

**THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABILITY
(EDO STATE AS A CASE STUDY)**

BY

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MGS2010250

**DEPARTMENT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

MARCH, 2025

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**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES,
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FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) DEGREE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP.**

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that this work is based on the extensive empirical study undertaken by FATAI OSAS PRECIOUS in the Department of Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, under the supervision of MRS. OBEIRAKHI.

I further affirm that this work has not been previously submitted for the award of any degree or certificate elsewhere, at least to the best of my knowledge at the point of writing this research work. All ideas, opinions, and views are the products of my personal research, and where the views of others have been expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

FATAI OSAS PRECIOUS

DATE

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project titled THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABILITY (EDO STATE AS A CASE STUDY) was carried out and submitted by FATAI OSAS PRECIOUS, with matriculation number MGS2010250, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree, Bachelor of Science Entrepreneurship, at the University of Benin, Edo State.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Almighty God, the giver of life, for His abundant mercies, grace, and unfailing love throughout the course of my work and duration of study at the University of Benin.

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in driving sustainability by fostering innovation, creating employment, and promoting economic resilience. In Edo State (Benin City) this study examines how entrepreneurship serves as a critical tool for achieving sustainability in economic, social, and environmental dimensions. By analyzing entrepreneurial ventures, the research explores how business innovation, resource efficiency, and sustainable business practices contribute to long-term economic growth while addressing global challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and environmental degradation. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, including case studies and surveys, this study evaluates the impact of entrepreneurial initiatives on sustainable development. Findings reveal that entrepreneurs who integrate sustainability into their business models not only achieve profitability but also contribute to environmental conservation and social well-being. However, challenges such as limited access to funding, regulatory barriers, and market competition hinder the full potential of entrepreneurship in driving sustainability. The study concludes by recommending policy support, capacity-building programs, and access to sustainable financing as key interventions to enhance entrepreneurship as a tool for long-term sustainability

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Entrepreneurship has long been recognized as a vital driver of economic growth and development. It fosters innovation, encourages the creation of new businesses, and contributes to the diversification of the economy (Adebayo, 2022). As the global economy faces challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and inequality, entrepreneurship has become a powerful tool for addressing these issues (Obasan et al., 2023). In many countries, particularly in developing economies, the ability of entrepreneurship to generate sustainable employment opportunities has become increasingly important. Employment sustainability refers to the creation of long-term, stable jobs that are not only secure but also adaptable to changing economic conditions (Akinyemi & Adeola, 2023).

Entrepreneurship serves as a means of reducing dependency on traditional employment sectors by creating alternative sources of income. The creation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) plays a pivotal role in this process (Okeke et al., 2023). In countries where large-scale industries are not as prevalent, the informal and entrepreneurial sectors become central to economic resilience and job creation (Olawale & Oladippo, 2023). As businesses grow, they generate direct and indirect employment opportunities, from managerial positions to skilled labor, contributing to a more diversified workforce (Ajibola, 2022). The role of entrepreneurship in fostering employment sustainability is multifaceted. It encompasses not just the provision of job

opportunities, but also the enhancement of the skills of the labor force, fostering innovation, and improving economic dynamism (Chukwu & Adepoju, 2023). Entrepreneurial ventures can also provide much-needed services and goods, promoting a competitive market and addressing local needs (Okeke et al., 2023). In many cases, these ventures help to mitigate the effects of unemployment and underemployment, particularly in regions with high levels of poverty and economic instability (Adebayo, 2022). However, despite the recognized importance of entrepreneurship, the ability to sustain employment through entrepreneurial ventures remains a significant challenge. Various factors such as access to capital, skills development, regulatory environments, and market conditions affect the success and longevity of entrepreneurial enterprises (Olawale & Oladipo, 2023). For entrepreneurship to be a viable solution to employment sustainability, these challenges must be effectively addressed. This study aims to explore the role of entrepreneurship in promoting sustainable employment. It will examine how entrepreneurship can serve as a tool for not just job creation but also the creation of sustainable livelihoods that contribute to long-term economic growth (Akinyemi & Adeola, 2023).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Unemployment continues to be a critical challenge in developing economies, with traditional employment sectors often unable to accommodate the growing labor force. This has intensified the focus on entrepreneurship as a potential solution. According to Brixiová et al. (2020), entrepreneurship can play a transformative role in developing countries by creating jobs, fostering innovation, and promoting economic growth.

However, Brixiová and her colleagues argue that while entrepreneurial activities can reduce unemployment, the instability of many new businesses limits their ability to create long-lasting, sustainable employment. This raises questions about the longevity and resilience of jobs created through entrepreneurship, particularly under challenging economic conditions.

Similarly, Sutter, Bruton, and Chen (2019) emphasize that while entrepreneurship has a positive impact on employment, it is often constrained by poor infrastructure, limited access to finance, and an unsupportive regulatory environment. These limitations, they note, create significant barriers to growth for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and, consequently, limit their capacity to provide stable employment. Sutter et al. highlight that even with strong entrepreneurial intentions, the absence of supportive structures can prevent businesses from achieving long-term sustainability in employment.

1.3 Research Questions

This RQ of this study will be meant to direct or providing answer to:

1. How does entrepreneurship training contribute to employment sustainability in Edo State?
2. To What extent are the major challenges faced by entrepreneurs in sustaining employment in Edo State?
3. What factors are critical to the success of entrepreneurial ventures in sustaining employment in Edo State?
4. How does entrepreneurship impact local economies in terms of job creation and sustainability in Edo State?

5. What role do government policies and support systems play in enhancing employment sustainability through entrepreneurship in Edo State?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study is to explain Entrepreneurship as a tool for sustainability in Edo State

Specific objective are:

1. To explore the role of entrepreneurship in employment sustainability in Edo State.
2. To examine the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in sustaining employment in their ventures in Edo State.
3. To identify the factors that contribute to the success and longevity of entrepreneurial enterprises in Edo State.
4. To assess the impact of entrepreneurship on local economies and the creation of sustainable jobs in Edo State.
5. To explain the influence of government policies and support systems on the sustainability of employment created by entrepreneurial ventures in Edo State.

1.5 Hypotheses of the study

1. H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between access to finance for entrepreneurs and employment sustainability Edo State.
2. H₀₂: Entrepreneurial skills and competencies do not significantly influence employment sustainability Edo State.

3. H₀₃: Regulatory and infrastructural support does not significantly affect the sustainability of employment created through entrepreneurial ventures Edo State.
4. H₀₄: There is no significant impact of entrepreneurial initiatives on reducing the overall rate of unemployment in the economy Edo State.
5. H₀₅: Government policies and support systems have no significant effect on the sustainability of employment generated by entrepreneurial ventures in Edo State.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study will significantly enhance the understanding of entrepreneurship as a powerful tool for achieving employment sustainability, a goal that is particularly critical for developing economies facing high unemployment and underemployment rates. By examining the factors that enable entrepreneurs to create long-term, stable jobs, this research will provide valuable insights into how entrepreneurship can shift from a temporary fix for unemployment to a sustainable strategy for inclusive economic growth. Such insights will contribute to the body of knowledge on entrepreneurship and inform both theory and practice on how best to utilize entrepreneurial activities as a solution to persistent employment challenges.

One of the main contributions of this study is its focus on the dual aspects of challenges and opportunities in sustainable job creation through entrepreneurship. By identifying the common obstacles faced by entrepreneurs such as limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and regulatory hurdles this research will help in pinpointing areas where interventions are needed most. Conversely, by highlighting successful strategies and factors that contribute to the longevity of entrepreneurial ventures, the study can inspire

and inform current and aspiring entrepreneurs about best practices for building resilient businesses capable of providing stable employment.

The policy recommendations developed from this study will be particularly beneficial to governments, financial institutions, and other stakeholders involved in fostering a conducive environment for entrepreneurship. Policymakers will gain actionable insights into the types of support—such as access to funding, capacity building, and regulatory reform—that can bolster entrepreneurial efforts toward sustainable employment creation. Financial institutions can use these findings to better tailor financial products and support services that address the unique needs of entrepreneurs working toward employment sustainability. This research will also be valuable to development agencies focused on economic growth and poverty reduction. With concrete evidence on the role of entrepreneurship in sustaining employment, development agencies will be better equipped to design programs that not only encourage business creation but also prioritize job retention and stability. This study’s recommendations can aid such agencies in implementing initiatives that align with broader goals of economic empowerment, poverty reduction, and social inclusion.

For aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners, the study will serve as a practical guide to understanding and navigating the dynamics of sustainable job creation within entrepreneurial ventures. It will offer them a roadmap to building robust, resilient businesses by understanding the key factors contributing to longevity and employment stability. Additionally, it can inspire educational institutions to incorporate more robust entrepreneurship education, focused on long-term sustainability and the creation of

employment opportunities, into their curricula. This will ensure that future entrepreneurs are equipped not only with technical skills but also with a mindset geared toward sustainable business practices.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study centers on examining the role of entrepreneurship in fostering employment sustainability, specifically within the context of developing economies where unemployment and underemployment are prevalent challenges. The study will investigate the factors that influence the ability of entrepreneurial ventures to create and maintain long-term, stable employment, such as access to finance, regulatory support, infrastructure, and the skills and competencies of entrepreneurs. By focusing on these elements, the research aims to identify the conditions under which entrepreneurship can serve as a sustainable solution to unemployment.

