

Institution: University of Wolverhampton		
Unit of Assessment: 17 Business and Management		
Title of case study: Promoting Youth Employment in Africa		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016 and 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Paschal Anosike	Senior Lecturer in HR	2008 - Present
Professor Yong Wang	Professor of Family Business and Entrepreneurship	2004 - Present
Dr Samia Mahmood	Senior Lecturer	2013 - Present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2016 - 2019		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact <p>Research on entrepreneurship conducted in the Management Research Centre has given rise to impact amongst Africa's higher education institutions, organisations, governments and intergovernmental bodies. This has been done by showing how effectively Entrepreneurship Education (EE) meets the most critical Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets on youth unemployment, thereby helping to improve the life chances of our beneficiaries. Impact arising from the systematic approach to EE provision has extended across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Our research has influenced the creation of new start-ups, curricula, learning processes and a new government directorate of entrepreneurship. It has also shaped wider youth entrepreneurship policy including the authoritative Africa Prosperity Index (API).</p>		
2. Underpinning research <p>A core part of our impact strategy is to co-ordinate capacity-building activities that focus on entrepreneurship and leadership, and provide opportunity for evidenced-based research and policy for Africa. We also help wider African communities in a programme of Africa-based entrepreneurship, connecting groups and institutions with faculties and business support units within the University of Wolverhampton in order to develop sustainable schemes for SME growth, graduate and youth employment and women's empowerment.</p> <p>The research is the result of wider collaboration with several African partners, including in Ghana and Nigeria, to develop and implement sustainable institutional infrastructures to support youth self-employment in a way previously unavailable in Africa. Through Anosike's advisory role at the African Union Commission (AUC), the research [R1; R6] also fed into curricula of the recently launched Pan-African Virtual and E-learning University (PAVEU), the AUC's new higher education policy flagship that provides direct learning opportunities to nurture youth-led start-ups in Africa through EE. As a result, Anosike was 1 of only 15 global experts prestigiously awarded by the AU for his intellectual contribution to education policy in Africa.</p> <p>Anosike examined how private and public educators could support African youths to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to set up and manage micro and small businesses through the medium of EE [R1]. Wang and Mahmood show how EE and training facilitate access to microcredit essential to financial inclusion and success of micro/small enterprises [R2; R4]. In addition to</p>		

credit, micro/small businesses need to build and nurture trust to survive, and survival is crucial to small businesses operating in an unpredictable conflict-torn environment in SSA [R1; R3].

The research has given rise to three clear Findings [F], which have:

F1. Developed mechanisms to facilitate youth employment through EE and financial inclusion.

Research by Anosike [R1] and Wang and Mahmood [R2; R4] examined and analysed the extent to which experience of EE and training, as well as access to finance, can influence the intention [R5] to start a business [R6]. By adopting a more systematic approach, effective learning processes alongside creating opportunities to access finance, the research demonstrates that educators can encourage and nurture students and graduates as nascent entrepreneurs.

F2. Devised a systematic approach to EE provision deployed by governments and educators as a means to influence unemployed young Africans to pursue self-employment rather than paid-employment as a career path.

Anosike devised a sequential approach to EE, which has been taken up and implemented by several educators in Africa [R1]. This creates awareness about entrepreneurship from theory, ideation to start-up formation, followed by launching a start-up through participation in business accelerator schemes including pitching for competitive grants. Finally, the approach supports early-stage entrepreneurs with market access through start-up incubation, scale-up investment and mentorship.

F3. Introduced a policy framework for youth entrepreneurship.

By developing a systematic approach to EE that has had a transformative effect on higher education teaching and learning in particular, Anosike's research [R1] informed the development and implementation of evidence-based higher education policy making in Africa and the introduction of a regional format for youth entrepreneurship policymaking, which were new and ground breaking.

3. References to the research

The following references have been assessed by peer review and have been cited repeatedly by scholars and practitioners. For example, Anosike's research [R1] has been used by researchers working in South America and Mahmood and Wang's work [R6] has been cited by over twenty established researchers in the field.

