

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A RECIPE FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

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## Abstract

The wheel of development of any country grossly depend on how productive and creative the youths and graduates of that country are. Stake holders (parents, teachers and government) have the obligation of ensuring that youths in their various communities are empowered by training them either formally, non-formally or informally. This paper focuses on entrepreneurship education as a recipe for effective community development in Nigeria. The paper highlights on the place of entrepreneurship education in achieving effective community development and possible challenges of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurial education is considered in this paper as an offering which tools learners with knowledge, skills and attitudes to be an entrepreneur – an innovator, the person who develops a new product, a new market, or a new means of production. Inadequate funding, shortage of manpower, illiteracy among others were identified as some of the challenges of entrepreneurship education in community development delivery. Finally, the study recommended that apart from improving funding by the government, the communities should embrace strictly the entrepreneurship education policy of the federal government. There should be seminars on entrepreneurial skills in development in our communities.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Recipe, Effective Community Development.

## Introduction

Education, which is a lifelong process and perhaps an instrument of social economic political and environmental change, is a public good which has assumed a variegated meaning from society to society. Education has been acknowledged as one of the powerful tools for changing the world because it opens the door for individuals to participate and contribute

meaningfully to the socio economic, and political development and achievement of self sufficiency. Etuk and Ekpo (2008) observe that when people are denied educational opportunities, they are excluded from the development process. The resultant effect of this exclusion is not being developed. In tandem with the above, Sunstein in Nwogu, Owhonda & Aleru (2013) posits that:

The right to good education is the most obvious example. By elevating a good education to the status of a right; that in many domains, education is indispensable to decent prospects in life; that it is a basic safe ground of individual security; that those who are well educated are

less likely to fall, and, if they do, are more likely to pick themselves up; and education is necessary for citizenship itself (p2).

The national policy on education in Onyenemezu (2012) aptly recognizes the relevance of education to the development of the individual and the nation and endorsed that Nigeria's policy thrust for education will be geared towards using education as an instrument for achieving:

- (a) A free and democratic society.
- (b) A just and egalitarian society.
- (c) A united, strong and self-reliant nation
- (d) A great and dynamic economy
- (e) A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

In order to achieve these, the policy also articulated the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society (FRN) in Nwogu, Owhondah and Aleru (2013).

The acquisition and inculcation of these appropriate skills in the individual make it possible for a shift from the bookish and theoretical oriented education to entrepreneurial education which is recognized all over the world today as important in the development of every nation's economy.

Okeke (2004) and Odiba (2008) explained that education is a process of learning which helps in the provision of suitable skills, training the youths for economic and cultural structures from generation to generation. The youths in Nigeria have

occupied themselves by stealing, armed robbery, kidnapping, youth restiveness and cultism (Odiba and Baba, 2013). When these youths are engaged in their own entrepreneurship, these crimes will be reduced to the barest minimum (Mgbor & Mgbor, 2011). The current global financial crisis has impacted negatively on the macro and micro levels of the Nigerian economy. This situation has posed serious challenges and threats to government and citizens. While education is used as an effective instrument for addressing such problems in developed countries, that of Nigeria is not yielding commensurate results.

## **Conceptual Clarifications**

### **Entrepreneurship Education**

The concept of entrepreneurship is great with ambiguities (Odiba & Baba 2013). This simply means there is no one definition of entrepreneurship. For instance, Koyede in Odiba & Baba (2013) perceives entrepreneurship as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities in an environment and he is able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identifying opportunities. Similarly, Johnson (2015) described entrepreneurship as an individual's ability to turn ideas into action through any form of education. Stevenson (2007) views that entrepreneurship is the pursuit of opportunities through innovation of leverages of resources that for the most part are not controlled internally. Entrepreneurship is all about translating

and transforming of ideas into realities. These ideas and initiative are inbuilt in every individual are dominant and requires little motivation and activation. This therefore requires entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education according to Akinscinde (2011) is the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize business opportunities and the insight, self-esteem knowledge and skills into action on them. Bassey (2005) defined entrepreneurship education as the inculcating in the citizenry appropriate skills, habits and competencies necessary for self and paid employments. Similarly, Nwabuam (2004) defined entrepreneurship education as the identification of the general characteristics of entrepreneurs and how potential they can be trained in management techniques needed for

effective performance of persons for long time service of an organization after acquisition of occupational skills. Entrepreneurship education is a potent and viable tool for self empowerment, job and wealth creation if accompanied with entrepreneurial skills. In tandem with the above Kehinde (2008) observed that entrepreneurial skills consist of organizing all the factors of production ie land, labour and capital to transform a business idea into profitable reality. According to him this involves careful observation of the environment, identifying to improve the environment, gather resources and implement action to maximize those opportunities. Corroborating the above views, Okebukola (2011) views that entrepreneurship education is ...

an offering which tools learners with knowledge, skills and attitudes to be an entrepreneur-an innovator, the person who develops a new product, a new market, or a new means of production.