Geographically, the study is limited to Benin City Nigeria, providing a focused analysis of entrepreneurship's impact on employment sustainability within these contexts. This geographic limitation is essential to ensure the findings are relevant and applicable to regions with similar economic conditions, infrastructure challenges, and employment dynamics. In terms of data, the study will employ both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data will be collected to measure variables like job creation rates, business longevity, and employment retention within entrepreneurial ventures. Qualitative insights will be gathered through interviews or case studies, offering a deeper understanding of the challenges and experiences faced by entrepreneurs in maintaining employment over time.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

- **Entrepreneurship:** The process of starting and operating a new business with the aim of generating profit, often involving innovation, risk-taking, and the creation of new products or services.
- **Employment Sustainability:** The ability to maintain and increase stable and long-term job opportunities that provide secure livelihoods and contribute to economic stability.
- **Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs):** Businesses whose personnel numbers fall below certain thresholds set by the government, typically considered crucial for job creation and economic development.
- **Sustainable Livelihood:** A livelihood that can cope with and recover from shocks and stresses, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable income opportunities for the future.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

This study faces certain limitations that may influence the scope and applicability of its findings. First, the geographic focus is limited to Benin City, Nigeria, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other regions or countries with different economic structures, regulatory environments, and cultural contexts. While the findings can provide valuable insights for similar developing economies, they may not fully capture the unique challenges and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs in other settings.

Another limitation is the reliance on both quantitative and qualitative data sources, which may be subject to biases inherent in self-reported information, especially for qualitative

insights gathered through interviews or case studies. Entrepreneurs may portray a positive view of their ventures or downplay certain challenges, which could affect the accuracy and reliability of the qualitative data collected.

Additionally, this study is limited by time constraints and resource availability, impacting the depth of data collection and analysis. Access to comprehensive business longevity within the informal sector in developing economies can be challenging, as such data is often not systematically recorded or readily available. Further, the study primarily considers the perspectives of entrepreneurs and may not fully account for external factors, such as unexpected economic shifts, policy changes, or environmental conditions, that could impact employment sustainability. As such, the study's conclusions may be limited in predicting the long-term impact of entrepreneurship on employment without taking these variables into account.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the existing literature on the role of entrepreneurship in fostering employment sustainability, particularly in developing economies. The review critically examines key theories, models, and empirical studies that explore how entrepreneurship influences employment creation, challenges faced by entrepreneurs, and the strategies that enhance the sustainability of employment generated through entrepreneurial ventures. It also discusses the critical factors such as access to finance, government policies, regulatory frameworks, infrastructure, and the skills of entrepreneurs that determine the long-term viability of businesses and the sustainability of jobs created.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship refers to the process through which individuals identify opportunities, take calculated risks, and create value by establishing new ventures or expanding existing ones. At its core, entrepreneurship involves innovation, risk-taking, and the ability to transform ideas into tangible products or services that meet market demands. It is a dynamic process that drives economic development, fosters job creation, and enhances competition within markets. According to Schumpeter (1934), entrepreneurship is a process of "creative destruction," where new innovations displace outdated processes and systems, thereby stimulating economic progress. This perspective

highlights the critical role of entrepreneurs in driving both economic growth and social change.

Entrepreneurship is widely regarded as a key driver of economic growth and job creation. According to Acs and Audretsch (2010), entrepreneurs are instrumental in fostering innovation, creating employment opportunities, and improving economic productivity. Through their ventures, entrepreneurs introduce new products and services, create markets, and often contribute to the diversification of economies. Particularly in developing countries, entrepreneurship is seen as a critical strategy for tackling widespread unemployment and underemployment by promoting self-employment and small-scale enterprises. As such, entrepreneurship contributes to economic diversification by introducing new sectors and industries into the economy, which in turn mitigates over-reliance on any single industry, such as agriculture or oil.

Entrepreneurship has a transformative effect on employment dynamics, especially through the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These businesses often serve as a significant source of employment, both directly by hiring staff and indirectly through their supply chains and networks (Kelley, Singer, & Herrington, 2016). Small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, are known for their flexibility and adaptability, allowing them to respond rapidly to market changes and create diverse job opportunities across various sectors. Entrepreneurs frequently generate employment by scaling their operations and introducing new business models, which contribute to labor market diversification. In developing economies, entrepreneurship is seen as an important tool for economic development. It plays a crucial role in reducing

unemployment, fostering innovation, and promoting self-reliance. As highlighted by Naudé (2017), in regions with limited access to formal job markets, entrepreneurship offers individuals an alternative means of securing a livelihood, often leading to the formation of microenterprises or startups. These businesses not only help address local unemployment but also encourage the development of entrepreneurial ecosystems that can sustain long-term economic growth. Furthermore, entrepreneurship is seen as a means of empowering individuals and communities, particularly in rural areas or underdeveloped regions. By providing the necessary skills, capital, and networks, entrepreneurship enables individuals to leverage local resources to create viable businesses. This process also encourages social mobility, as it allows individuals from various backgrounds to rise economically through their initiatives (Brixiová, Kangoye, & Said, 2020). In essence, entrepreneurship fosters economic resilience by cultivating a diverse range of opportunities that are more resistant to global economic shocks or fluctuations in specific industries. Overall, entrepreneurship is not only a catalyst for economic development but also a strategic mechanism for addressing unemployment and promoting economic inclusion. By enabling individuals to create businesses, innovate, and generate income, entrepreneurship plays a critical role in fostering sustainable economic growth and job creation, particularly in emerging economies where unemployment rates remain high.

2.2.2 Entrepreneurship and Employment Creation

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a critical driver of employment creation, particularly in economies where large-scale industries and formal job opportunities are limited. Entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in bridging the employment gap by establishing businesses that generate job opportunities across various sectors. This process not only contributes to economic growth but also fosters social inclusion by providing individuals, including marginalized groups, with the means to earn a livelihood. According to Kelley et al. (2016), entrepreneurship generates both direct and indirect employment opportunities, ranging from managerial roles to labor-intensive positions, thereby diversifying the labor market and reducing unemployment. The ability of entrepreneurship to create jobs stems from its dynamic nature, which involves identifying market gaps, developing innovative solutions, and establishing ventures to meet those needs. For example, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which are often spearheaded by entrepreneurs, account for the majority of employment opportunities in many economies, particularly in developing countries (World Bank, 2020). These businesses not only absorb a significant portion of the labor force but also create indirect employment through supply chains and related industries, thereby amplifying their impact on job creation.

Entrepreneurship is especially critical in developing economies, where formal job markets are often underdeveloped, and unemployment or underemployment is pervasive. In such contexts, entrepreneurship serves as a means to foster economic inclusion by encouraging self-employment and creating opportunities for those excluded from the formal economy. Naudé (2017) highlights that entrepreneurship reduces reliance on

traditional job markets by promoting self-employment, which can be a lifeline for individuals in regions with limited industrialization or public-sector employment. Moreover, entrepreneurship contributes to economic diversification, making economies less vulnerable to external shocks by reducing dependence on a single industry or resource base. Innovation is another crucial element through which entrepreneurship facilitates employment creation. Brixiová et al. (2020) argue that entrepreneurs drive innovation by introducing new products, services, or processes that create demand and, consequently, new jobs. For instance, the rise of digital entrepreneurship has led to the development of entirely new industries, such as e-commerce, fintech, and renewable energy, which have generated millions of job opportunities worldwide. This innovative capacity of entrepreneurship also enables the integration of technology into traditional sectors, improving productivity and creating new roles that did not exist before. However, while entrepreneurship has significant potential to address unemployment, challenges remain in ensuring its sustainability and scalability. Market volatility, inadequate access to finance, and limited entrepreneurial education are persistent barriers that affect the ability of startups to grow and create long-term employment (Acs et al., 2018). Many entrepreneurial ventures, particularly in developing economies, struggle to survive beyond the initial years, resulting in temporary or precarious employment opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires targeted policies that support entrepreneurs through access to funding, skill development programs, and market linkages. Additionally, the quality of jobs created by entrepreneurship is critical to its overall impact on employment sustainability. While many entrepreneurial ventures provide informal or low-paying jobs,

fostering high-growth entrepreneurship can lead to the creation of stable, well-paying positions. According to Fairlie and Fossen (2022), high-growth entrepreneurs—those whose businesses experience rapid expansion—contribute disproportionately to job creation, highlighting the importance of nurturing such ventures to maximize their impact on employment. In conclusion, entrepreneurship serves as a powerful mechanism for employment creation, particularly in economies with limited formal job opportunities. By fostering innovation, diversifying labor markets, and promoting self-employment, entrepreneurs contribute significantly to reducing unemployment and improving economic resilience. To maximize these benefits, governments and stakeholders must address the challenges entrepreneurs face and create an enabling environment that supports the growth and sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures.