R1. Anosike, P. (2017) Entrepreneurship education knowledge transfer in a conflict sub-Saharan African context, *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 25(4), pp. 591-608 (in <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-01-2017-0001>) (REF 2 Output)

R2. Atiase V.Y., Mahmood S., and Wang Y. (2019) Does institutional logic matter in microfinance delivery? An empirical study of microfinance clients, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research* (in <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-10-2018-0713>)

R3. Wang Y. and Shi H. (2019) Particularistic and system trust in family businesses: The role of family influence, *Journal of Small Business Management* (in <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12533>) (REF 2 Output)

R4. Atiase V.Y., Wang Y., and Mahmood S. (2019) FNGOs and financial inclusion: Investigating the impact of microcredit on employment growth in Ghana, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 20(2), pp. 90-106. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1465750319832478>) (REF 2 Output)

R5. Mwiya B., Wang Y., Kaulungombe B. and Kayekesi M. (2019) Exploring entrepreneurial intention's mediating role in the relationship between self-efficacy and nascent behaviour: Evidence from Zambia, Africa, *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 26(4), pp. 466-485. (<https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-03-2017-0083>)

R6. Atiase V.Y., Mahmood S., Wang Y., and Botchie D. (2018) Developing entrepreneurship in Africa: Investigating critical resource challenges, *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 25(4), pp. 644-666. (<https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-03-2017-0084>)

Grants

European Commission Grant for the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme (IAAMS), Grant number: 2017-2709/001-001 (IAAMS), Amount of the Grant in GBP1,300,000.

British Council Grant to develop a framework for academic-industry collaboration in Nigeria, March 2019, GBP9,895.

4. Details of the impact

I1. Contributing to innovation and entrepreneurial activity: impact on upskilling, start-ups, and enterprise

There has been strong and enduring change in African innovation and entrepreneurial activity due to the use by others of our research. We have worked with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and the ultimate result has been real improvement in the lives and livelihoods of our beneficiaries, those young men and women who have started their own businesses and enriched their communities. Upskilling, the creation of 200 new start-ups, and the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises have all emerged as a direct result of this collaborative process.

a. Curricula changes and learning processes

Institutional strategies on teaching and learning practices were influenced by Findings [F1-F2] directly impacting international EE pedagogies and students' learning experience across Africa, a contribution termed 'invaluable' by the African Union [C1]. For instance, by remodelling their EE content including academic-industry collaboration, teaching and assessment techniques, and innovation labs based on our research [F2, F3], African educators improved the quality of their entrepreneurship programmes, thereby influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions [C2, C3 and C4]. This impact was taken forward through GBP1,300,000 EU funding to strengthen capacity for EE provision in higher education sectors in Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa and Uganda and GBP9,895 British Council grant to develop a framework for academic-industry collaboration in Nigeria [C5].

b. New start-ups creation

Through influencing institutional strategies and operational structures, research insights [F1-F2] have directly informed a) the restructuring of Bingham University's Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC), and b) the scale-up of the Hebron Start-up Lab (HSL) at Covenant University, Nigeria. Covenant University has stated that:

"Notably, your intellectual contribution through research and direct influence, in our on-going joint project with the British Council to scaleup our Hebron Startup Lab, has ensured that as an institution we have access to the best expertise and knowledge to review our strategies, embrace fresh ideas and upgrade our collaboration with the private sector for better synergy and output in creating start-up opportunities for our students' and alumni." [C2]

Consequently, HSL restructured its strategy on collaboration with industry and relaunched its micro-Venture Acceleration Programme (mVAP) [C2]. This led to the incubation and creation of 200 new start-ups in 2019, which employed over 1,000 new employees. Findings [F2] were instrumental to transforming mVAP into a highly successful business accelerator programme that brought together education and industry stakeholders to jointly support new start-ups. An equity

investment of USD100,000 (GBP73,000) to scale-up one of HSL's new start-ups was taken forward with 'Edustart Challenge' [C2], a new platform launched in 2019 tasked with creating an additional 2,000 new high growth start-ups by 2024 [C5]. Similarly, [F1-F2] were instrumental to 90 new student start-ups with over 600 employees under the newly restructured EDC at Bingham University [C3]. In sum, the initiatives supported by our research created 290 new start-ups employing 1,600 people, and laid the foundations for a further 2,000 start-ups.

c. Financial institutions/Small and Medium Enterprises

Research findings [R4 and F1] have directly influenced institutional lending practices and strategies, increased awareness and understanding of lending risks and mitigation strategies for micro, small and medium enterprises in Africa. Organisations such as the National Investment Bank Ltd. Ghana have relied on the recommendations from [R2] and [R4] to change its institutional strategy with a focus on greater commitment towards micro-lending at the 'bottom of the pyramid', which hitherto was not the case [C6].

The impact from Anosike's, Mahmood's and Wang's research findings has improved the lives of SME entrepreneurs, the people with whom they trade, and the sectors in which they operate [C7 and C8]. Communities are enlivened, enriched, and empowered in ways that would not otherwise have been possible.

