

ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING AND STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, CALABAR.

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the impact of entrepreneurial training on students' academic performance at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre, University of Calabar. The study adopted a survey research design, with data collected from a sample of 105 students selected using simple random sampling from a population of 144. Data were obtained through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Analysis of Variance). The findings revealed that entrepreneurial training has a moderately high positive effect on students' performance, particularly in enhancing entrepreneurial mindset, resilience, and adaptability. The results also showed that entrepreneurial training contributes to reducing graduate unemployment, improving managerial skills, and promoting self-reliance among students. Furthermore, the ANOVA result indicated a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial training and students' academic performance, leading to the

rejection of the null hypothesis. The study concludes that entrepreneurial training plays a vital role in improving both academic and practical competencies of students. It recommends improved curriculum integration, increased practical exposure, and enhanced institutional support to maximize the benefits of entrepreneurship education.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Training, Academic Performance, Entrepreneurship Education, Employability, Skill Acquisition.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship education has emerged as a critical strategy for addressing youth unemployment and enhancing human capital development, particularly in developing economies like Nigeria. Universities have increasingly integrated entrepreneurial training into their curricula through Entrepreneurship Development Centres (EDCs) to equip students with practical skills, innovation capacity, and self-employment potential. This shift reflects a global recognition that traditional academic learning alone may not adequately prepare graduates for the dynamic demands of the labour market. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2023), entrepreneurship education significantly improves students' opportunity recognition, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability, all of which are essential for both academic and career success. However, concerns remain regarding how such training influences students' academic performance, especially when balancing academic responsibilities with entrepreneurial activities.

Academic performance is a key indicator of students' success within higher education institutions, often measured through grades, cumulative grade point averages (CGPA), and overall academic engagement. Entrepreneurial training, on the other hand, involves structured learning experiences such as business simulations, skill acquisition programs, and practical enterprise development. Studies suggest that entrepreneurial training can positively influence cognitive skills such as critical thinking, time management, and creativity, which are directly linked to improved academic outcomes (Bae et al., 2014; Nabi et al., 2017). Conversely, excessive involvement in entrepreneurial ventures may divert students' attention from their studies, thereby negatively affecting academic performance (Ozaralli & Rivenburgh, 2016). This dual perspective highlights the need for empirical investigation into the nature of this relationship.

In the context of the University of Calabar, the Entrepreneurship Development Centre plays a significant role in fostering entrepreneurial competencies among students. The centre provides training programs designed to promote innovation, self-reliance, and practical business skills. While these initiatives align with national educational policies aimed at reducing graduate unemployment, their impact on students' academic performance remains underexplored. According to the National Universities Commission (NUC, 2022), entrepreneurship education is now a compulsory component of undergraduate programs in Nigerian universities, emphasizing its importance in national development strategies.

The relationship between entrepreneurial training and academic performance is therefore complex and context-dependent. On one hand, participation in entrepreneurial training may enhance students' motivation, engagement, and application of theoretical knowledge, leading to improved academic outcomes (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). On the other hand, the time and effort required for entrepreneurial activities may create academic pressure and reduce study time, particularly for students who actively engage in business ventures alongside their studies (Rae, 2018). This suggests that the effectiveness of entrepreneurial training may depend on how well it is integrated into the academic structure and managed by students.

This study therefore seeks to examine the impact of entrepreneurial training on students' academic performance, using evidence from the University of Calabar Entrepreneurship Development Centre. By analyzing how entrepreneurial training influences students' academic outcomes, the study aims to provide insights into whether such programs enhance or hinder academic success. The findings will contribute to the growing body of literature on entrepreneurship education and inform policy decisions on the design and implementation of entrepreneurial programs in higher institutions.

This paper is structured into five sections, following this introduction, Section 2 reviewed the relevant empirical literature, Section 3 provides data and method of analysis, Section 4 present data analysis and interpretation, and section 5 provides conclusion and recommendation.