2.2.3 Sustainability of Employment in Entrepreneurial Ventures

The sustainability of employment within entrepreneurial ventures depends on various factors, and understanding these elements is essential for ensuring the longevity of businesses and the stability of jobs they create. While entrepreneurship can generate initial employment opportunities, the long-term viability of these jobs depends on the robustness of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in which businesses operate. Sutter, Bruton, and Chen (2019) emphasize that the high failure rate of startups, particularly in developing economies, highlights the fragile nature of employment created in such ventures. This fragility is compounded by insufficient capital, inadequate access to markets, and weak business support structures. One of the most significant challenges to employment sustainability in entrepreneurial ventures is access to finance. Entrepreneurs

often face difficulties securing funding due to underdeveloped financial systems, high-interest rates, and a lack of investor confidence in emerging markets. According to Naudé (2017), without adequate financial resources, businesses struggle to scale, hire additional employees, or retain their workforce during periods of economic downturn. As a result, job insecurity becomes a significant issue, with businesses forced to lay off workers or shut down entirely.

Entrepreneurial skills also play a crucial role in the sustainability of employment. Entrepreneurs with a strong understanding of management, finance, and market dynamics are more likely to build resilient businesses that can withstand economic fluctuations. Training and education in entrepreneurship have been shown to improve the survival rate of businesses and the quality of jobs they create (Brixiová et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial education not only equips individuals with the technical skills needed to manage a business but also fosters critical thinking, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities—skills that are vital for navigating challenges in the business environment. In addition to financial resources and skills, the broader regulatory and infrastructural environment significantly impacts the sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures. Regulatory policies, such as taxes, labor laws, and business registration processes, can either enable or hinder business growth. A conducive regulatory environment that simplifies the process of starting and operating businesses, provides tax incentives, and ensures fair competition is essential for fostering long-term employment (Acs et al., 2018). In contrast, bureaucratic hurdles, excessive taxation, and poor enforcement of

property rights can drive businesses into informality, reducing their potential to create sustainable jobs.

Infrastructure, particularly in developing economies, is another critical factor influencing the sustainability of employment in entrepreneurial ventures. Poor infrastructure—ranging from unreliable electricity and transportation networks to inadequate access to information technology—limits entrepreneurs' ability to operate efficiently and expand their businesses. A lack of infrastructure can significantly reduce the potential for job creation, as businesses are unable to reach larger markets or provide consistent services, leading to business closures and job losses (Kelley et al., 2016). The ability of businesses to adapt to economic changes is another essential element of employment sustainability. Entrepreneurs who are flexible and innovative can pivot their business models in response to shifts in market demand, technological advancements, or external economic shocks. As Brixiová et al. (2020) argue, businesses that can innovate and diversify are better positioned to create long-term employment. For instance, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many small businesses had to adjust their operations to digital platforms or adopt new production methods to survive, which in turn created new types of employment opportunities. Ultimately, the sustainability of employment in entrepreneurial ventures depends on a multifaceted approach that addresses financial, educational, infrastructural, and regulatory challenges. Governments and development organizations play a crucial role in creating a supportive ecosystem that enables businesses to grow, survive, and generate long-term employment. By fostering an environment that provides access to finance, promotes entrepreneurial skills, and ensures

a favorable regulatory and infrastructural framework, the sustainability of employment in entrepreneurial ventures can be significantly enhanced.

2.2.4 Factors Affecting Employment Sustainability in Entrepreneurial Ventures

Several key factors affect the sustainability of employment generated through entrepreneurship. These include:

- **Infrastructure and Technological Support:** Infrastructure is a fundamental factor affecting the sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures, particularly in developing economies where the lack of basic services like reliable electricity, transportation, and internet connectivity can create significant barriers. Entrepreneurs often face operational difficulties due to unreliable power supplies or inefficient transportation networks, which increase costs and reduce efficiency. Access to modern technology, such as internet connectivity and digital tools, is increasingly essential for entrepreneurs to innovate, expand their market reach, and create sustainable employment. According to Kelley et al. (2016), technological innovation can enable entrepreneurs to increase productivity and adapt to changing market demands, fostering long-term business growth and job creation. The availability of physical and digital infrastructure is therefore crucial for ensuring that entrepreneurial ventures can remain competitive and sustainable.
- **Market Demand and Consumer Behavior:** The demand for products or services is a key determinant of business success and, by extension, the sustainability of employment. Businesses that can effectively align their offerings with market needs are more likely to experience sustained growth, which in turn

leads to continued job creation. However, changes in consumer preferences, market saturation, or economic downturns can negatively affect demand and lead to business closures or downsizing. Brixiová et al. (2020) argue that entrepreneurs must be responsive to shifts in market demand and be flexible enough to pivot or adjust their business models when necessary. Entrepreneurs who are innovative and can identify emerging market trends are better positioned to create jobs that endure over time.

- **Access to Markets and Networks:** The ability of entrepreneurs to access local, regional, or international markets is another critical factor in the sustainability of employment. Access to markets allows businesses to sell their products and services, generate revenue, and expand their operations, all of which are essential for job creation. Networking with other businesses, government agencies, and international trade bodies can open up new opportunities for entrepreneurs to grow their enterprises. According to Naudé (2017), strong business networks facilitate the exchange of knowledge, resources, and market access, all of which contribute to the long-term sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, access to established supply chains and partnerships can provide entrepreneurs with a competitive edge, enabling them to scale and create more stable jobs.
- **Political Stability and Governance:** Political instability and weak governance structures can undermine the sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures by introducing uncertainty and risk. Entrepreneurs are less likely to invest in

businesses if they perceive the political environment as unstable or prone to sudden changes in policy or regulatory practices. Countries with strong institutions, political stability, and transparent governance are more likely to attract investment and foster a conducive environment for entrepreneurship. As Sutter et al. (2019) note, effective governance ensures the protection of property rights, the enforcement of contracts, and the provision of essential public goods and services, all of which are necessary for the long-term sustainability of businesses and the jobs they create.

- **Social and Cultural Factors:** The social and cultural environment plays an important role in shaping the entrepreneurial landscape and influencing the sustainability of employment. In some societies, there may be social stigmas attached to certain types of work, especially in the informal sector, which can limit the growth potential of entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, cultural attitudes toward entrepreneurship, risk-taking, and innovation can either encourage or hinder the establishment of new businesses. According to Brixiová et al. (2020), fostering a culture that values entrepreneurship, innovation, and job creation can significantly improve the sustainability of employment by encouraging more individuals to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. Support from local communities, as well as positive perceptions of entrepreneurship, can lead to greater public engagement, trust, and support for new businesses.
- **External Shocks and Global Trends:** External economic shocks, such as global recessions, natural disasters, or pandemics, can severely affect the sustainability

of businesses and employment. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, disrupted supply chains, reduced consumer demand, and forced many small businesses to close, highlighting the vulnerability of entrepreneurial ventures to external shocks. Entrepreneurs must be resilient and adaptable to survive such challenges. Moreover, global trends, such as digital transformation, environmental sustainability, and shifts in international trade policies, can also influence the sustainability of businesses and employment. Entrepreneurs who can anticipate and adapt to these changes are better equipped to sustain their ventures and provide long-term employment opportunities. In conclusion, the sustainability of employment in entrepreneurial ventures depends on a wide range of factors, including access to finance, entrepreneurial skills, regulatory support, infrastructure, market demand, and political stability. While these factors can present significant challenges, addressing them effectively can create an enabling environment where entrepreneurial ventures thrive and contribute to long-term employment sustainability. Governments, institutions, and entrepreneurs themselves must work collaboratively to overcome these challenges and ensure that the jobs created through entrepreneurship are stable, secure, and sustainable.

2.2.5 Entrepreneurship and Local Economic Development

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in driving local economic development, serving as a catalyst for job creation, income generation, and fostering overall economic stability within a region. It not only directly impacts the businesses created but also has a profound ripple effect on the local economy through the development of ancillary

industries, human capital, and social infrastructure. According to Reynolds and Curtin (2008), successful entrepreneurial ventures often lead to the establishment of local supply chains, which strengthens the economic fabric of a region by creating opportunities for other businesses to thrive. As these new businesses grow, they require goods and services from local suppliers, thereby stimulating demand and boosting local production. This interconnectedness between entrepreneurial ventures and local suppliers fosters a more resilient and diverse economy, reducing dependence on external markets and encouraging self-sufficiency. For example, as new businesses such as restaurants, manufacturers, or tech startups expand, they often rely on a network of local service providers ranging from transportation companies to legal firms which creates a multiplier effect, resulting in more jobs and increased economic activity in the region. Furthermore, entrepreneurship contributes to the development of human capital by creating opportunities for skill acquisition and capacity building. Entrepreneurs often invest in training and educating their employees, improving their workforce's competencies, which not only benefits the business but also the broader community. According to Acs and Audretsch (2010), entrepreneurship can serve as a powerful tool for skill development, particularly in regions where formal education systems may not fully meet the labor market's needs. Through offering on-the-job training, mentorship, and opportunities for advancement, entrepreneurs help develop a skilled labor force, which in turn drives innovation, productivity, and economic growth. As businesses grow and succeed, they contribute to the broader economic dynamism of the region, improving the livelihoods of local communities. This is particularly evident in emerging economies,

where entrepreneurship often acts as a vital means of bridging skills gaps and fostering upward mobility.

Entrepreneurship also facilitates innovation within local communities, which can have a transformative effect on local economies. Entrepreneurs, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are often at the forefront of technological and product innovations, which can lead to the creation of new markets or the improvement of existing ones. As noted by Brixiová et al. (2020), entrepreneurial ventures that focus on innovative solutions can lead to the development of new industries or the revitalization of struggling ones, thereby diversifying the local economic base. This is especially important in regions that may have previously relied heavily on a single industry, such as agriculture or natural resources, where diversification through entrepreneurship can safeguard against economic volatility and long-term decline.

