

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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## **Abstract**

Entrepreneurship education is an indispensable asset through which a nation can effectively realize its goals and objectives for national development. It is an essential instrument available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development that would guarantee steady income, fight against poverty and provide psychological fulfillment and self-actualization.

## **Concept of Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education is a vital instrument for economic development. It unlocks the industrial potentials of youths, empowers and equips the youths with skills, knowledge and attitudes to participate and benefit from the economy, facilitate industrial development and provide the basis for economic transformation. The successful implementation of entrepreneurship education will fight against poverty, guarantee steady income, provide psychological fulfillment and self-actualization. Odei (2010) defined entrepreneurship education as that aspect of education that develops the insight needed by individuals to discover and create business opportunities and the expertise to successfully start and manage their own businesses and to take advantage of these opportunities.

Entrepreneurship education will equip the youths with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to establish their businesses and become self-employed. Okafor, (2011) viewed entrepreneurship education as the educational training for the acquisition of knowledge, skills

and attitudes for successful formation of business enterprises. Akintola (2002) in support of the view, defined entrepreneurship education as a programme that prepares individuals to acquire knowledge and skills to undertake the formation and operation of small business enterprises.

Entrepreneurship education educates individuals on how to take business risks, mobilize business resources, provide jobs, introduce innovation and create economic activities. Akpan (2011) also defined entrepreneurship education as the training of individuals to acquire the ability to recognize business opportunities and have insight, self esteem, knowledge, business attitudes and skills to invest. Effective implementation of entrepreneurship education will lead to the most desired industrial revolution in Nigeria which would turn around the Nigerian economy for sustainable development and self-reliance. Entrepreneurship education may therefore, be defined as a specialized training programme for the acquisition of skills, attitudes, managerial abilities and capabilities for investment. It is the education that equips individuals with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes towards economic transformation and self-actualization.

## **Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education**

The objectives of entrepreneurship education include the following;

- ❖ To produce graduates with skills that will meet the manpower needs of the society.
- ❖ To provide meaningful education for youths that would make them to be self-reliant.
- ❖ To produce graduates with training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.
- ❖ To provide graduates with the training, skills and the support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium scale businesses.
- ❖ To produce graduates with enough training that will make them become creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities.
- ❖ To stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed areas.

#### **Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education is fraught with many challenges such as;

- ❖ **Inadequate Qualified Manpower**  
Competent and qualified entrepreneurial skill teachers with sufficient tutelage and pedagogy to impart the required skills in entrepreneurship education are inadequate in the nations institutions of learning due to poor incentives and remunerations from government ministries and agencies. They are either employed in big companies or self-employed. These non motivational attitudes by the government lead to the employment of unqualified and ill-skilled entrepreneurial teachers in the avoid the use of personal pronouns school system.
- ❖ **Inadequate Training Facilities**  
Entrepreneurial training in Nigeria is fraught with inadequate training facilities. Entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, capacities and competencies will not be effectively acquired and

utilized when learning environment is not equipped with training facilities similar to industrial or business environment. This would in turn affect the successful acquisition and implementation of entrepreneurial education.

- ❖ **Inadequate Funding**

Adequate fund is required for the implementation of entrepreneurial education and absence of fund hampers the achievement of the objectives of the programme. Despite this, there is always government's non-challant attitude towards funding of entrepreneurial education. When fund is approved, it is always not released on time and when it is released, there will be demand for a "kickback" thereby resulting to insufficient fund for the training.

- ❖ **Poor Implementation of Government Policies**

Successive Nigerian governments only pay lip service and inadequate attention to the development of entrepreneurship skills acquisition which is the engine room for youths empowerment. Government gives less attention to the monitoring and implementation of entrepreneurial policies in the country thereby rendering the objectives of the programme ineffective.

- ❖ **Poor Relationship between Institutions and Industries**

One of the greatest challenges to the progress and development of laudable entrepreneurial education is the failure of industries to accept students on industrial attachment to acquire the needed practical experience. None acceptance of students by the industries to undergo industrial attachment will not pave way for successful career development for youths and to guarantee a knowledge work force and self-reliance which are the secrets of economic success. Godfrey (2002) emphasized that nothing synthesizes education and job

performance better than a dose of reality in the intern. When industries and institutions are not doing the training together, the outcome would not be synergistic. Youths would also not be motivated to undertake business risks and set up businesses after graduation.

❖ **Diversification and Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum**

Entrepreneurship education curriculum is not yet diversified in content and learning experiences in order to accommodate diverse professional needs and interest groups. The curriculum does not emphasize the content to be taught at the secondary school level, colleges of education, polytechnics and universities. The curriculum does not emphasize entrepreneurship education as a professional course to prepare the youths to meet the current technological needs of the society with the philosophy for useful living, employment and the needed human qualities in the industrial world.

