty, social vices, dependency, and slowed economic growth.

In response to this challenge, entrepreneurship education was introduced and strengthened in various tertiary institutions across Nigeria. The aim was to equip students with entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and the mindset required to become job creators rather than job seekers. Universities and other higher institutions now include entrepreneurship courses as part of their curriculum, with the expectation that graduates will be able to establish and manage small and medium-scale enterprises after graduation. This policy direction was also supported by government initiatives and programmes designed to promote self-reliance and reduce pressure on the labour market (Ayo-Sobowale, 2021).

The introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian institutions, the problem of youth unemployment still persists. Many graduates who have undergone entrepreneurship training still struggle to secure employment or establish viable businesses. This suggests that while entrepreneurship education has improved awareness, it has not sufficiently translated into meaningful employment outcomes. One major limitation identified is that much of the entrepreneurship training remains theoretical, with limited emphasis on innovation, practical problem-solving, and technological application (Oyinlola et al., 2024). Consequently, many youth-led enterprises remain small-scale, survivalist in nature, and unable to

generate sustainable employment opportunities.

This persistent challenge has led to growing interest in innovative entrepreneurship as a more effective approach to addressing youth unemployment (Oyinlola et al., 2024). The process of establishing new company concepts, goods, services, or procedures by utilizing creativity, technology, and innovation to address societal issues is known as innovative entrepreneurship. It goes beyond traditional entrepreneurship by integrating digital tools, modern technologies, and innovative business models that enhance productivity, competitiveness, and scalability. Innovative entrepreneurship is therefore expected to produce more dynamic enterprises that can generate employment and contribute meaningfully to economic development (Suleiman, 2021).

In this sense, undergraduate students at Southwest Nigerian universities are particularly included in the study's definition of young unemployment. Because they are in the transitional stage between finishing their school and entering the workforce, these undergraduates constitute a significant portion of the youth population. Many of them are still unsure about their future employment prospects despite having received entrepreneurship education, which emphasizes the need to investigate how innovative entrepreneurship can better prepare them for the realities of a competitive and technologically advanced economy (Ayo-Sobowale, 2021).

Southwest Nigeria, which comprises states such as Lagos, Ogun, Oyo and Osun, is one of the most educationally and economically advanced regions in the country, hosting numerous universities and

entrepreneurial ecosystems. However, even within this region, graduate unemployment remains a significant concern. Many undergraduate students engage in entrepreneurship activities that are largely traditional and lack innovation content, limiting their capacity to create jobs for themselves and others (Oyinlola et al., 2024). This situation underscores the need to shift attention from conventional entrepreneurship education to innovation-driven entrepreneurial practices that can enhance skill acquisition and job creation. Therefore, this study focuses on innovative entrepreneurship and youth employment among undergraduate students in Southwest, Nigeria with particular emphasis on innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and technology entrepreneurship as key variables influencing skill acquisition and job creation.

Literature Review

Innovative Entrepreneurship

Innovative entrepreneurship refers to the process of creating new products, services, or business models that address existing problems or open up new markets through creativity, technology, and unique strategies (Medase & Wyrwich, 2022). Innovative entrepreneurs prioritize transformation and value creation through disruptive thinking and the application of novel solutions (Oyinlola et.al., 2024). Furthermore, innovative entrepreneurship plays a critical role in driving economic growth and development. By introducing breakthrough innovations, these entrepreneurs not only improve productivity but also generate employment opportunities, especially for the youth in developing economies. This fosters a vibrant business ecosystem that

can adapt to global changes. Innovative entrepreneurs often rely on technological advancements and digital platforms to scale their ventures. In doing so, they contribute to the digital economy and help modernize industries ranging from agriculture to finance (Bakhouché, 2022). Additionally, governments and educational institutions increasingly recognize the value of fostering innovation-driven entrepreneurship through policy support, funding, and incubation programs.

Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurial Training

Innovation-driven entrepreneurial training equips young individuals with the practical skills, creative mindset, and technological competencies needed to create sustainable, high-impact ventures. Traditional entrepreneurship education, which focuses largely on theoretical knowledge, while innovation-driven training emphasizes hands-on experience, problem-solving, and the use of digital tools to address real-world challenges. Ajagbe, Fadeyi, Oke, and Isiafwe (2015) highlight the importance of integrating innovation into training programs to build self-reliant and resilient entrepreneurs. In Nigeria, however, most youth empowerment initiatives still lack a strong innovation component. Chineze, Uche, and Gabriel (2021) argue that for entrepreneurship to effectively address youth unemployment, training must be redesigned to reflect current global economic realities. Juliana, Hui, Clement, Solomon, and Elvis (2021) further emphasize the role of practical, innovation-based learning in transforming entrepreneurial intentions into viable businesses. Strengthening innovation-driven training, especially in regions like Southwest Nigeria, is essential for promoting youth

employment and driving inclusive, technology-enabled economic development.

According to Federal Ministry of Communication, Innovation and Digital Economy (2026), the following are identified as innovation-driven hubs in Southwest, Nigeria among others;

Premier Hub Innovation Center (Lagos): Offers enterprise development training and workshops focused on business growth, marketing, and digital strategies.

Southwest Innovation and Tech Pre-Fellowship Program: A fellowship for prospective NYSC members in Southwest Nigeria to build practical leadership and innovation skills.

Youth Innovators Programme (YIP): Provides grants, mentorship, competitions, and training sessions on design thinking, product development, and pitching to help young people address real-world problems.

South-West Innovation Fellowship (SWIF) by SWIT: A fellowship program that immerses high-potential young leaders and entrepreneurs in hands-on projects and mentorship, focusing on innovation and driving change in the region.

Madros Technologies: Offers technology-focused training programs in areas such as programming, data science, and digital marketing, with a curriculum designed to meet industry demands.

Piston and Fusion Business Academy: Provides classroom and virtual training in creative thinking, innovation, and digital transformation, with a presence in Lagos and offering online classes in other Nigerian states.

Gen AI Fellowship Programme: This is a full-time, in-person experience that equips youths with practical, in-demand skills for the AI-driven world. Organized by the Ogun State Ministry of Science

and Technology and sponsored by the Bosun Tijani Foundation, this initiative is a gateway into the world of AI and cutting-edge technology.

Technological Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurship

Technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship refers to the development of new ventures that utilize advanced technologies to deliver innovative products, services, or processes. This form of entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in shaping modern economies by increasing efficiency, scalability, and market competitiveness (Suleiman, 2021). Entrepreneurs who integrate digital tools such as artificial intelligence, mobile platforms, and cloud computing are better positioned to disrupt traditional markets and create new business opportunities. According to Do-Adro, Fernandes, Veiga, and Kraus (2021), technology-based entrepreneurship enhances value creation and is a key driver of sustainable economic growth. In emerging economies like Nigeria, technological innovation offers a pathway to reduce youth unemployment and stimulate productivity across sectors. However, challenges such as infrastructural deficits, lack of funding, and policy gaps persist (Osabohien et al., 2022). This emphasizes the need for inclusive digital ecosystems, while Medase and Wyrwich (2022) remark that building technological capabilities among young entrepreneurs is critical to harnessing the full potential of innovation-driven ventures in developing countries.

Technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship opportunities Southwest, Nigeria

According to Southwest Innovation & Technology Co. (2026),

the following are itemised as technological innovation-driven opportunities in Southwest, Nigeria.

1. Lagos State (Tech Hub of Nigeria)

- **FinTech Solutions:** Mobile banking apps, payment gateways, blockchain-based microfinance.
- **E-commerce and Logistics Platforms:** AI-driven online marketplaces, last-mile delivery drones.
- **Smart City Solutions:** Waste-to-energy systems, traffic management apps, renewable energy startups.
- **Creative Tech:** Virtual reality (VR) in Nollywood, music tech platforms.

2. Oyo State (Education and Agriculture Base)

- **AgriTech:** Drones for precision farming, IoT-enabled irrigation, digital marketplaces for farmers.
- **EdTech:** Robotics, AI coding academies, digital learning platforms for schools.
- **HealthTech:** Mobile diagnostic tools, AI-powered telemedicine, biotech ventures.
- **Renewable Energy** – Solar energy startups to support rural electrification.