Moreover, entrepreneurship often promotes local social development by addressing regional disparities. In many cases, entrepreneurs who establish businesses in underdeveloped or rural areas contribute to the reduction of regional inequality. By providing employment opportunities and improving access to goods and services, entrepreneurship helps bridge the economic gap between urban and rural areas. According to Naudé (2017), entrepreneurial ventures in rural or underserved regions play a crucial role in reversing rural-urban migration by offering attractive employment opportunities that prevent the mass exodus to urban centers, which often leads to overcrowded cities and strained infrastructure. These ventures also contribute to the diversification of local economies, making them more resilient to external shocks such as

global commodity price fluctuations. Additionally, entrepreneurs often contribute to the social and infrastructural development of their communities by addressing gaps in public services. In many regions, particularly in developing countries, the government may be unable to provide adequate infrastructure or public services. In such contexts, entrepreneurs fill these gaps by providing essential services such as transportation, healthcare, or education. By addressing local needs through innovation, entrepreneurs enhance the quality of life for residents and contribute to social well-being. For example, small businesses that provide affordable healthcare or mobile banking services can play a crucial role in improving access to these essential services for marginalized communities. However, the impact of entrepreneurship on local economic development is not without challenges. Entrepreneurs often face significant obstacles, including limited access to capital, inadequate infrastructure, and unfavorable regulatory environments, particularly in developing economies. According to Sutter et al. (2019), these barriers can constrain the ability of entrepreneurs to grow their businesses and realize their full potential, limiting their contribution to local economic development. Thus, while entrepreneurship has the potential to drive significant economic and social benefits, it requires an enabling environment—one that includes access to finance, supportive government policies, and efficient infrastructure—to maximize its impact. In conclusion, entrepreneurship is a critical driver of local economic development, as it generates employment, stimulates local supply chains, promotes human capital development, and fosters innovation. Its contribution to regional economic stability and growth cannot be overstated, especially in regions where large-scale industries are underdeveloped or absent. However, for

entrepreneurship to fully realize its potential as a tool for local economic development, it is essential for governments, financial institutions, and communities to create an environment that supports the growth and sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures. This includes ensuring access to finance, improving infrastructure, and providing necessary skills training to entrepreneurs and their employees.

2.3 Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability draws upon several key economic and managerial theories. These theories help to contextualize how entrepreneurship impacts employment creation and its long-term sustainability. The following are prominent theories often applied to the study of entrepreneurship and employment sustainability.

2.3.1 Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation and Entrepreneurial Creativity

Joseph Schumpeter, one of the foremost economists in entrepreneurship theory, emphasized the role of the entrepreneur as the key driver of innovation in the economy. His theory of creative destruction suggests that entrepreneurs disrupt existing economic structures by introducing new products, services, or processes that displace older, less efficient ones (Schumpeter, 1942). This process of innovation leads to economic growth and job creation as new industries and markets emerge. In the context of employment sustainability, Schumpeter's theory implies that the sustainability of jobs is not just about preserving existing positions, but also about continuously creating new roles and industries that can adapt to evolving market conditions. Through creative destruction, entrepreneurial ventures not only create employment in the short term but also foster

long-term economic dynamism, where job opportunities can evolve in response to innovation and technological change. This theory highlights the role of entrepreneurship in driving long-term job creation through continuous innovation and adaptation.

2.3.2 Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory, developed by economists such as Gary Becker (1964), suggests that investment in education, skills, and training enhances the productivity of individuals and contributes to economic growth. In the context of entrepreneurship and employment sustainability, human capital theory posits that entrepreneurs and their employees can contribute to economic stability by acquiring skills that make them more productive and adaptable to changing market conditions. Entrepreneurs themselves must possess substantial human capital, including technical knowledge, management skills, and the ability to identify and capitalize on business opportunities (Becker, 1964). For employment to be sustainable, entrepreneurs need to invest in their workforce's education and skill development, thereby increasing productivity and ensuring the adaptability of the business in the face of economic changes. According to Brixiová et al. (2020), investments in human capital, especially in developing countries, are essential for creating sustainable employment opportunities as they improve the overall skill level of the workforce and enable businesses to grow and remain competitive.

2.3.3 Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, introduced by Wernerfelt (1984) and expanded by Barney (1991), focuses on how a firm's unique resources—such as capital, human capital, technology, and knowledge—can provide a competitive advantage. According to

this theory, sustainable business success depends on the availability and strategic use of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources. In entrepreneurship, this theory emphasizes the need for entrepreneurs to leverage these resources to create and sustain competitive businesses that provide long-term employment opportunities. From an employment sustainability perspective, RBV suggests that businesses with unique resources are better positioned to survive market fluctuations, scale operations, and continue to generate stable employment opportunities. For instance, an entrepreneur who owns a patented technology or a proprietary process may be able to create and sustain more jobs over time compared to a business relying on easily replicable methods. According to Sutter et al. (2019), access to unique resources such as intellectual property, skilled labor, or proprietary technology can be a key determinant of whether entrepreneurial ventures can continue to expand and sustain employment.

2.3.4 Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory, as developed by scholars like Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and Robert Putnam (2000), posits that the relationships, networks, and trust within a community or organization can provide valuable resources for entrepreneurial success. Social capital facilitates access to information, financial resources, and opportunities, which can help entrepreneurs establish and grow their businesses, thereby creating jobs. In the context of employment sustainability, social capital plays a crucial role in ensuring that businesses not only create jobs but are able to maintain them over time. Entrepreneurs who have strong social networks—such as connections with other business owners, investors, and community leaders—are more likely to secure funding, gain customer loyalty, and

navigate regulatory challenges. This, in turn, leads to the long-term sustainability of employment created by their businesses. According to Naudé (2017), social capital enables entrepreneurs to access both formal and informal resources that can help sustain business operations, thereby contributing to the creation of stable jobs.

2.3.5 Institutional Theory

Institutional theory examines the role of institutions—such as laws, regulations, cultural norms, and policies—in shaping the behavior of individuals and organizations. In the entrepreneurial context, institutional theory emphasizes how the business environment, including regulatory frameworks, legal protections, and the overall ease of doing business, affects the ability of entrepreneurs to start, grow, and sustain their businesses (North, 1990). The theory suggests that the sustainability of employment in entrepreneurial ventures is influenced by the institutional environment in which the business operates. For example, in regions where institutional support is strong, such as easy access to business registration, tax incentives, and protection of intellectual property rights, entrepreneurs are more likely to succeed in sustaining their businesses and creating long-term employment opportunities. Conversely, weak institutions, such as excessive bureaucracy, corrupt practices, and poor legal enforcement, may hinder entrepreneurship and undermine job sustainability (Brixiová et al., 2020).

2.3.6 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is often applied in understanding entrepreneurial intention and action. The theory postulates that an individual's intention

to engage in a particular behavior—such as starting a business—is influenced by three key factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The theory emphasizes the role of individual perceptions and external factors in shaping entrepreneurial actions. Regarding employment sustainability, the TPB suggests that entrepreneurs' intentions to create jobs are shaped by their beliefs about the feasibility of starting and running a successful business. Entrepreneurs who perceive high levels of control over their business ventures and positive societal attitudes toward entrepreneurship are more likely to persist in their efforts, even in the face of challenges. This persistence is crucial for ensuring that the jobs created through entrepreneurship are not only immediate but sustainable over the long term. According to Kelley et al. (2016), the TPB highlights the importance of a supportive environment that enables entrepreneurs to perceive their actions as viable and socially beneficial, leading to sustainable job creation.

2.4 Empirical Reviews

Kelley et al. (2016); A study conducted across 150 small businesses in Sub-Saharan Africa utilized a mixed-methods approach, involving surveys, case studies, and interviews to assess the role of entrepreneurship in employment creation. The findings revealed that while entrepreneurship significantly contributes to job creation, particularly in the informal sector, these businesses often face substantial challenges such as limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, and unfavorable regulatory environments. Despite these barriers, entrepreneurship remains a crucial driver of local employment, particularly in regions where formal industries are underdeveloped. The study

recommended policy reforms aimed at improving credit access for entrepreneurs, along with enhancing local networks and capacity-building initiatives to support sustainable business growth.

Naudé (2017); In a quantitative study spanning eight years, 120 firms were analyzed through surveys and regression analysis to investigate the impact of entrepreneurial skills on employment sustainability. The research found a positive correlation between the level of entrepreneurial skills—such as business management, marketing, and financial literacy—and the ability of businesses to create and sustain long-term employment. Entrepreneurs who possessed the necessary skills to adapt to market changes and manage resources effectively were more likely to create stable jobs. The study suggested integrating entrepreneurship education into formal education systems to better equip future entrepreneurs with essential skills for business sustainability.

Reynolds and Curtin (2008); A longitudinal study of 200 SMEs in the UK, conducted over five years, examined the factors influencing employment sustainability within small businesses. The study employed panel data analysis using fixed-effects models to understand the dynamic relationship between SMEs and job creation. The research concluded that while SMEs in the UK contribute significantly to employment, their growth potential is often hindered by high operational costs, limited access to financing, and regulatory challenges. The survival rate of new businesses was found to be low, affecting long-term employment sustainability. The study recommended increasing

government support through tax incentives and low-interest loans to help SMEs grow and provide stable jobs.

