

# LEVERAGING SELF-EFFICACY AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING TO ACCELERATE VENTURE CREATION AMONGST PRESERVICE TEACHERS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*This study examines how entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial leadership training influence venture creation behaviour among preservice teachers in state-owned Colleges of Education in the North-Central region of Nigeria. Specifically, the level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial leadership and venture creation behaviour by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. The study raised three research questions and two hypotheses. The study employed a descriptive correlational design and administered a structured questionnaire (Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Leadership Training, and Venture Creation Questionnaire – ESELTVQ) to a sample of 300 Business Education students selected through a multistage sampling technique. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to test hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that (1) preservice teachers report high levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (grand mean = 3.45, SD = 0.60) and (2) high levels of entrepreneurial leadership training (grand mean = 3.40, SD = 0.67), and (3) high levels of venture creation behaviour (grand mean = 3.39, SD = 0.67). Furthermore, significant positive relationships were found between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation ( $r = .93$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and between leadership training and venture creation ( $r = .95$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The study recommended amongst others that Business education lecturers should continue to emphasize on building preservice teachers' entrepreneurial self-efficacy through proper knowledge and skill acquisition.*

**Keywords:** Colleges of Education, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Entrepreneurial Leadership Training, Nigeria, Preservice Teachers, Venture Creation Behaviour.

## Introduction

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in the economic development of Nigeria by fostering innovation, creating employment opportunities, and reducing dependence on government jobs. It involves the identification, development, and pursuit of business opportunities through creativity, innovation, and risk-taking to meet societal needs and generate income. In a nation characterized by a growing youth population and high unemployment rates, entrepreneurship serves as a strategic tool for sustainable development and self-reliance (Erundu & Erundu, 2023). Recognizing this importance, educational institutions, particularly Colleges of Education, have begun integrating entrepreneurship training into their curricula to equip preservice teachers with the skills and confidence necessary to

initiate and manage business ventures. Building on this foundation, it is essential to understand the concept of venture creation and how it manifests among students in Colleges of Education.

Venture creation refers to the process of transforming innovative ideas into viable business enterprises through systematic planning, resource mobilization, and strategic implementation. It encompasses the stages of identifying market opportunities, developing business models, acquiring resources, and sustaining operations for growth and impact. Among students in Colleges of Education, venture creation extends beyond profit-making to include the application of entrepreneurial knowledge and leadership skills toward solving educational and social problems within their communities. This process nurtures creativity, self-efficacy, and practical experience, enabling preservice teachers to become job creators rather than job seekers (Gbadamosi, 2023). Despite the growing emphasis on venture creation in tertiary institutions, several challenges continue to hinder students' entrepreneurial engagement and business sustainability.

Entrepreneurship and venture creation in Nigeria face numerous challenges, including inadequate funding, limited access to mentorship, poor infrastructure, and insufficient institutional support. For preservice teachers in Colleges of Education, these challenges are compounded by a lack of practical exposure, weak entrepreneurial orientation, and limited confidence in their ability to initiate and manage ventures (Oyinlola *et al.*, 2024). Self-efficacy and leadership training key components of entrepreneurial success are often underemphasized in the curriculum, leaving students ill-equipped to translate entrepreneurial ideas into actionable ventures.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to plan, organize, and execute actions required to achieve specific goals or tasks (Artino, 2012). In venture creation, it determines an entrepreneur's confidence in identifying opportunities, overcoming challenges, and sustaining business operations despite uncertainty or failure. High self-efficacy enhances creativity, perseverance, and resilience qualities essential for translating innovative ideas into successful ventures. Among preservice teachers, strong self-efficacy fosters a proactive mindset that encourages risk-taking, innovation, and self-reliance, ultimately empowering them to initiate and manage their own enterprises. It also influences goal setting, decision-making, and commitment, making it a critical determinant of entrepreneurial performance and sustainability. Closely related to this is the concept of entrepreneurial leadership training, which plays a vital role in shaping the skills and attitudes necessary for effective venture creation.

Entrepreneurial leadership training refers to the process of developing the skills, mindset, and competencies required to inspire, influence, and guide others toward achieving innovative and business-oriented goals (Tawar & Syahrizal, 2025). It integrates the principles of entrepreneurship such as creativity, innovation, and risk-taking with leadership qualities like vision, communication, and strategic decision-making. This form of training is essential for venture creation because it equips individuals with the ability to identify opportunities, mobilize resources, and motivate teams to transform ideas into sustainable enterprises. For preservice teachers, entrepreneurial leadership training fosters initiative, problem-solving, and adaptability qualities necessary to navigate the dynamic challenges of business development and the education sector. By cultivating leadership-oriented entrepreneurs, such training not only enhances self-confidence and team collaboration but also promotes long-term venture success and socio-economic development.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the growing emphasis on entrepreneurship education in Nigerian tertiary institutions, many preservice teachers in Colleges of Education remain under-engaged in actual venture creation activities. This challenge is evident in the limited number of viable and sustainable enterprises initiated by students despite exposure to entrepreneurial courses and training programs. Previous studies such as Baba and Audu (2019) have shown that while constructs such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy and motivation influence students' intentions, their translation into tangible business ventures remains