3. Ogun State (Industrial and Manufacturing Zone)

- **Manufacturing Automation:** 3D printing, robotics in SMEs, IoT-driven supply chains.
- **Green Tech:** Recycling and waste-to-product startups, clean energy for factories.

- **Logistics and Transport Tech:** AI-powered fleet management, ride-hailing platforms for intercity transport.

- **Construction Tech:** Smart building materials, prefabricated housing innovations.

4. Osun State (Education and Cultural Heritage Hub)

- **AgriTech Innovations:** Smart farming tools for cocoa, cassava, and poultry.
- **EdTech and Digital Literacy:** E-learning platforms for colleges of education. Coding and robotics academies for secondary schools.
- **Tourism and Cultural Tech:** Virtual reality (VR) tours of Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove. Mobile apps promoting cultural festivals and crafts. Digital platforms for local artisans to sell globally.

These innovations align with Nigeria's digital economy strategy and are likely to drive youth employment, business scalability, and regional competitiveness.

Youth Employment

Youth employment is a growing concern in many developing nations, including Nigeria, where a large segment of the population consists of young people with limited access to formal job opportunities. Addressing this challenge requires a dual approach that emphasizes both skill acquisition and job creation (Adenusi, 2023). These two components are fundamental to equipping young people with the tools necessary to

participate meaningfully in the economy either as employees or entrepreneurs.

Skill acquisition refers to the development of practical, technical, vocational, and digital competencies that enhance employability. In the context of innovative entrepreneurship, these skills are particularly vital, as they enable young individuals to respond to dynamic market demands, embrace technology, and solve complex problems creatively (Oyinlola et al., 2024). Innovation-driven training programs, workshops, and mentorship schemes contribute to building these essential capabilities among youths.

Job creation, involves generating new employment opportunities, often through entrepreneurial ventures that expand and hire additional labour. Technological innovation and entrepreneurship have emerged as significant drivers of job creation, especially in regions like Southwest, Nigeria where startup ecosystems and youth-led initiatives are on the rise (Osabohien et al., 2022). When youths acquire relevant skills, they are more likely to establish businesses, engage in self-employment, and contribute to broader economic development.

Skill acquisition and job creation have been observed to form the foundation for a sustainable solution to youth unemployment. Innovative entrepreneurship serves as the bridge between these two pillars, making it a critical focus area for research, policy, and development programs in Nigeria and other emerging economies.

Theoretical Review

This study adopts Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation, propounded by Joseph Alois Schumpeter in 1911 in his work *The Theory of Economic Development*, to explain the relationship

between innovative entrepreneurship and youth employment in Southwest Nigeria. Schumpeter explained that economic development is driven by entrepreneurs who introduce new combinations such as new products, new production methods, new markets, and new organisational structures. This process, referred to as "creative destruction," replaces outdated systems with more efficient ones, thereby stimulating economic growth and employment creation.

Contemporary scholars have supported and extended this theoretical position in relation to employment and innovation. Chineze, Uche, and Gabriel (2021) affirm that entrepreneurial education plays a significant role in reducing unemployment among students in Nigeria by equipping them with relevant skills for self-employment and enterprise creation. Innovation is a critical driver of employment growth among firms in developing countries, including Nigeria, as innovative firms are more likely to expand and create new job opportunities compared to non-innovative ones.

Schumpeter's theory is therefore relevant to this study because it explains how innovation-driven entrepreneurship can transform unemployed undergraduates in Southwest Nigeria into job creators through creativity, skills acquisition, and technological adoption. It provides a strong foundation for understanding how innovation in entrepreneurship education and practice can contribute to reducing youth unemployment and enhancing sustainable job creation in the study area.

Empirical Review

Intentions to start new ventures across selected universities in Southwest Nigeria found a strong link between

structured entrepreneurial programs and business innovation. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the study revealed that variables such as content knowledge, mentoring, and knowledge sharing significantly influenced students' skill acquisition and startup readiness. Similarly, Ayo-Sobowale (2021) examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students. The findings confirmed that exposure to entrepreneurship education positively impacted employment creation and enterprise development, concluding that practical, innovation-driven learning should be emphasized in university curricula.