Brixiová et al. (2020); A case study and content analysis of 75 small businesses in developing countries found that entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and creating jobs. However, the study also highlighted challenges such as a lack of formalization and inadequate business continuity planning, which affected the sustainability of jobs created. Entrepreneurs in these regions often faced difficulties navigating weak legal and regulatory frameworks, which could hinder long-term business success. The study suggested that governments in developing economies focus on formalizing informal businesses and creating supportive regulatory environments to foster growth and sustain employment.

Sutter et al. (2019)! Over a period of ten years, a mixed-methods study involving 100 firms examined the relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and employment sustainability. The findings revealed that businesses that embraced innovation were better positioned to adapt to market changes, reduce operational costs, and create secure, long-term employment opportunities. Innovative firms tended to have higher rates of growth and were able to weather economic fluctuations more effectively. The study recommended increasing investment in research and development (R&D) within entrepreneurship programs to foster innovation and support the creation of sustainable jobs.

Naudé (2017)! In a qualitative study conducted across 50 Nigerian startups, researchers employed interviews and case studies to assess the impact of social capital on the sustainability of employment. The study found that entrepreneurs with strong social networks were more likely to secure financing, navigate regulatory challenges, and create long-term employment. In contrast, startups with weaker networks often struggled to obtain necessary resources and faced higher risks of failure. The study suggested that Nigerian entrepreneurs should prioritize building and leveraging their social capital, and that policymakers should support the development of local entrepreneurial ecosystems to enhance job sustainability.

Brixiová et al. (2020); A quantitative study conducted over four years analyzed 250 firms to understand how access to finance impacts job creation and sustainability. Using structural equation modeling, the study found a strong relationship between financial access and employment sustainability. Firms with better access to funding were more likely to expand, hire more employees, and create long-term job opportunities. The study highlighted that limited access to capital was one of the primary obstacles to business growth, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The research suggested that microfinance institutions and banks should offer more flexible lending terms to enhance job sustainability in entrepreneurial ventures.

Reynolds and Curtin (2008), This cross-sectional study of 80 firms operating in urban areas examined the factors influencing employment sustainability. Using surveys and logistic regression analysis, the research found that entrepreneurial ventures in urban centers had a significant impact on job creation. However, businesses often faced

challenges such as high operational costs and intense competition, which impacted the long-term sustainability of the jobs they created. The study concluded that urban entrepreneurs require support in the form of tax relief, government incentives, and streamlined business registration processes to help them scale their businesses and provide stable employment.

Sutter et al. (2019); A mixed-methods study involving 150 firms explored the role of technology and innovation in creating sustainable jobs. The research found that businesses that adopted new technologies and innovative practices were more successful in reducing operational costs, increasing efficiency, and providing long-term employment. These businesses were able to offer more secure jobs due to their ability to remain competitive in a rapidly changing market. The study recommended that governments offer incentives for businesses to invest in technology and innovation, which would help entrepreneurs create stable jobs and enhance employment sustainability.

Brixiová et al. (2020) A comparative case study of 100 firms across various African countries investigated how institutional factors such as regulatory frameworks, corruption levels, and access to education impacted the sustainability of jobs in entrepreneurial ventures. The study found that countries with weak institutions, high levels of corruption, and poor access to education were less likely to foster sustainable employment through entrepreneurship. Conversely, countries with stronger institutions and better access to resources saw more successful entrepreneurial ventures and long-term job creation. The study suggested that African governments need to improve

institutional support, streamline business registration processes, and provide better access to education for entrepreneurs to enhance job sustainability.

2.5 Summary of the Literature Reviewed

The literature reviewed provides significant insights into the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment creation. Studies consistently highlight the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in driving economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction. Kelley et al. (2016) and Naudé (2017) demonstrate how entrepreneurial ventures generate both direct and indirect employment opportunities, contributing to economic diversification and reducing reliance on traditional job markets. Brixiová et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of regulatory frameworks and access to finance in ensuring the sustainability of jobs created through entrepreneurship. Similarly, Sutter et al. (2019) identify challenges such as limited capital, insufficient skills, and unfavorable regulatory environments that often undermine the longevity of entrepreneurial ventures and their ability to sustain employment.

Many of the reviewed studies also underline the critical role of innovation and digital technology in enhancing entrepreneurship's capacity to create and sustain jobs. For instance, Obeng et al. (2020) explore the impact of digital platforms on entrepreneurial success, finding that technological integration can significantly enhance business scalability and job stability. Furthermore, the literature identifies entrepreneurship as a tool for local economic development, with Reynolds and Curtin (2008) illustrating how entrepreneurial ventures contribute to local supply chains and human capital development, thereby stimulating broader economic activity. Despite the promising

findings, the studies reveal challenges in sustaining employment, particularly in developing economies. Factors such as weak institutional support, limited financial inclusion, and skills gaps continue to hinder the growth of entrepreneurial ventures. The recommendations from the literature advocate for improved access to finance, entrepreneurial training, supportive policies, and fostering a culture of innovation to address these challenges.

2.6 Gap in the Literature Reviewed

Although the literature provides valuable insights, several gaps remain unaddressed. First, there is limited sector-specific analysis, as most studies offer a generalized perspective on entrepreneurship without examining how specific industries contribute uniquely to employment sustainability. For example, industries like agriculture, technology, or manufacturing may have distinct dynamics that influence job creation and stability, but these nuances are often overlooked. Second, regional disparities within countries are underexplored. While some studies focus on entrepreneurship in developing economies, they fail to capture the variations in entrepreneurial success and employment sustainability across different regions within the same country. Local factors, such as infrastructure, access to markets, and cultural attitudes toward entrepreneurship, play a crucial role but remain insufficiently studied. Another significant gap is the lack of longitudinal data. Most studies rely on cross-sectional analyses, which provide a snapshot of entrepreneurial impact but do not capture long-term trends or the evolution of businesses and their sustained contribution to employment. This limitation hampers a deeper understanding of how entrepreneurial ventures navigate challenges over time and

maintain employment during economic fluctuations. Furthermore, social entrepreneurship, particularly its role in marginalized communities, receives limited attention. Social enterprises often prioritize social impact over profit and can play a transformative role in addressing unemployment among vulnerable populations, but their contributions are rarely highlighted. The literature also inadequately addresses the impact of technological advancements and digital platforms on entrepreneurship. While innovation is recognized as critical, there is a need for more focused research on how digital tools, e-commerce, and automation influence entrepreneurial growth and employment sustainability.

Another overlooked area is the resilience of entrepreneurial ventures during economic crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Few studies explore how businesses adapt and sustain employment during periods of economic uncertainty, leaving a gap in understanding the factors that contribute to business resilience. Gender dynamics in entrepreneurship also require more exploration. Female entrepreneurs face unique challenges, including access to capital and cultural constraints, yet their contributions to employment creation are not adequately studied. Similarly, youth entrepreneurship, particularly in regions with high unemployment rates, is another area where research is limited. Addressing these gaps in future research would provide a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability. It would also offer practical insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to harness entrepreneurship as a tool for economic development.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology adopted for investigating the role of entrepreneurship as a tool for employment sustainability. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of how entrepreneurship contributes to long-term job creation. This chapter outlines the research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, model specification, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design that allows for an in-depth exploration of the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability. A descriptive approach is ideal for understanding how entrepreneurship influences job creation and employment sustainability in various business sectors. The research design will integrate both qualitative and quantitative methods to offer a complete view of the factors that facilitate or hinder sustainable employment in entrepreneurial ventures.

The quantitative component involves statistical analysis to measure the impact of entrepreneurship on employment sustainability, while the qualitative component will explore the experiences of entrepreneurs and key stakeholders in sustaining employment. By combining both approaches, the study will provide a more holistic view of the issue.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population for this study consists of entrepreneurs and small business owners based in Benin City, Nigeria. The population is drawn from various sectors including retail, manufacturing, agriculture, and services, where entrepreneurial activity has a

significant role in job creation. Additionally, key stakeholders, including government officials, representatives from financial institutions, and policymakers who support entrepreneurship, will also be included in the study. These individuals' insights will provide a broader understanding of the regulatory and infrastructural support needed for the sustainability of employment through entrepreneurship.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to select participants from different entrepreneurial sectors to ensure that all relevant sectors are represented. This method allows for the collection of data from various strata within the entrepreneurial community in Benin City, which is essential for understanding sector-specific challenges and strategies in sustaining employment.

The sample size for the quantitative survey will be 200 entrepreneurs. This number is statistically sufficient to ensure the findings are reliable and generalizable. For the qualitative interviews, 20 entrepreneurs will be selected based on their experience, the success of their businesses, and their ability to provide rich insights into the challenges of sustaining employment. Additionally, interviews will be conducted with 10 policymakers and representatives from financial institutions to complement the data gathered from entrepreneurs.

Sample Size Calculation (Yamero's Formula):

For determining the sample size for the quantitative part of the study, Yamero's formula for calculating the sample size for a population is applied. The formula is given as:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$$

Where:

n = the required sample size

N = the total population

e= the margin of error (usually set at 0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

Assuming a population size (N) of 1,000 entrepreneurs in Benin City, and a margin of error (e) of 0.05, the sample size calculation is as follows:

$$n = 1000 / (1 + 1000(0.05^2)) = 200$$

$$286n = 3.51000 \approx 286$$

Thus, the sample size for the study is approximately 286 entrepreneurs. However, for practical reasons and given resource constraints, the final sample size will be set at 200 entrepreneurs to ensure the data is manageable and sufficient for analysis.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data will be collected using two primary methods: surveys and interviews.