He sums it up by viewing that it is all activities aiming to foster entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes and skills and covering a range of aspects such as idea generation,

start-up growth and innovation. The perception of entrepreneurship education was not left of by traditional African education. Fafunwa (2004) observes that:

One very significant point that should be mentioned about traditional African education is the training of the handicapped person in order to make him a contributing member of the society. The lame and hutch back, for example are taught sedentary occupations such as weaving, carving or black smitery, such persons are also often trained as priests, barbers, native doctors and the like particularly among the Yoruba (p22).

Mamman, Effanga, Egwuasi, Mfon and Ighalo in Nwogu, Owchondah and Aleru (2013) summarize the roles of entrepreneurship education to include job creation, identification of individual, skills, maintenance of free enterprise, promotion of healthy competition, general health and the speeding of general prosperity. Other roles identified include ensuring innovation and creativity, encouraging grass root development, social progress and growth.

Furthermore, Effanga, Egwuasi and Mfon (2011) added that entrepreneurship education will further enable individuals to find sustainable solutions to overcoming the injustices of poverty as evidenced by malnutrition low-life expectancy, poor educational attainment, poor access to potable water, inadequate health care and exclusion from the benefits of economic and technological progress.

Entrepreneurship can be described as training that stimulates learners to better their lives by generating value through the creation or expansion of economic activities, identification and exploiting new products, processes or markets. It brings about pragmatic and meaningful interaction between the learner and the instructor for the purpose of developing in the learner the ability of identifying, evaluating and generating ideas and solving business problems in a unique way. Entrepreneurship education precipitates self-employment among learners and accelerates sustainable growth and development in the community. Raimi and Ogunjirin (2014) viewed that entrepreneurship education has aided

sustainable growth and developing in a number of developed nations like Japan and America, in improving human capital as Opposed to the traditional approach of teach-and-listen approach which is prevalent in the developing rations. The essential ingredients of entrepreneurship include willingness to take calculated risks in terms of time, the ability to formulate an effective venture team, the creative skill to marshal needed resources and fundamental skill of building solid business plans and finally the vision to recognize opportunity where others see chaos, contradiction and confusion (Kiosaki, 2014). This demands for a continuous development of skill.

### **Approaches to Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education is focused toward different ways of realizing opportunities. This is what distinguishes it from management education which is focused on the best way to operate existing hierarchies. Entrepreneurship education provides the students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to be an innovator.

Two main approaches to entrepreneurship education have been described by the National Agency for Enterprise and Construction (Okebukola, 2011). According to him, these are the focused approach and the unified approach.

**The Focused Approach:** In this approach, students and staff are located exclusively in the academic area of business. It focuses on learning through doing (practice). Moberg, (2014) viewed that entrepreneurship should be thought as a method in all school topics and that the focus should be on personal development

rather than on entrepreneurship as a profession. This approach intends to encourage students to consider a career as self employed.

**The Unified/Integrated Approach:** This approach targets non-business students outside business schools. It provides an in-debt look at the research and programmes associated with rural entrepreneurship. It involves the creation of a new organization that introduces a new product, serves or creates a new market or utilizes a new technology in a rural or community environment. The unified approach has two models- the magnet and radiant.

The Magnet- Model – Here student are drawn from across a broad range of majors where entrepreneurial activities are offered by a single academic entity, but attended by students from all over the university. All resources and skills are united into a single hub that facilitates the coordination and planning of entrepreneurial activities. The Radiant Model – Here, individual institutes and faculties are responsible for facilitating the integration and visibility of entrepreneurship activities, thereby enabling the activities to be adjusted to the specific structure of individual faculties.

### **Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education**

National Universities Commission (NUC) in Okebukola (2011) listed the following as objectives of entrepreneurship education.

1. Empowerment of the people (student).
2. Creation of employment.
3. Diversification in business, and
4. Individual confidence.

Corroborating the above, Ojeifo (2014) observes that entrepreneurship education is structured to achieve the following objectives.

1. To offer functional education for the youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-oriented.
2. To provide the youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
3. To serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
4. To offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management, to make certain bearing feasible.
5. To reduce high rate of poverty.
6. To create employment generation.
7. To reduce rural-urban migration.
8. To provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium sized businesses.
9. To inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the youths and adults which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on.
10. To create smooth transition from traditional to modern industrial economy.

The above objectives of entrepreneurship education are very laudable and relevant in effective community development delivery in Nigeria, considering the level of unemployment which has become a major problem bedeviling the lives of youths causing them frustration,

depression, dejection and dependency on family members and friends. This has further contributed to high rate of insecurity, violence during elections and poverty among the populace (Ajufo, 2012). Entrepreneurship education would help reduce the problem of unemployment in the various communities, thereby making them to participate effectively in community development activities.

### **Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education**

Okebukola (2011) views that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria still in its infancy, is confronted with some challenges. Such challenges include

- Heavy initial outlay of implementing the programme.
- Short supply of trained personnel to deliver quality entrepreneurial education. The environment which can permit easy start-up of small businesses is inclement.
- Graduates bubbling with newly – acquired entrepreneurial skills will be negatively affected by and unable to successfully grow their small businesses within their environment. Entrepreneurship training requires partnership with industries.
- Feeble University – industry partnership because industries of the quality of graduates from the university system.
- The quality and relevance of university – based research.