A related study focused on the Youth-in-Agribusiness (YIA) program in Southwestern Nigeria used propensity score matching and probit models to assess its effectiveness. Results showed that access to training, credit, and youth networks significantly influenced participation, which in turn led to improved gainful employment outcomes among the youth. In a complementary perspective, Adebakin and Ayanlowo (2023) explored the broader challenges of innovation and entrepreneurship in Nigeria through theoretical analysis. Their findings pointed to poor orientation, lack of experiential learning, funding constraints, and weak institutional support as barriers to youth entrepreneurial success. The study emphasized that higher education institutions must strengthen experiential learning and innovative skill development to empower young people for self-reliance and job creation in Southwest Nigeria.

From the available empirical studies, there seems to be limited empirical evidence connecting

technological innovation, training quality, and startup success to measurable youth employment outcomes in the region, hence, this study sets to fill the identified gap.

Statement of the Problem

Youth unemployment remains a major socio-economic challenge in Nigeria, particularly in the Southwest region where many graduates and young people struggle to secure sustainable employment opportunities. Despite increasing government support for entrepreneurship development, many youths still lack practical entrepreneurial skills, technological exposure, and access to innovation-driven opportunities capable of enhancing self-employment and job creation. The growing rate of unemployment has contributed to poverty, social instability, and economic dependency among youths.

Although innovative entrepreneurship has been recognised as a tool for economic empowerment, existing entrepreneurial programmes in Nigeria are often criticised for inadequate technological integration, insufficient practical training, and limited innovation support systems. Many entrepreneurship initiatives focus mainly on theoretical knowledge with less emphasis on innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and technological entrepreneurship that can improve skill acquisition and employment generation among youths.

Several studies have examined entrepreneurship and youth employment from different perspectives. Entrepreneurship for poverty reduction and sustainable development, entrepreneurial education and unemployment reduction among students in Nigeria. Technopreneurship education as a strategy for reducing

youth unemployment, entrepreneurship and innovation trends in Nigeria. All these studies paid limited attention to the relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition, as well as technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation among youths in Southwest Nigeria. This contextual and empirical gap necessitated this study.

Research Objectives

Specifically, the study;

- i. examined the relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition among youths in Southwest, Nigeria.
- ii. assessed the relationship between technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation among youths in Southwest, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition among youths in Southwest, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation among youths in Southwest, Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to investigate the relationship between innovative entrepreneurship and youth employment in Southwest, Nigeria. The design was chosen because it allows for the collection

of detailed and quantifiable data from a large sample. The population of the study comprised final-year undergraduate students in public universities in Lagos, Ogun, Oyo and Osun States. These states were identified as innovation hubs in Southwest, Nigeria. The selected universities are University of Lagos (UNILAG), University of Ibadan (UI), Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (OAU) respectively. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select participants. The population for the study is 8,220 students who had offered entrepreneurship courses. The sample size of 385 was determined using Taro Yamane (1967) formula and structured questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The instrument for data collection was a self-administered questionnaire. The instrument was validated by experts in entrepreneurship and educational research, and a pilot test was conducted and ensured reliability, yielding a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.75. Inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used to test the hypotheses. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 25, with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$.

Results and Analysis

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition among youths in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 1: Model Summary of Pearson Correlation

		Innovation-driven entrepreneurial training	Skill Acquisition
Innovation-driven entrepreneurial training	Pearson Correlation	1	.741
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011*
	N	385	385
Skill Acquisition	Pearson Correlation	.741	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011*	
	N	385	385

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 presents the model summary of the correlation between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition among youths in Southwest Nigeria. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.741 indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as innovation-driven entrepreneurial training improves, the level of skill acquisition among youths also increases significantly.

The significance value (p-value) of 0.011, which is less than the 0.05 significance level, confirms that the relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected, which states that there is no significant relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial

training and skill acquisition, and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) that there is a significant relationship between the two.