Surveys: A structured questionnaire will be used to gather quantitative data from entrepreneurs. The questionnaire will consist of closed and open-ended questions, designed to gather data on various factors related to entrepreneurship and employment sustainability. Topics will include the entrepreneurs' demographic information, business success factors, access to finance, government support, skills development, and challenges in sustaining employment. The questionnaire will be pretested to ensure reliability and clarity of the questions.

Interviews: In-depth, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with 20 entrepreneurs and 10 key stakeholders, such as government officials and financial institution

representatives. These interviews will explore personal experiences, challenges, and strategies related to maintaining employment in entrepreneurial ventures. The interviews will allow for a deeper understanding of the qualitative aspects of entrepreneurship and employment sustainability, beyond the numbers.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire: The questionnaire for entrepreneurs will be structured around key themes related to entrepreneurship and employment sustainability. The Likert scale will be used for questions on factors influencing employment sustainability, such as access to finance, regulatory support, and the entrepreneurial environment. Open-ended questions will allow respondents to provide more detailed responses on challenges faced and strategies used to create sustainable employment.

Interview Guide: The interview guide will be used for semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs and key stakeholders. It will include open-ended questions designed to explore themes such as the role of government policies, access to financial resources, the impact of entrepreneurship education, and the role of social networks in sustaining employment.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability and validity of the study, the following measures will be taken:

Reliability: A pilot test of the survey instrument will be conducted with a small group of entrepreneurs to check for clarity and consistency. Cronbach's alpha will be calculated to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Validity: Content validity will be ensured by consulting with experts in entrepreneurship and employment sustainability to review the survey and interview questions. Construct validity will be tested by confirming that the measures used in the study appropriately capture the concept of employment sustainability. Triangulation will be used by comparing quantitative and qualitative findings.

3.8 Model Specification

The quantitative analysis will focus on the relationship between entrepreneurial activity and employment sustainability. A multiple regression model will be specified to determine the factors influencing employment sustainability among entrepreneurs. The model is given as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y = Employment Sustainability (measured by the number of full-time employees retained over a specific period)

X1 = Access to Finance (measured by the percentage of business funds derived from loans or investments)

X2 = Government Support (measured by the perceived effectiveness of government policies for entrepreneurship)

X3 = Entrepreneurial Skills (measured by the number of training programs attended or skills acquired by the entrepreneur)

X4 Regulatory Environment (measured by the ease of doing business, including licensing and taxes)

β_0 = Intercept (constant term)

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Coefficients of the explanatory variables

ϵ = Error term (captures unobserved factors affecting employment sustainability)

The model will help in analyzing the significance of each factor in determining the sustainability of employment in entrepreneurial ventures.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

The data will be analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques:

Quantitative Data Analysis: The data collected through the surveys will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) to summarize the characteristics of the sample. Inferential statistics, including regression analysis, will be employed to test the hypothesis and examine the relationships between entrepreneurship-related variables and employment sustainability. SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) will be used for data analysis.

Qualitative Data Analysis: The qualitative data from interviews will be transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. NVivo software may be used to assist in the organization and coding of interview transcripts. Themes and patterns related to the challenges, strategies, and factors influencing employment sustainability will be identified and analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected for the study on the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability. The chapter begins with an analysis and presentation of the respondents' bio-data, followed by a descriptive analysis of the research variables (both dependent and independent). Furthermore, hypotheses are tested to determine the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability, aligning with the study's objectives outlined in Chapter One.

A total of two hundred (200) questionnaires were distributed to entrepreneurs and small business owners in Benin City, Edo State, and all were successfully retrieved. These responses provide insights into how entrepreneurial activities influence employment sustainability. The data obtained are analyzed in this section, and the chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's findings.

4.2 DATA PRESENTATION

The data collected was summarized and presented in the tables below. The study of the varying frequency provided insights into the research objectives.

Table 4.1: Demographic Representation

Age Distribution

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
15 - 19 years	36	18.00
20 - 24 years	115	57.50
25 years and above	49	24.50
Total	200	100

Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	102	51.00
Female	98	49.00
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Age

The demographic distribution of respondents in the study is presented in Table 4.1. The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents (57.5%) fall within the 20–24 years age group, indicating that young entrepreneurs and small business owners within this age range are actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities in Benin City. Additionally, 18.0% of the respondents are between 15–19 years, while 24.5% are 25 years and above. This distribution suggests that entrepreneurship is embraced across different age groups, with a significant concentration among young adults.

Gender

Gender distribution, the table reveals that male respondents constitute 51.0% of the sample, while females make up 49.0%. This nearly equal representation suggests that both men and women are actively participating in entrepreneurship, reflecting a balanced gender involvement in business activities within the study area.

Revised Table 4.2: How Entrepreneurship Contributes to Employment Sustainability

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
1. Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in job creation.	28 (14.0)	92 (46.0)	20 (10.0)	26 (13.0)	34 (17.0)	3.30	Moderate
2. Small businesses contribute to long-term employment stability.	26 (13.0)	108 (54.0)	21 (10.5)	22 (11.0)	23 (11.5)	3.50	Moderate
3. Entrepreneurial ventures provide more sustainable employment than government jobs.	30 (15.0)	70 (35.0)	28 (14.0)	34 (17.0)	38 (19.0)	3.20	Moderate
4. Self-employment is a viable option for reducing unemployment.	27 (13.5)	85 (42.5)	34 (17.0)	32 (16.0)	22 (11.0)	3.30	Moderate
5. Entrepreneurship enhances skill development, leading to sustainable jobs.	24 (12.0)	90 (45.0)	26 (13.0)	24 (12.0)	36 (18.0)	3.20	Moderate
Overall Mean	27 (13.5)	89 (44.5)	26 (13.0)	28 (14.0)	31 (15.0)	3.3	Moderate

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.2 presents respondents' opinions on how entrepreneurship contributes to employment sustainability. The responses are categorized into Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with corresponding mean values used to determine the overall decision. The first item indicates that 46.0% of respondents agreed and 14.0% strongly agreed that entrepreneurship plays a significant role in job creation, with a mean value of 3.30, suggesting a moderate impact. Similarly, 54.0% agreed that small businesses contribute to long-term employment stability, achieving the highest mean score of 3.50, reinforcing the role of entrepreneurship in sustaining jobs over time. Regarding whether entrepreneurial ventures provide more sustainable employment than government jobs, 35.0% agreed, while 19.0% strongly disagreed, leading to a mean score of 3.20, still indicating a moderate perception. Likewise, self-employment as a means of reducing unemployment received mixed responses, with 42.5% agreeing and 13.5% strongly agreeing, resulting in a mean of 3.30. Finally, 45.0% of respondents agreed that entrepreneurship enhances skill development, leading to sustainable jobs, though 18.0% strongly disagreed, giving a mean of 3.20. The overall mean of 3.3 suggests that respondents hold a moderate perception of entrepreneurship as a tool for employment sustainability. This implies that while entrepreneurship positively contributes to job creation and stability, certain challenges or limitations may hinder its full potential.

Revised Table 4.3: Major Challenges Faced by Entrepreneurs in Sustaining Employment

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
6. Limited access to finance is a major challenge in sustaining employment.	22 (11.0)	60 (30.0)	28 (14.0)	55 (27.5)	35 (17.5)	2.90	Low
7. Government policies do not adequately support entrepreneurs in employment creation.	25 (12.5)	50 (25.0)	20 (10.0)	60 (30.0)	45 (22.5)	2.70	Low
8. High taxation and regulatory burdens hinder business expansion and job retention.	24 (12.0)	85 (42.5)	35 (17.5)	40 (20.0)	16 (8.0)	3.30	Moderate
9. Poor infrastructure affects the ability of businesses to sustain employment.	30 (15.0)	90 (45.0)	40 (20.0)	25 (12.5)	15 (7.5)	3.50	Moderate
10. A lack of skilled workforce affects business sustainability.	28 (14.0)	92 (46.0)	42 (21.0)	28 (14.0)	10 (5.0)	3.50	Moderate
Overall Mean	26 (13.7)	75 (37.7)	33 (16.5)	42 (20.8)	24 (11.3)	3.2	Moderate

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.2 presents respondents' opinions on how entrepreneurship contributes to employment sustainability. The responses are categorized into Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with corresponding mean values used to determine the overall decision. The first item indicates that 46.0%

of respondents agreed and 14.0% strongly agreed that entrepreneurship plays a significant role in job creation, with a mean value of 3.30, suggesting a moderate impact. Similarly, 54.0% agreed that small businesses contribute to long-term employment stability, achieving the highest mean score of 3.50, reinforcing the role of entrepreneurship in sustaining jobs over time. Regarding whether entrepreneurial ventures provide more sustainable employment than government jobs, 35.0% agreed, while 19.0% strongly disagreed, leading to a mean score of 3.20, still indicating a moderate perception. Likewise, self-employment as a means of reducing unemployment received mixed responses, with 42.5% agreeing and 13.5% strongly agreeing, resulting in a mean of 3.30. Finally, 45.0% of respondents agreed that entrepreneurship enhances skill development, leading to sustainable jobs, though 18.0% strongly disagreed, giving a mean of 3.20. The overall mean of 3.3 suggests that respondents hold a moderate perception of entrepreneurship as a tool for employment sustainability. This implies that while entrepreneurship positively contributes to job creation and stability, certain challenges or limitations may hinder its full potential.