12. Impact on international policy

Through high-level engagement in expert panels of international organisations, our research has influenced policies and policy frameworks on entrepreneurship and EE in African nations. The African Union is the highest of these politically and led with an innovative pan-African EE framework. The impact of our research on the Industrial Training Fund demonstrates how the research informed Nigeria's national youth entrepreneurship strategy.

a. African Union (AU)

As a member of PAVEU's Technical Taskforce and Expert Panel, Anosike's research [F3] informed the policy on using modern and digital technologies to drive education innovation across Africa. He led a team of experts comprising of UNESCO officials to integrate his EE framework into PAVEU's digital content [F2, C1]. Approved by AU's Executive Council and successfully launched in December 2019, PAVEU is AU's Open, Online and Distance Learning flagship initiative aimed at supporting 1,000,000 African youths with direct learning opportunity to start their own business. Anosike's research was described as "remarkable and unique in steering the work of the Taskforce and instrumental to the successful development of PAVUE's entrepreneurship course" [C1].

b. Industrial Training Fund (ITF)

Findings [F3] fed into a Commonwealth/UNCTAD international workshop on developing national policies on youth entrepreneurship attended by over 50 senior government representatives from the Ministries of Labour, Youth Development, Trade and Industry, and Economic Development featured in media across Africa. Following this, 10 Commonwealth countries including Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone South Africa and Swaziland developed national youth entrepreneurship policy, previously unavailable.

In Nigeria, Anosike's work directly informed the creation of new entrepreneurship policy and new directorate within the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Grade 'A' agency of the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment responsible for steering Nigeria's national youth entrepreneurship strategy. Agencies with Grade 'A' status are established by Act of Legislation led by a Director General/CEO appointed by the President and confirmed by Legislators, operate autonomously across the 36 States of Nigeria and the Federal Capital. The ITF stated:

“Your recommendations on establishing national youth entrepreneurship policies and publication in the Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development have strengthened our staff’s knowledge. This in turn has enhanced our organisational capability and improved our processes to work effectively with other government agencies and employers in various sectors to support youth entrepreneurship in Nigeria. It has also influenced [the] establishment of new entrepreneurship policy and [an] Entrepreneurship Unit overseen by a Director to drive our growth agenda.” [C9]

c. Legatum Institute Foundation

Initially presented at the World Economic Forum on Africa (September 2019), the Africa Prosperity Index (API) was launched at the 33rd session of the African Union Heads of State Summit in Ethiopia (February 2020) as part of an integrated policy reference tool used to inform national policies across the AU 55-member countries. Anosike’s research Findings [R1 and F3] inspired wider and greater awareness about Africa’s economic prospects through EE, and directly influenced the metrics used to develop and pioneer publication of the API by the London-based Legatum Institute (LI). As the Institute has written:

“To enrich our understanding, we turned to experts with specific experience on Africa. Your entrepreneurship research... enriched our understanding... [and] influenced the thematic breadth of the measures that we used in pioneering the Africa Prosperity Report.” [C10a]

The LI, part of Legatum Foundation (Charity Number 1140719) that hosts the Social Metrics Commission, publishes the Prosperity Index used by governments across the world to define and shape national policies [C10b].

Overall, the team have used their research to 1) create knowledge and understanding leading to the improvement of young people’s occupational choices, and 2) forge dialogue and collaboration between educators, funders, governments, industry and policy, thereby, influencing system-level reforms to tackle youth unemployment in partnership with Africa’s highest-level policy-making body – the African Union [C1].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- C1. Testimonial from the Commissioner of the African Union Commission
- C2. Testimonial from the Vice Chancellor of Covenant University
- C3. Testimonial from Vice Chancellor of Bingham University
- C4. Testimonial from the CEO of DreamCode Education Foundation
- C5. Testimonial from the Curator, Hebron Start-up Lab
- C6. Testimonial from the National Investment Bank Limited, Ghana
- C7. Testimonial from MO Kiddies World, Lagos, Nigeria
- C8. Testimonial from Aridunnuomo Enterprise, Lagos, Nigeria
- C9. Testimonial from the CEO of the Industrial Training Fund
- C10a. Testimonial from the Director of Policy of the Legatum Institute
- C10b. Legatum Institute Prosperity Index– *The Africa Prosperity Report, 2019-20*, p 162, <https://li.com/reports/the-africa-prosperity-report-2019-2020/>