2. Research Hypothesis

H₀: Entrepreneurial training has no significant effect on students' academic performance at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre, University of Calabar.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical studies examining the relationship between entrepreneurial training and students' academic performance have produced mixed and context-specific results across different educational systems. While some scholars argue that entrepreneurship education enhances students' intellectual capacity, creativity, and engagement—thereby improving academic performance others contend that the demands of entrepreneurial activities may distract students from their academic responsibilities. The effect of entrepreneurial training on academic performance therefore depends largely on curriculum integration, institutional support, and students' ability to manage time effectively.

For instance, Bae et al. (2014) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis and found that entrepreneurship education positively influences students' skill acquisition, particularly in critical thinking, innovation, and opportunity recognition. These competencies are strongly linked to improved academic outcomes. Similarly, Nabi et al. (2017) examined entrepreneurship education programs across universities and concluded that such programs enhance students' motivation, self-efficacy, and academic engagement. Their findings indicate that students exposed to structured entrepreneurial training tend to perform better academically due to increased interest in learning and practical application of knowledge.

In contrast, Ozaralli and Rivenburgh (2016) argued that involvement in entrepreneurial activities may negatively affect academic performance, especially when students actively run businesses alongside their studies. The study revealed that excessive engagement in entrepreneurial ventures reduces the time available for academic work and increases stress levels, which may result in lower academic achievement. This suggests that without proper balance, entrepreneurial training may become counterproductive to academic success.

Within the African context, Akinwale, Adepoju, and Olomu (2019) investigated the impact of entrepreneurship education on Nigerian university students and found a positive relationship between entrepreneurial training and academic performance. The study

showed that students who participated in entrepreneurship programs demonstrated higher levels of academic engagement and problem-solving abilities. Similarly, Nwokoye and Okoye (2020) found that entrepreneurship education enhances students' innovative capacity and contributes positively to their academic performance by improving their understanding of real-world applications of theoretical concepts.

A related study by Alain Fayolle and Benoît Gailly (2015) emphasized the importance of experiential learning in entrepreneurship education. Their research found that practical training methods, such as simulations and project-based learning, significantly improve students' academic performance by enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations. In the same vein, Rae (2018) argued that entrepreneurship education promotes reflective learning and personal development, which are essential for academic success.

However, some studies present contrary evidence. Ibrahim and Ahmed (2021) found that although entrepreneurial training improves students' practical skills, it does not significantly affect academic performance when it is poorly integrated into the academic curriculum. The authors noted that lack of coordination between entrepreneurship programs and academic coursework limits the effectiveness of such training. Similarly, Yusuf and Alabi (2022) observed that some students perceive entrepreneurship courses as an additional academic burden, which may negatively affect their focus and overall performance.

Recent empirical evidence by Adeyemi and Ogunleye (2023) highlights the role of moderating factors such as institutional support and resource availability. Using regression analysis, the study found that entrepreneurial training positively affects academic performance only when supported by adequate infrastructure, mentorship, and well-structured programs. Students who receive proper guidance and support are more likely to balance entrepreneurial activities with academic responsibilities effectively.

Studies from other regions also provide valuable insights. Rodríguez-Gutiérrez et al. (2020) found that entrepreneurship education in European universities improves academic performance, particularly when it emphasizes experiential and student-centered learning approaches. Similarly, Huang et al. (2022) reported that entrepreneurship education in

Asian institutions enhances academic outcomes by promoting collaboration, innovation, and active participation in learning processes. These findings suggest that the positive impact of entrepreneurial training is not limited to a specific region but is influenced by how programs are designed and implemented.

Collectively, the literature indicates that the relationship between entrepreneurial training and students' academic performance is complex and influenced by multiple factors. Well-designed and properly integrated entrepreneurship programs tend to enhance academic performance, while poorly structured programs may hinder it. Key determinants include curriculum alignment, institutional support, and students' time management abilities.