**Prospects of Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education is designed to equip the youths with relevant skills and attitudes to become creative, productive and wealthy as well as to become self-employed, self-sustaining, self-reliant and to contribute effectively and efficiently to the development of the nation. The prospects of entrepreneurship education to the development of the nation include;

❖ **Creation of Job Opportunities**

Entrepreneurship education is an essential instrument for positive socio-economic transformation because it has the ability of producing literate skills, healthy and self-reliant citizens that would create wealth for sustainable development. Entrepreneurial education empowers the youths with skills, competencies and managerial dexterity to create jobs for themselves and become self-reliant after

graduation thereby reducing unemployment in the country. Agetue and Nnamdi (2011) confirmed that self-employment and job creation elements inherent in entrepreneurship education frontally tackle the spate of unemployment which impedes sustainable development. Entrepreneurship education provides job for the unemployed and reduces crime and contribute to sustainable development.

❖ **Poverty Alleviation**

When youths are empowered through the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, there is a tendency for using the skills acquired to create avenue for wealth through performance of various types of jobs that would alleviate poverty among youths. The acquisition of these skills would enable youths to invest in small businesses and earn steady income that would enable them meet the societal needs and escape from the blight of absolute poverty. Entrepreneurship education has the capacity of reducing poverty through creation of jobs thereby increasing the standard of living of individuals.

❖ **Formation of Business Attitudes**

Entrepreneurship education inculcates in youths the necessary knowledge, behaviours and business attitudes needed for successful business formation. It surveys and reveals the desirable business behaviours and knowledge, habits and attitudes needed to control business performance. Akpan (2010) confirmed that entrepreneurship education equips the youths with desirable social and cultural behaviours and sufficient methods of distribution of goods and services to consumers.

❖ **Consumer Education**

Entrepreneurship education educates individuals in the development of consumer businesses and socio-economic competencies

for them to be more intelligent consumers of goods and services provided by business and to develop better understanding of individual relationship with business and their place in the socio-economic system. Entrepreneurship educates individuals on the consumption of goods and services and fosters conservation and discourages exploitation which could deter the socio-economic development of the society. It educate the youths on the insurable and uninsurable risks and efficient ways of management. Knowledge of entrepreneurship education helps to serve individuals in making adjustments in the economic arena.

❖ **Provision of Manpower Needs**

Entrepreneurship education is the most potent instrument for positive socio-economic transformation. It provide the youths with relevant skills, innovative ideas and business attitudes necessary for self-reliance, employers of labour and to become productive members of the society which are the necessary ingredients for socio-economic development. Adeola and Oviawe (2009) confirmed that there is a strong relationship between economic development of a nation and its entrepreneurship education. It was on this basis that Zimmere and Scarborough (2005) concluded that entrepreneurship education is the most important means for economic development of any nation. The resources that would have been lying idle or rotting away would be effectively utilized through the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and creative innovative ideas.

❖ **Career Choice Information**

Entrepreneurship equips the youths with educational experiences and abilities that would enable them make intelligent occupational decisions acquire specialization and to progress in their chosen areas. It equips the youths with the ability to make realistic decisions on a successful and satisfying career for economic

survival. Mebaane (2001) confirmed that career education guide individuals to fit into the job opportunities available within the system. Entrepreneurship education equips the youths with a wide range of occupational opportunities where choice of life career would be made.

**Way Forward for Sustainable Development**

Entrepreneurship education need to be strengthened and made active source of youth empowerment and self-reliance.

❖ **Recruitment of Qualified Manpower**

Adequate and qualitative manpower with well tutelage and pedagogy in teaching should be recruited to teach the needed skills, knowledge and attitudes required to meet the technological changes in the industrial world.

❖ **Adequate Provision of Training Facilities**

Provision of enough training facilities such as text books, journals and other instructional materials needed for teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education should always be made available to institutions offering entrepreneurship education to aid both the trainers and the trainees to achieve their goals and objectives.

❖ **Positive Attitude**

Government should change their non-challant attitudes towards funding entrepreneurship education and release fund on time for the procurement of equipment and facilities needed in schools. Government should always make enough budgetary allocation to schools since entrepreneurship education is capital intensive to make the recipients benefit maximally from the training.

❖ **Cordial Relationship Between Institution and Industry**

There should be cordial relationship between entrepreneurship education and industries. Operators of industries should always allow students to expose themselves to practical work experience through industrial attachment in their respective industries in order to enable them acquire proficiency in their respective field of endeavour. Theory alone would not make for the desired level of proficiency required for self-reliant and sustainable development.

❖ **Curriculum Diversification**

Entrepreneurship education curriculum should be diversified in content to accommodate diverse professional needs and interest groups in the society. The curriculum should emphasize entrepreneurship training as a course with the philosophy for sustainable living and the needed human qualities in the industrial world.

**Conclusion**

Entrepreneurship education needs to be strengthened and made an active source of youth empowerment and self-reliance. This would successfully guarantee steady income, fight poverty and provide psychological fulfillment and self-actualization.

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