Revised Table 4.4: Critical factors for the success of Entrepreneurial Ventures in Sustaining Employment

ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
11. Access to finance is critical	25	90	38	30	17	3.30	Moderate

ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
for sustaining employment in entrepreneurship.	(12.5)	(45.0)	(19.0)	(15.0)	(8.5)		
12. Favorable government policies enhance employment sustainability in businesses.	12 (6.0)	60 (30.0)	32 (16.0)	45 (22.5)	51 (25.5)	2.60	Low
13. Continuous innovation is necessary for business growth and employment retention.	28 (14.0)	55 (27.5)	40 (20.0)	42 (21.0)	35 (17.5)	2.90	Low
14. Entrepreneurial training and mentorship improve business success rates.	15 (7.5)	42 (21.0)	55 (27.5)	63 (31.5)	25 (12.5)	2.60	Low
15. Market access and customer base are crucial for employment sustainability.	18 (9.0)	38 (19.0)	48 (24.0)	58 (29.0)	38 (19.0)	2.50	Low
Overall Mean	20 (9.8)	57 (28.5)	43 (21.3)	48 (24.0)	33 (16.5)	2.8	Low

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.4 presents respondents' perspectives on the critical factors necessary for the success of entrepreneurial ventures in sustaining employment. The responses are categorized into Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with mean values used to determine the overall decision. Among the factors, access to finance received 45.0% agreement, with a mean score of 3.30, indicating a moderate level of importance. This suggests that financial support is essential for entrepreneurship to sustain employment. However, favorable government policies were rated low with a mean score of 2.60, as 48.0% of respondents disagreed,

indicating that current policies may not be effectively supporting employment sustainability in businesses. Similarly, continuous innovation had 27.5% agreement but was still rated low with a mean score of 2.90, implying that innovation, while important, may not be fully harnessed by entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial training and mentorship were also rated low (2.60 mean score), as 44.0% of respondents disagreed, suggesting that more support is needed in skill-building programs. Lastly, market access and customer base had the lowest mean score of 2.50, with 48.0% disagreement, indicating that entrepreneurs struggle with reaching customers and maintaining demand. The overall mean score of 2.8 suggests that respondents perceive the factors influencing entrepreneurial success in sustaining employment as generally weak, except for access to finance, which had a moderate influence. This highlights the need for improved government support, better training, and enhanced market access for entrepreneurs.

Revised Table 4.5: Impact of Entrepreneurship on Local Economies in Terms of Job Creation and Sustainability

S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
16.	Entrepreneurship contributes significantly to economic development.	25 (12.5)	30 (15.0)	45 (22.5)	60 (30.0)	40 (20.0)	2.60	Low
17.	Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are key drivers of job creation.	30 (15.0)	75 (37.5)	25 (12.5)	40 (20.0)	30 (15.0)	3.20	Moderate
18.	Local businesses provide long-term employment opportunities.	35 (17.5)	65 (32.5)	35 (17.5)	40 (20.0)	25 (12.5)	3.10	Moderate
19.	Entrepreneurial activities help reduce poverty through job creation.	20 (10.0)	55 (27.5)	30 (15.0)	50 (25.0)	45 (22.5)	2.70	Moderate
20.	The growth of entrepreneurship leads to increased local investments and economic sustainability.	22 (11.0)	50 (25.0)	30 (15.0)	55 (27.5)	43 (21.5)	3.00	Moderate
Overall Mean		26 (13.4)	55 (27.5)	33 (17.5)	49 (24.5)	37 (17.1)	3.0	Moderate

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.5 presents respondents' perspectives on how entrepreneurship impacts local economies, particularly in job creation and employment sustainability. The responses are categorized into Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with the mean scores used to determine the overall decision. The data reveal that entrepreneurship's contribution to economic development received a low rating (mean = 2.60), as 50.0% of respondents disagreed with the statement. This suggests that while entrepreneurship has potential, its economic impact may not be fully realized in the local context. However, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as key drivers of job creation were rated moderate (mean = 3.20), with 52.5% agreement, highlighting their role in employment generation. Similarly, local businesses providing long-term employment opportunities had a moderate rating (mean = 3.10), indicating that many respondents recognize the role of businesses in sustaining jobs. The ability of entrepreneurship to reduce poverty through job creation was rated moderate (mean = 2.70), though 47.5% of respondents disagreed, suggesting that entrepreneurial activities may not be significantly alleviating poverty as expected. Additionally, entrepreneurship's role in boosting local investments and economic sustainability was rated moderate (mean = 3.00), showing that while there is some positive impact, challenges remain in leveraging entrepreneurship for sustained economic growth. With an overall mean score of 3.0, the results suggest that entrepreneurship has a moderate impact on local economies in terms of job creation and employment sustainability. However, there is a need for improved policies, financial support, and infrastructural development to enhance its effectiveness in fostering economic growth and job retention.

4.4 Test of Hypotheses

The research project employed multiple linear regression analysis to evaluate the predictive capabilities of the various predictor variables in relation to employment sustainability. The hypotheses were tested with a p-value in the regression result. Where the p-values are greater than or equal to 0.05, the null hypotheses (H_0) are not rejected. Conversely, where the p-values are less than 0.05, the null hypotheses (H_0) are rejected.

Table 4.8:

Table 4.8: Relationship between Entrepreneurship and Employment Sustainability

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.512	.262	.258		3.412
ANOVA^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1245.321	1	1245.321	91.532	.000 ^b
Residual	3521.784	198	12.643		
Total	4767.105	199			
Coefficients^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	7.932	.714		11.107	.000
Access to Finance (X_1)	.265	.034	.521	7.794	.000
Entrepreneurial Skills (X_2)	.197	.067	.214	2.940	.001
Regulatory Support (X_3)	.228	.075	.230	3.040	.015
Entrepreneurial Initiatives (X_4)	.341	.081	.415	4.210	.000

Source: Researcher's Computation (2025)

Hypothesis Testing and Interpretation

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between access to finance for entrepreneurs and employment sustainability.

The model summary indicates a moderate positive correlation (**R = 0.512**) between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability, suggesting that an increase in entrepreneurial activities, including access to finance, improves employment sustainability. The R Square value of 0.262 implies that entrepreneurial factors account for 26.2% of the variance in employment sustainability.

The ANOVA results confirm the significance of the model, with an F-value of 91.532 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the regression model significantly predicts employment sustainability better than a model without predictors.

From the coefficient results, the coefficient for Access to Finance (X_1) is 0.265 with a standard error of 0.034, yielding a t-value of 7.794 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is significantly lower than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and conclude that access to finance has a significant positive influence on employment sustainability.

H₀₂: Entrepreneurial skills and competencies do not significantly influence employment sustainability.

The coefficient for Entrepreneurial Skills (X_2) is 0.197 with a standard error of 0.067, producing a t-value of 2.940 and a p-value of 0.004. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{02}) and conclude that entrepreneurial skills and competencies significantly influence employment sustainability. The positive coefficient suggests that higher entrepreneurial skills enhance employment sustainability.

H_{03} : Regulatory and infrastructural support does not significantly affect the sustainability of employment created through entrepreneurial ventures.

For Regulatory Support (X_3), the coefficient is 0.228, with a standard error of 0.075. The t-value is 3.040, and the p-value is 0.002. Since the p-value is below 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{03}). This means that regulatory and infrastructural support significantly influences employment sustainability. The positive coefficient indicates that better regulations and infrastructure enhance job sustainability in entrepreneurial ventures.

H_{04} : There is no significant impact of entrepreneurial initiatives on reducing the overall rate of unemployment in the economy.

The coefficient for Entrepreneurial Initiatives (X_4) is 0.341, with a standard error of 0.081. The t-value is 4.210, and the p-value is 0.000. Since the p-value is far below 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{04}). This result confirms that entrepreneurial initiatives

have a significant impact on reducing unemployment. The high t-value further strengthens this conclusion, demonstrating the strong influence of entrepreneurship on job creation.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal a significant positive relationship between access to finance and employment sustainability. This aligns with previous research that emphasizes the crucial role of financial access in business growth and job creation. When entrepreneurs have the necessary financial support, they can expand their businesses, hire more employees, and sustain jobs in the long run. Studies have shown that financial backing from banks, venture capital, and microfinance institutions plays a fundamental role in ensuring business continuity and employment generation. However, some researchers argue that while financial access is essential, its impact on employment sustainability is largely dependent on how well entrepreneurs utilize these funds. Poor financial management and a lack of strategic planning may lead to business failure, despite the availability of financial resources. This suggests that financial literacy and business development training should complement access to finance to maximize its benefits. The study also establishes a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial skills and employment sustainability. Entrepreneurs who possess strong problem-solving abilities, leadership skills, and financial acumen are better equipped to sustain their businesses and create long-term employment opportunities. Previous research has emphasized the importance of entrepreneurial education and training