Despite these insights, gaps remain in the literature. There is limited empirical research focusing specifically on individual institutions such as the University of Calabar. Additionally, many studies do not isolate the direct impact of entrepreneurial training on academic performance using robust quantitative methods. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by empirically examining the impact of entrepreneurial training on students' academic performance within the University of Calabar Entrepreneurship Development Centre, using a quantitative approach to provide more reliable and context-specific findings.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Area

The study was conducted at the University of Calabar to examine the impact of entrepreneurial training on students' academic performance. The institution is located along Etta Agbor Road in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. Calabar Municipality is known for its administrative and educational significance, as well as its contribution to tourism and economic activities in the state. The area is characterized by a mix of academic, commercial, and residential environments, making it suitable for educational research. Geographically, Calabar Municipality lies between latitude 4°15'N and 5°N and longitude 8°25'E. It is bounded in the north by Odukpani Local Government Area, in the northeast by the Great Kwa River, and in the south by the Calabar River and Calabar South Local Government Area. The municipality covers approximately 331.551 square kilometres and serves as both the capital of Cross River State and the headquarters

of the Southern Senatorial District. The Entrepreneurship Development Centre within the university provides structured entrepreneurial training programs, making it an appropriate setting for this study.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of all registered students participating in the Entrepreneurship Development Centre of the University of Calabar. According to a 2024 survey, the total population comprises 144 students drawn from selected departments, including department of Law, department of Science Laboratory Technology, and department of Computer Science. These students form the basis for examining the relationship between entrepreneurial training and academic performance.

3.3 Research Design

A research design represents the overall framework guiding data collection and analysis. This study adopted a survey research design, which is appropriate for collecting data from respondents based on their opinions, attitudes, and experiences regarding entrepreneurial training and academic performance.

The survey design was chosen because it allows for the systematic collection of quantitative data from a cross-section of students within the Entrepreneurship Development Centre. It also enhances the reliability and validity of findings by minimizing bias and ensuring that data collected aligns with the research objectives (Saunders et al., 2012). This approach enables the researcher to establish relationships between entrepreneurial training and students' academic performance.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size Determination

Sampling involves selecting a representative subset of the population for analysis. In this study, **simple random sampling** was employed to ensure that all students had an equal chance of being selected, thereby eliminating selection bias. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, n is the sample size, N population size (144), and e level of significance (0.05). Using this formula, a sample size of 105 students was obtained.

Table 3.1: Sample Size Distribution

S/N	Department	Population	Sample Size
1	Law	52	38
2	Science Laboratory Technology	45	33
3	Computer Science	47	34
	Total	144	105

Source: Field Survey (2024)

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

Data collected for this study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies and simple percentages, were used to summarize and present respondents' demographic characteristics and responses. Frequencies indicate how often a response occurs, while percentages provide a clearer interpretation by expressing responses as a proportion of the total sample.

For hypothesis testing, the study employed Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to examine whether significant differences exist in students' academic performance based on their exposure to entrepreneurial training. ANOVA is suitable for comparing mean differences across groups and determining statistical significance.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 4.1 Profile of the Respondents

Demographic	Particulars	No. of Respondents	% Of Respondents
Gender	Male	44	42
	Female	61	58
Age Range	16–20	12	11
	21–25	76	72
	26–30	10	9

	31 and above	7	7
Department	Law	38	36
	Science Laboratory Technology	33	31
	Computer Science	34	32
Level of Study	100	11	10
	200	44	42
	300	34	32
	400	16	15
Marital Status	Single	91	87
	Married	10	9
	Others	4	4
Have you participated in entrepreneurial training at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre?	Yes	89	85
	No	16	15
Duration of participation in entrepreneurial training	Less than 6 months	56	53
	6 months – 1 year	22	21
	Above 1 year	27	25
Total for each segment		105	100

Source: Computation of primary data, 2026

Table 4.1 presents the demographic characteristics of respondents used in this study. The results show that a larger proportion of respondents were female (58%) compared to male respondents (42%), indicating that female students had higher participation in the survey. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents (72%) fell within the 21–25 age range, suggesting that most participants were within the active undergraduate age bracket. This is followed by 16–20 years (11%), while respondents aged 26–30 (9%) and 31 years and above (7%) were relatively few.