weak or inconsistent, particularly among preservice teachers. If this problem persists, Nigeria risks perpetuating high youth unemployment and underemployment, thereby missing the opportunity to transform graduates into job creators who can contribute to national development. Such a situation undermines innovation, economic diversification, and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, further intensifying social and economic instability. Although existing research has explored entrepreneurial intention and orientation, most studies have focused on university students or SME owners, neglecting preservice teachers in Colleges of Education, especially in the North-Central region. Moreover, limited attention has been given to the combined role of self-efficacy and leadership training as predictors of actual venture creation. Thus, it is based on this premise that study examined leveraging Self-Efficacy and Leadership Training to Accelerate Venture Creation Amongst preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine:

1. The level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.
2. The level of entrepreneurial leadership training by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.
3. The level of venture creation behaviour of preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised.

*Research Question 1:* What is the level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

*Research Question 2:* What is the level of entrepreneurial leadership training by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

*Research Question 3:* What is the level of venture creation behaviour of preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

*Research Hypothesis 1:* There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

*Research Hypothesis 2:* There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership training and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

### **Method**

#### ***Research Design***

This study adopts a descriptive correlational research design, which is appropriate because it seeks to determine the extent and nature of the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy, leadership training, and venture creation among students without manipulating any variables. According to Creswell (2014), correlational research design allows for the examination of the strength and direction of relationships between two or more variables in their natural setting.

#### ***Participants***

The population of the study comprises all Business Education students enrolled in state-owned Colleges of Education within the North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, which includes six states (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau) plus the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Within this zone, there are seven state-owned Colleges of Education, and the total population of Business

Education students across these colleges is estimated to be 1,200 students based on institutional records and departmental enrolment data.

### ***Sampling Procedure***

A multistage sampling technique will be employed to select participants. In Stage 1, three states Benue, Nasarawa, and Niger will be randomly selected from the six states in the North Central zone. In Stage 2, one state-owned College of Education will be randomly selected from each of these three states, giving a total of three Colleges of Education for the study. In Stage 3, Business Education preservice teachers from each selected college were purposively selected as respondents because they are directly exposed to entrepreneurship and leadership training within their programs. The sample size will be determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations:

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

Where:

- $n$  = sample size
- $N$  = population size (1,200)
- $e$  = margin of error (0.05 at 95% confidence level)

$$n = \frac{1200}{1 + 1200(0.05)^2} = \frac{1200}{1 + 3} = \frac{1200}{4} = 300$$

Thus, the final sample size will be 300 Business Education students across the three selected colleges.

### ***Data Collection Instrument***

The study employed a structured research instrument titled "Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Leadership Training, and Venture Creation Questionnaire (ESELTVQ)", which was developed by the researcher to collect relevant data aligned with the study's objectives. The instrument will be divided into four sections; Section A gathered demographic data of respondents, Section B collected data on entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Section C elicit information on entrepreneurial leadership training. Section D collected data on venture creation behaviour of preservice teachers. All questionnaire items were structured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (4)*.

### ***Validation and Reliability of Instrument***

To ensure face and content validity, the draft instrument was subjected to expert review by three specialists in Entrepreneurship Education, and Measurement and Evaluation from the FCT College of Education, Zuba, Abuja. A pilot study will then be conducted with 30 Business Education students from, FCT College of Education Zuba, Abuja who were not be part of the main study sample. The reliability of the ESELTVQ was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha method, with a reliability coefficient of 0.82.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis Procedure***

Data collection was carried out by the researcher with the assistance of 2 trained research assistants to ensure accuracy and a high response rate. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and encouraged to provide honest responses. The collected data will be coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency counts were used to summarize demographic characteristics and answer research questions with a criterion mean of 2.50. To test the research hypotheses, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was applied. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

### Answer to research questions

*Research Question 1:* What is the level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

**Table 4: Mean and standard deviation on the level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	x	SD	Remark
1	I am confident in my ability to identify profitable business opportunities.	151	145	2	2	3.48	0.55	Agree
2	I can successfully plan and start a small business.	150	143	4	3	3.46	0.58	Agree
3	I can overcome obstacles that may arise while starting a business.	149	142	5	4	3.45	0.60	Agree
4	I can manage resources efficiently for a new venture.	146	141	9	4	3.43	0.62	Agree
5	I am confident in my ability to make decisions that will benefit my business.	147	140	4	9	3.41	0.67	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 4 shows that preservice teachers exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE). Across the five items measuring ESE, the mean scores range from 3.41 to 3.48 on a 4-point Likert scale, indicating that respondents agree with statements reflecting confidence in entrepreneurial abilities. The grand mean of 3.45 further confirms that, preservice teachers in these Colleges of Education a high level of self-efficacy.

