

Apprenticeship Practices and Sustainable Economic Development: Evidences from Nigeria's Small-Scale Auto-Mechanic Enterprises

Agha Nancy Chinwe

Department of Business Management and Entrepreneurial Studies, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria

Abstract:

This study examines the role of apprenticeship practices in promoting sustainable economic growth in Nigeria, with a focus on their potential to generate employment and reduce poverty through small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Specifically, the research investigates the employment-creation capacity of SME-based apprenticeship systems and evaluates their contribution to poverty alleviation. Two research questions were formulated to guide the inquiry. Conceptually, the study explores key indicators of economic growth—unemployment and poverty—while the analysis is grounded in Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory. Data were collected from registered members of an automobile mechanics' association in Enugu. Of the seventy registered mechanics, fifty copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed to master craftsmen, and thirty-seven valid responses were retrieved for analysis. The instrument consisted of six structured questions, and the data were analyzed using the Chi-square statistical technique. Findings reveal that apprenticeship practices significantly contribute to job creation and play a meaningful role in poverty reduction in Nigeria. Based on these results, the study recommends that government strengthen national youth development initiatives by prioritizing grassroots empowerment through entrepreneurship training and vocational education programs in order to enhance the economic impact of apprenticeship systems.

Keywords:

Apprenticeship Practices, Economic Growth, Employment and Poverty Reduction.