Corroborating the above, Ojeifor (2013), observes the problem of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria to include the following

1. Rampant political and bureaucratic corruption together with the absence of social consensus on importance on the importance of macroeconomic policy issues.
2. Poor access to vocational skills development training for rural and urban youths involved in the informal economy.
3. Lack of data for entrepreneurship education.
4. Little or limited programme design for entrepreneurship education.
5. Significant infrastructural deficits (especially with regards to roads and electricity).
6. The presence of administrative and trade barriers that curtail capacity building and inhibit access to technical support.
7. Absence of pro-active regulatory environment that encourages innovative enterprise development at the grassroots level.
8. Lack of funds for teaching in practical terms entrepreneurship education, for financing start-ups and expansion of business ventures in order to produce successful entrepreneurs.

### **Benefits of Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education empowers the youth to be entrepreneurs and turn hard times of life into better ones that is filled with opportunities. Olawolu and Kaegon (2012) observed that entrepreneurship education prepares youths to be responsible entrepreneurial thinkers by exposing them to real life learning experiences; where they will be required to think, take risks, manage circumstances

and incidentally learn from the outcome. Uduanochie (2015) observes the following as benefits of entrepreneurship education

- **Entrepreneurship education is the key driver of the economy:** Wealth and a high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneur – minded individuals; many of whom go on to create big businesses. People exposed to entrepreneurship frequently have more opportunity to exercise creative freedoms, higher self-esteem and an overall greater sense of control over their own lives.
- **Entrepreneurship education is a lifelong process:** Starting as early as elementary school and progressing through all levels of education. The standards and their supporting performance indicators are a framework for teachers to use in building appropriate objectives, learning activities and assessments for their largest audience. Using this framework, students will have progressively more challenging educational activities experiences that will enable them to develop the insight needed to discover and create entrepreneurial opportunities and the expertise to successfully start and manage their own businesses to take advantage of these opportunities.

- **The importance of entrepreneurship to any economy is like that of entrepreneurship to any community:** A persons who has entrepreneurial skills, will recognize a genuine opportunity when he/she come across one. Entrepreneurial skills and attitude provide benefits to the society, even beyond their application to business activity. Personal qualities such as creativity and a spirit of initiative can be useful to everyone in their working responsibilities and daily existence.
- **Entrepreneurship plays an important role in employment generation, especially in developing economics:** It serves as a foundation for the supply of potential entrepreneurs who are always ready to explore new ideas at the slightest opportunity.

### **Concept of Community Development**

Community development can be defined from three perspectives, namely, as a movement, as a process of social action and as an educational process. For the purpose of this discourse, community development is defined as a process of social action in which the people of a community organize themselves for planning an action, define their goals, make plans to meet their needs and execute this plans relying mainly on their community resources. It can also be defined as a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation,

and if possible on the initiative of the community members. Community development involves a number of social actions and activities which are sequentially arranged in order to improve people living conditions in various perspectives in communities in the society. Essentially, community development focuses on identification of community needs or problems, prioritizing these identified needs, planning to actualize them, implementing the plan, management and evaluation of the task at hand.

While commenting on community development as a process of social action, UNESCO in Onyenemezu and Olumati (2013) defines community development as: the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate those communities into the life of the nation and to enable them contribute fully to national progress.

In the above definition, community development simply means the process in which community members unite with those of governmental authorities, non-governmental organization (NGO's), corporate organizations etc to improve people living in human environment all ramifications. This plays important roles in improving people's socio-economic, political cultural and environmental conditions.

### **Entrepreneurship Education for Effective Community Development**

Entrepreneurship education is considered a strong tool for effective community development. This is so because youth who come from various communities are participants in entrepreneurship education and their primary reason for participating is to gain new skills or relevant knowledge in order to establish a new business initiative with the intention of generating income and employment opportunities in order to enable them to contribute meaningfully to community development activities in their various communities. An entrepreneur according to Willy (2019) is a person who instead of working as an employee establishes and operates a business assuming all the risks and rewards of the venture. Okei (2019) submits that experience and literature have shown that most Nigerian graduates are theoretical and not practical oriented. They lack entrepreneurship skills. A practical engineer has to be creative and innovative to be an employer of labour, likewise other professions to ensure effective community development.

### **Conclusion**

Unemployment in a developing country like Nigeria is a bad signal that could create a barrier to growth and achievement of developmental goals. It is associated with frustration, depression dejection, hostility and dependency on family members and friends. This has equally made some of the unemployed youths in the communities to be involved in all kinds of criminal and anti-social activities and thereby constituting constraints to community and national



development. Entrepreneurship education is a powerful recipe for effective community development delivery. Entrepreneurship education provides and equips individuals in communities with the ability to recognize business opportunities or become an innovator and develop new product, new market or a new means of production. The practical knowledge of entrepreneurship training better prepare school leavers for transition from school to the labour market, enabling them to identify business opportunities and improve their chances of success and self investment ventures in their various communities.

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