The implication of this result is that structured and innovation-focused entrepreneurial training plays a vital role in enhancing the skills of young in Southwest, Nigeria. It shows that when youths are exposed to modern, hands-on, and innovative training programs, they are more likely to acquire relevant skills necessary for self-employment, job readiness, and entrepreneurial success.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation among youths in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 2: Model Summary of Pearson Correlation

		Technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship	Job Creation
Technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship	Pearson Correlation	1	.680
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001*
	N	385	385
Job Creation	Pearson Correlation	.680	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001*	
	N	385	385

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows the model summary of the correlation between technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation among youths in Southwest Nigeria. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.680 indicates a moderately strong positive relationship between the two variables. This implies that an increase in technological innovation within entrepreneurial ventures is associated with a notable increase in job creation among youths.

The significance value (p-value) of 0.001, which is well below 0.05 significance level, indicates that the relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected, which posited that there is no significant relationship between technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation, and we accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1), which affirms that there is a significant relationship between the two variables.

The implication of this result is that technological innovation plays a critical role in enhancing youth employment through entrepreneurship. When young entrepreneurs adopt and apply technological tools such as digital platforms, automation, and mobile solutions they not only improve business efficiency but also expand operations, leading to the creation of more job opportunities.

Discussion of Findings

The result of hypothesis one showed a strong and statistically significant relationship ($r = 0.741$, $p = 0.011$) between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition. This indicates that innovation-focused entrepreneurship education significantly enhances youths' ability to acquire relevant skills necessary

for self-employment and enterprise creation. This finding corroborates with the views of Suleiman (2021), who emphasized that the integration of technopreneurship education into Nigerian university curricula is essential for equipping students with both entrepreneurial mindsets and practical digital skills. Suleiman argued that when entrepreneurial training includes innovation components such as digital tools, design thinking, and real-world enterprise projects students are expected to acquire employable skills and develop sustainable business ideas. The present study affirms that innovation-driven training does more than stimulate entrepreneurial intention; it translates into tangible skill acquisition, positioning youths to contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's economy.

Hypothesis two analysis revealed a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship ($r = 0.680$, $p = 0.001$) between technological innovation-driven entrepreneurship and job creation. This implies that young entrepreneurs who integrate technology into their ventures are more likely to generate employment opportunities for themselves and others. This result aligns closely with the findings of Medase and Wyrwich (2022), who examined the role of innovation in employment growth across firms in Nigeria. Their study concluded that innovation particularly product and process innovation positively influences employment expansion among firms in developing economies. In line with their findings, this research confirms that technological innovation enhances business scalability, improves market access, and drives employment generation among youth-led startups in Southwest Nigeria. Young entrepreneurs leveraging mobile platforms, automation, and digital

business models are increasingly becoming sources of job creation, thereby addressing local unemployment challenges.

Conclusion

The study established that there is a strong and statistically significant relationship between innovation-driven entrepreneurial training and skill acquisition among youths in Southwest, Nigeria. This implies that structured, innovation-oriented training programs especially those emphasizing creative thinking, digital competence, and entrepreneurial problem-solving play a vital role in equipping young people with the practical skills necessary for employability and self-reliance. It confirms that entrepreneurial training that integrates innovation is not merely theoretical but translates into real-world skill development that can enable youth to thrive in dynamic labour markets.

The study also concludes that integration of technology into entrepreneurial ventures is an effective strategy for generating employment among Nigerian youths and concludes that promoting technological innovation among youth-led startups can significantly reduce unemployment and contribute to broader economic development in the region.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Universities and entrepreneurial training hubs in Southwest, Nigeria should strengthen entrepreneurship training by integrating innovation-driven components such as digital skills, mentorship, and hands-on projects in their curricular through regular curriculum updates which

will help align training with evolving market demands, enhancing skill acquisition among youths and improving their readiness for self-employment and business creation in Southwest, Nigeria.

- ii. Government and private sectors should support youth entrepreneurs by improving access to technology, innovation funding, digital training and establishing regional innovation hubs and providing affordable technology resources which can empower youths to apply technology in business operations across Southwest, Nigeria.