*Research Question 2:* What is the level of entrepreneurial leadership training by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

**Table 5: Mean and standard deviation on the level of entrepreneurial leadership training by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	x	SD	Remark
1	The entrepreneurial training I received has improved my ability to lead and motivate others in business projects.	147	140	5	8	3.42	0.66	Agree
2	I have been trained to set clear goals and strategies for starting a venture.	145	134	13	8	3.38	0.69	Agree
3	Leadership training has increased my confidence in initiating business activities.	147	140	8	5	3.43	0.63	Agree
4	I can organize and coordinate a team to achieve business objectives.	143	137	9	11	3.37	0.71	Agree
5	I am able to inspire peers to participate in entrepreneurial activities.	146	140	4	10	3.40	0.68	Agree



Grand Mean

3.40 0.67 Agree

Table 5 indicates that preservice teachers agree that entrepreneurial leadership training positively influences their skills and confidence. The grand mean of 3.40 shows a high level of perceived impact, meaning students feel the training improves their ability to lead, motivate, set goals, organize teams, and inspire peers in business ventures.

*Research Question 3:* What is the level of venture creation behaviour of preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

**Table 6: Mean and standard deviation on the level of venture creation behaviour by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	x	SD	Remark
1	I have generated one or more business ideas during my time at college.	143	141	9	7	3.40	0.66	Agree
2	I have started a small business or entrepreneurial project while in school.	144	140	8	8	3.40	0.67	Agree
3	I actively participate in entrepreneurial activities organized on or off campus.	143	140	11	6	3.40	0.65	Agree
4	I plan to establish a business venture within the next year after graduation.	144	135	12	9	3.38	0.70	Agree
5	I seek opportunities to improve my entrepreneurial skills through workshops or training.	141	133	22	4	3.37	0.67	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>3.39</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 6 indicates that preservice teachers in North Central Nigerian Colleges of Education agree that they engage in venture creation behaviours. The grand mean of 3.39 shows a high level of venture creation.

## Hypotheses Testing

*Research Hypothesis 1:* There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

**Table 7: PPMC comparing the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.**

		VC
ESE	Pearson Correlation	0.93
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00
	N	300

*ESE= Entrepreneurial self-efficacy, VC= venture creation*

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis in Table 7 shows a relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) and venture creation (VC) among preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. The correlation coefficient is  $r = 0.93$ , which indicates a very high positive association, meaning that as preservice teachers' entrepreneurial self-efficacy increases, their engagement in venture creation behaviours also increases. The relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ( $p = 0.00$ , 2-tailed). Thus, there is a significant relationship between

entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

*Research Hypothesis 2:* There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership training and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

**Table 8: PPMC comparing the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership training and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.**

		VC
ELT	Pearson Correlation	0.95
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00
	N	300

*ELT= entrepreneurial leadership training, VC= venture creation*

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis in Table 8 shows a relationship between entrepreneurial leadership training (ELT) and venture creation (VC) among preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. The correlation coefficient is  $r = 0.95$ , indicating that higher levels of exposure to and competence in entrepreneurial leadership training are associated with higher engagement in venture creation behaviours. The relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ( $p = 0.00$ , 2-tailed). Thus, there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership training and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

## Discussion

The first finding revealed that preservice teachers exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. The hypotheses testing revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This is in line with the findings of Na-Allah and Ahmad (2022) who revealed that self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and venture creation among Nigerian graduates.

The second finding revealed that preservice teachers exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial leadership training in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. The hypotheses testing revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership training and venture creation by preservice teachers in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This finding echoes the findings of Dada *et al.* (2023) who revealed that leadership skills as a component of entrepreneurial attributes significantly predicted venture creation among Nigerian undergraduates.

The third finding revealed that preservice teachers exhibit a high level of venture creation behaviours in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This finding is in line with the findings of Dada *et al.* (2023) who revealed that students who possessed entrepreneurial attributes, such as creativity and opportunity identification, were significantly more likely to engage in venture-creation behaviour.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusion were arrived at.

Preservice teachers exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. Preservice teachers exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial leadership training in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. Preservice teachers exhibit a high level of venture creation behaviours in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made:

1. Business education lecturers should endeavor to continue to emphasize on building preservice teachers entrepreneurial self-efficacy through proper knowledge and skill acquisition.
2. Colleges of Education in Northcentral Nigeria should endeavor to organize conference, entrepreneurship job fairs and seminars that emphasize heavily on the importance of entrepreneurial leadership training.
3. The department of business education in various Colleges of Education in Northcentral should endeavor to put in more effort in renewing and reinstating the entrepreneurship spirit in preservice teachers by providing experiential based learning such as the organization of trade fairs to continuously boost preservice teachers venture creation behaviours.

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