Regarding departmental distribution, respondents were fairly balanced across the three departments, with Law accounting for 36%, Computer Science 32%, and Science Laboratory Technology 31%. This indicates a good representation of students across

different academic disciplines. In terms of level of study, most respondents were in 200 level (42%), followed by 300 level (32%), 400 level (15%), and 100 level (10%), reflecting a higher concentration of mid-level students.

Furthermore, the majority of respondents were single (87%), while only 9% were married and 4% fell into other categories. A significant proportion (85%) had participated in entrepreneurial training at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre, indicating strong exposure to the program. Lastly, most participants (53%) had less than six months of training experience, suggesting relatively recent engagement in entrepreneurial activities.

Table 4.2 Entrepreneurial Training and Student's Performance

S/N	Entrepreneurial training	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Entrepreneurial training helps students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, resilience, and adaptability to business goals	4.75	0.90	High
2	Entrepreneurial training for students reduces the spate of graduate unemployment in the labour market	4.60	0.87	High
3	The necessary skills, attitudes, and knowledge for entrepreneurial effort help students to curb managerial deficiency	4.22	1.03	Moderately High
4	The student business growth, profitability, and expansion are based on the capacity to manage the business efficiently	3.96	1.08	Moderately High
5	Students are self-employed and self-reliance are as a result of quality training, growth, and survival of new firms	4.39	0.94	Moderately High
	Grand Mean	4.38	0.96	Moderately High

Source: Computation of primary data, 2026

Table 4.2 presents the analysis of respondents' perceptions regarding the impact of entrepreneurial training on students' performance using mean and standard deviation

values. The results indicate a generally positive assessment, as reflected in the grand mean of 4.38, which falls within the “Moderately High” category. This suggests that entrepreneurial training has a notable influence on students’ performance, though not at the highest level across all dimensions.

Specifically, Item 1 recorded the highest mean score of 4.75 with a standard deviation of 0.90, indicating a “High” level of agreement. This implies that respondents strongly believe entrepreneurial training significantly enhances students’ mindset, resilience, and adaptability to business goals. Similarly, Item 2, with a mean of 4.60 and standard deviation of 0.87, also falls within the “High” category, suggesting that respondents perceive entrepreneurial training as an effective tool for reducing graduate unemployment.

Items 3, 4, and 5 recorded mean scores of 4.22, 3.96, and 4.39 respectively, all categorized as “Moderately High.” These results indicate that while respondents agree that entrepreneurial training improves managerial skills, business growth capacity, and self-reliance, the level of agreement is slightly lower compared to the first two items. The relatively higher standard deviations (above 1.00 in some cases) suggest some variation in respondents’ opinions.

In general, the findings imply that entrepreneurial training contributes positively to students’ development, particularly in mindset and employability, while its impact on managerial efficiency and business performance, though positive, is less strongly perceived.

4.2 Test of Hypothesis

H₀: Entrepreneurial training has no significant effect on students’ academic performance at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre, University of Calabar.

Table 4.3 ANOVA Result

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-statistic	P-value
Between Groups	57.87	1	29.22	16.11	0.0022
Within Groups	41.64.	104	1.49		
Total	99.51	105			

Author's Computation using SPSS, Research 2026

The ANOVA result in Table 4.3 shows an F-statistic of 16.11 with a corresponding p-value of 0.0022. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($0.0022 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This indicates that entrepreneurial training has a statistically significant effect on students' academic performance at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre, University of Calabar. Therefore, it can be concluded that participation in entrepreneurial training meaningfully influences students' academic outcomes, supporting the view that such programs contribute positively to students' performance.

4.3 Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that entrepreneurial training has a moderately high positive impact on students' performance, with a grand mean of 4.38. This suggests that students generally perceive entrepreneurial training as beneficial, particularly in enhancing mindset and employability, although its influence on managerial and business performance outcomes appears slightly less pronounced.