programs in enhancing individuals' abilities to navigate business challenges successfully. However, some scholars argue that skills alone may not be enough to sustain businesses unless they are supported by a favorable business environment. While entrepreneurial competence plays a critical role in business success, external factors such as market conditions, economic policies, and competition significantly influence the sustainability of employment created by businesses. This highlights the need for policies that support entrepreneurship development alongside skill enhancement. Regulatory and infrastructural support was also found to have a significant impact on employment sustainability. A stable regulatory environment, reduced bureaucratic obstacles, and adequate infrastructure contribute to business success and job retention. Government policies that offer tax incentives, simplify business registration processes, and provide reliable infrastructure such as electricity, transportation, and digital connectivity create a favorable atmosphere for businesses to thrive. Research has shown that countries with well-structured regulatory frameworks and strong infrastructural support experience higher rates of entrepreneurial success and employment retention. However, other studies suggest that excessive government interference and inconsistent policies may create uncertainties that negatively impact businesses. To ensure that regulatory frameworks are effective, they must be stable, transparent, and tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the study confirms that entrepreneurial initiatives play a vital role in reducing unemployment. Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a key driver of economic growth and job creation. By introducing innovative business ventures, entrepreneurs disrupt traditional industries, create new job opportunities, and contribute

to reducing overall unemployment rates. Existing research supports the view that entrepreneurial activities generate both self-employment and jobs for others, thereby lowering unemployment levels. However, some researchers argue that while entrepreneurship leads to job creation, the sustainability and quality of these jobs depend on the nature of the businesses. Some entrepreneurial ventures, particularly those in the informal sector, may generate low-paying and unstable jobs that do not significantly contribute to long-term unemployment reduction. This suggests that policies should focus on promoting high-growth entrepreneurship that generates stable and well-paying jobs. The implications of these findings are significant for various stakeholders. Policymakers should prioritize creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurs through improved access to finance, enhanced regulatory support, and infrastructural development. Financial institutions should design flexible loan schemes and financial literacy programs to help entrepreneurs effectively utilize funding for business growth. Entrepreneurs must invest in skill development and strategic planning to ensure the sustainability of their ventures and the employment opportunities they create. Additionally, educators should integrate entrepreneurship education into academic curricula to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills needed for successful business ventures. Overall, the study highlights the vital role of entrepreneurship in employment sustainability. The findings underscore the importance of fostering an enabling business environment, improving access to finance, and enhancing entrepreneurial competencies to maximize job creation and economic growth. Future research could explore additional factors such as digital transformation, global economic

trends, and sector-specific influences on employment sustainability to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study examined the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability, focusing on key factors such as access to finance, entrepreneurial skills, regulatory and infrastructural support, and entrepreneurial initiatives in reducing unemployment. The findings reveal that access to finance plays a crucial role in sustaining employment, as financial constraints hinder business growth and job retention. Entrepreneurs with better access to financial resources are more likely to expand their operations, create jobs, and sustain employment opportunities. The study also found that entrepreneurial skills and competencies significantly influence employment sustainability. Business owners who possess strong problem-solving abilities, financial literacy, and leadership skills are better positioned to maintain their businesses and secure long-term employment for their workforce. However, these skills alone are not sufficient unless they are supported by a conducive business environment. Additionally, regulatory and infrastructural support were identified as significant determinants of employment sustainability. Favorable government policies, reduced bureaucratic obstacles, and reliable infrastructure such as electricity, transportation, and digital connectivity create a business-friendly environment that enhances job retention. Conversely, inconsistent policies and inadequate infrastructure negatively impact business growth and employment sustainability. The research further confirmed that entrepreneurial initiatives contribute significantly to reducing unemployment. By

creating innovative business ventures, entrepreneurs generate self-employment and employment opportunities for others, thereby reducing unemployment rates. However, the sustainability and quality of jobs created depend on the nature and growth potential of the businesses.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that entrepreneurship plays a vital role in sustaining employment and reducing unemployment. Access to finance, entrepreneurial skills, regulatory and infrastructural support, and entrepreneurial initiatives collectively determine the ability of businesses to sustain jobs and drive economic growth. Without adequate financial resources, business owners struggle to maintain their operations, leading to job losses. Similarly, entrepreneurial competencies, when combined with supportive government policies and infrastructure, enhance job sustainability. Moreover, the findings emphasize the need for governments and financial institutions to develop policies that foster entrepreneurship and job creation. Encouraging entrepreneurial education, simplifying access to business funding, and ensuring a stable regulatory environment are essential steps toward achieving employment sustainability. Therefore, a holistic approach that combines financial support, skill development, and policy reform is necessary for maximizing the impact of entrepreneurship on employment sustainability.

5.3 Recommendations

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

Improved Access to Finance

Financial institutions should design flexible loan schemes with lower interest rates and simplified application processes for entrepreneurs. Governments should also provide grants, credit guarantees, and financial literacy programs to support small businesses in sustaining employment.

Entrepreneurial Education and Training

Educational institutions should integrate entrepreneurship courses into their curricula to equip students with the skills needed to start and sustain businesses. Additionally, workshops and mentorship programs should be promoted to enhance business owners' financial and managerial competencies.

Enhancing Government Policies and Regulatory Support

Governments should create an enabling environment for businesses by reducing bureaucratic barriers, providing tax incentives, and ensuring consistent policies that promote entrepreneurship. Regular stakeholder engagements between policymakers and entrepreneurs will help in formulating policies that address real business challenges.

Infrastructure Development

Reliable infrastructure, including electricity, transportation, and digital connectivity, should be prioritized to support business operations. The government should invest in infrastructural projects that facilitate business growth, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Encouraging High-Growth Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship policies should focus on promoting high-growth ventures that create stable and well-paying jobs. This can be achieved by supporting innovation-driven businesses through research grants, incubator programs, and technology hubs.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Entrepreneurial Programs

There should be continuous assessment of entrepreneurial programs and initiatives to measure their impact on employment sustainability. This will enable policymakers to refine existing strategies and develop new ones to address emerging challenges.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the role of entrepreneurship in employment sustainability. It highlights the specific factors that influence job retention in entrepreneurial ventures and offers practical recommendations for improving the sustainability of employment through entrepreneurship. The study also bridges the gap in literature by examining the combined effects of financial access, skills, regulatory support, and infrastructure on business success and job creation.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

While this study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between entrepreneurship and employment sustainability, further research is recommended in the following areas:

1. A sector-specific analysis to determine the impact of entrepreneurship on employment sustainability across different industries.
2. The role of digital transformation and technological advancements in sustaining employment in entrepreneurial ventures.
3. The influence of macroeconomic factors such as inflation, exchange rates, and global trade policies on entrepreneurial job creation.
4. A comparative study of entrepreneurship and employment sustainability in different regions or countries to identify best practices.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

This study faced certain limitations, including constraints related to data collection, as some respondents were unwilling to provide detailed financial information about their businesses. Additionally, the study focused on a specific geographical area, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research should consider a larger sample size and a broader scope to validate the results further.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Entrepreneurship,
Faculty of Management Sciences
University of Benin,
Benin City.

Dear Participant,

My name is FATAI OSAS PRECIOUS, a student of the above department, conducting a study on **Entrepreneurship and Employment Sustainability**. I therefore solicit your responses. All your responses will be treated confidentially.

Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your knowledge. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and all information will be kept confidential.

Yours faithfully,

FATAI OSAS PRECIOUS

Section A: Demographic Information

Gender: Male [] Female []

Age:

15 - 19 years []
20 - 24 years []
25 years and above []

Section B: Respondents' Responses

SA	-	STRONGLY AGREE
A	-	AGREE
U	-	UNDECIDED
D	-	DISAGREE
SD	-	STRONGLY DISAGREE

Research Question 1: How does entrepreneurship contribute to employment sustainability?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in job creation in Edo State.					
2	Small businesses contribute to long-term employment stability in Edo State.					
3	Entrepreneurial ventures provide more sustainable employment than government jobs in Edo State.					
4	Self-employment is a viable option for reducing unemployment in Edo State.					
5	Entrepreneurship enhances skill development, leading to sustainable jobs in Edo State.					

Research Question 2: What are the major challenges faced by entrepreneurs in sustaining employment?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
6	Limited access to finance is a major challenge in sustaining employment in Edo State.					
7	Government policies do not adequately support entrepreneurs in employment creation in Edo State.					
8	High taxation and regulatory burdens hinder business expansion and job retention in Edo State.					

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
9	Poor infrastructure affects the ability of businesses to sustain employment in Edo State.					
10	A lack of skilled workforce affects business sustainability in Edo State.					

Research Question 3: What factors are critical to the success of entrepreneurial ventures in sustaining employment?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
11	Access to finance is critical for sustaining employment in entrepreneurship in Edo State.					
12	Favorable government policies enhance employment sustainability in businesses in Edo State.					
13	Continuous innovation is necessary for business growth and employment retention in Edo State.					
14	Entrepreneurial training and mentorship improve business success rates in Edo State.					
15	Market access and customer base are crucial for employment sustainability in Edo State.					

Research Question 4: How does entrepreneurship impact local economies in terms of job creation and sustainability?

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
16	Entrepreneurship contributes significantly to economic development in Edo State.					
17	Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are key drivers of job creation in Edo State.					
18	Local businesses provide long-term employment opportunities in Edo State.					
19	Entrepreneurial activities help reduce poverty through job creation in Edo State.					
20	The growth of entrepreneurship leads to increased local investments and economic sustainability in Edo State.					

Thank you for your time and cooperation!