References

- Adenusi, D. E. (2023). Entrepreneurship, job creation, income empowerment and poverty reduction in low-income economies. *Theoretical Economics Letters*, 13(06), 1579–1598.
- Adeosun, O. T., & Shittu, A. I. (2021). Learning and innovation in youth-owned small businesses. *Rajagiri Management Journal*, 15(1), 69–87.
- Adeosun, O. T., Shittu, A. I., & Ugbede, D. (2023). Disruptive financial innovations: the case of Nigerian micro-entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business and Socio-Economic Development*, 3(1), 17–35.
- Adebakin, A. B., & Ayanlowo, A. E. (2023). Entrepreneurship Education: A Sustainable Strategy for Economic Development in Nigeria. In *The Importance of Entrepreneurship in Fostering*

- Economic Progress* (pp. 120-134). IGI Global.
- Agri, E. M., Nanwul, D. A., & Acha, O. F. (2017). Promoting entrepreneurship for poverty reduction and sustainable development in Nigeria. *Journal of Business Management and Economics*, 8(1), 38–46. <https://doi.org/10.1109/SADFE.2009.7>
- Ajagbe, M. A., Fadeyi, O., Oke, A. O., & Isiaevwe, D. T. (2015). *Building Sustainable Future for Nigeria through Entrepreneurship*, 5(3), 42–49. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v5-3/1740>
- Ayo-Sobowale, M. O. (2021). *Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in South-West of Nigeria* (Doctoral dissertation, Kwara State University (Nigeria)).
- Bakhouché, A. (2022). Assessing the innovation-finance nexus for SMEs: Evidence from the Arab Region (MENA). *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 13(3), 1875–1895. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-021-00786-x>
- Bhurtel, A. (2015). Technical and vocational education and training in workforce development. *Journal of Training and Development*, 1(July), 77–84. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v1i0.13094>
- Chineze, J., & J., Uche R., E., & Gabriel E., E. (2021). Effect of entrepreneurial education on unemployment reduction among students in Nigeria. *Business and Management Research*, 10(2), 16. <https://doi.org/10.5430/bmr.v10n2p16>
- Do-Adro, F., Fernandes, C. I., Veiga, P. M., & Kraus, S. (2021). Social entrepreneurship orientation and performance in non-profit organizations. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 17(4), 1591–1618. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-021-00748-4>
- European Commission. (2020). Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe. Comparative synthesis report. Authors: Carlo Borzaga, Giulia Galera, Barbara Franchini, Stefania Chiomento, Rocío Nogales and Chiara Carini. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at <https://europa.eu/!Qq64ny>
- Hill, S., Ionescu-Somers, A., Coduras Martínez, A., Guerrero, M., Menipaz, E., Boutaleb, F. & Shay, J. (2023). Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2022/2023 Global Report: Adapting to a "New Normal".
- Ifeoma, A. R., Purity, N. O., & Yusuf, A. E. (2018). Effect of entrepreneurship development on poverty alleviation in Nigeria. *Journal of Business and Management*, 20(2), 80-87.
- Juliana, N. O., Hui, H. J., Clement, M., Solomon, E. N., & Elvis, O. K. (2021). The impact of creativity and innovation on entrepreneurship development: evidence from Nigeria. *Open*

- Journal of Business and Management*, 9(4), 1743-1770.
- Medase, S. K., & Wyrwich, M. (2022). The role of innovation for employment growth among firms in developing countries: Evidence from Nigeria. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 14(3), 610-619.
- Osabohien, R., Worgwu, H., Rafi, S. K., Adediran, O., Matthew, O., & Aderounmu, B. (2022). Impact of business innovation on future employment in Nigeria. *Managerial and Decision economics*, 43(8), 3795-3806.
- Oyinlola, M., Kolade, O., Okoya, S. A., Ajala, O., Adefila, A., Adediji, A., & Akinlabi, E. T. (2024). Entrepreneurship and innovation in Nigerian universities: Trends, challenges and opportunities. *Heliyon*.
- Suleiman, Y. (2021). Integrating Technopreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities: Strategy for Decreasing Youth Unemployment. *Journal of Education and Research*, 11(1), 49-76.