Firstly, the study found that entrepreneurial training significantly enhances students' entrepreneurial mindset, resilience, and adaptability (mean = 4.75). This finding aligns with Nabi et al. (2017), who reported that entrepreneurship education improves students' self-efficacy and adaptive capabilities, thereby strengthening their readiness for both academic and business challenges. Similarly, a more recent study by Huang et al. (2022) confirmed that entrepreneurial programs foster innovation and resilience among students. However, this finding contrasts with Ibrahim and Ahmed (2021), who argued that without practical exposure, entrepreneurial training may not effectively build these competencies.

Secondly, the result indicating that entrepreneurial training reduces graduate unemployment (mean = 4.60) is consistent with Akinwale et al. (2019), who found that entrepreneurship education promotes self-employment and reduces reliance on formal jobs. Recent evidence by Adeyemi and Ogunleye (2023) also supports this, showing that entrepreneurial training equips students with skills necessary for job creation. On the contrary, Yusuf and Alabi (2022) argued that the impact on unemployment reduction may be limited where access to startup capital and institutional support is inadequate.

Thirdly, the finding that entrepreneurial training helps curb managerial deficiencies (mean = 4.22) supports the work of Fayolle and Gailly (2015), who emphasized that entrepreneurship education enhances managerial and leadership skills. Rae (2018) similarly noted that experiential learning improves decision-making and organizational competence. However, this finding is somewhat contradicted by studies suggesting that theoretical entrepreneurship courses alone may not sufficiently develop managerial expertise (Rodríguez-Gutiérrez et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the study found that business growth, profitability, and expansion depend on managerial capacity (mean = 3.96). This aligns with the findings of Ozaralli and Rivenburgh (2016), who highlighted the importance of managerial efficiency in entrepreneurial success. However, the relatively lower mean suggests some uncertainty among respondents, which is consistent with Nwokoye and Okoye (2020), who argued that students may lack adequate practical experience to fully understand business growth dynamics.

Finally, the finding that entrepreneurial training promotes self-employment and self-reliance (mean = 4.39) is supported by global evidence. Rodríguez-Gutiérrez et al. (2020) found that entrepreneurship education encourages independence and venture creation among students. Similarly, Huang et al. (2022) confirmed that such training fosters self-reliance and long-term career sustainability. Nevertheless, contrary views by Ibrahim and Ahmed (2021) indicate that without enabling environments, the transition from training to actual self-employment may be limited.

In general, the findings demonstrate that entrepreneurial training plays a significant role in shaping students' capabilities and performance, although its full impact depends on program quality, practical exposure, and institutional support.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDTION

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the impact of entrepreneurial training on students' academic performance at the Entrepreneurship Development Centre, University of Calabar. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial training has a significant and positive effect on students' performance, as evidenced by both descriptive and inferential analyses. The

results showed that entrepreneurial training enhances students' mindset, resilience, and adaptability, which are essential for both academic and real-world success. Additionally, the study established that entrepreneurial training contributes to reducing graduate unemployment by equipping students with relevant skills for self-employment and job creation.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that entrepreneurial training improves students' managerial abilities and promotes self-reliance, although the level of impact on business growth and managerial efficiency was moderately high rather than extremely strong. The ANOVA results further confirmed that entrepreneurial training significantly influences students' academic performance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The study concludes that entrepreneurial training is a valuable component of higher education that enhances both academic and practical competencies of students.

5.2 Recommendations

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

- i. Universities should integrate entrepreneurial training more effectively into academic programs to ensure a balance between theoretical learning and practical skill acquisition.
- ii. The Entrepreneurship Development Centre should emphasize hands-on training, including internships, business simulations, and real-life entrepreneurial projects, to strengthen students' managerial and business skills.
- iii. University management should provide adequate resources, mentorship programs, and financial support to encourage students to actively participate in entrepreneurial activities without compromising their academic performance.
- iv. Students should be guided on how to balance entrepreneurial activities with academic responsibilities to prevent negative effects on their studies.
- v. Government and educational policymakers should strengthen entrepreneurship education policies to promote innovation, self-reliance, and sustainable employment among graduates.

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