

---

# TOWARDS TRANSFORMATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITIES IN BAYELSA STATE: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

---

**By**

Dr. Cecilia Timiniebipa A. Timi-Johnson,  
*Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education,  
Sagbama,  
Bayelsa State.*

**And**

Dr. Richard Bodi Aloba  
*Registry Department  
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education,  
Sagbama,  
Bayelsa State.*

## **Abstract**

*The study investigated transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. The study employed two research questions and research hypotheses. The sample size consisted of 1,014 respondents which represent 5% of a population of 20,270 in two higher institutions in Bayelsa State; the participants were also selected using sample random sampling technique in the study. Instrument for data collection was Towards Transformation of Entrepreneurship Education in Universities in Bayelsa State Questionnaire (TTEEUQ). To validate the research instrument, the researcher presented the questionnaire items to two experts in the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education of the University of Port Harcourt for scrutiny. A reliability coefficient index of 0.90 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and rank order level of significance for the Z-statistics at 0.05 level of significance for the hypothesis were used. The study revealed that transformation of entrepreneurship education exposed undergraduate and the higher institutions on the require steps to create entrepreneurship awareness*

*and encouraging students to self-employment as well as inculcating a positive attitude towards business start-up and training for risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy. The study recommended that, for actualization of the transformation of entrepreneurship education for national priority, it is important that higher institutions should device a strategy to assist the undergraduate that indicated interest to start business or enterprise while in school and after graduation through inculcating programme or partner with firms to assist.*

Education has been defined in various ways as the aggregate of processes through which an individual acquires knowledge values, attitude and all other forms of behavior that are of positive value to the society to which a person belongs or as the process of learning to live as a useful and acceptable member of the community. According to Frackmann (2003) cited in Onyilofor, (n.d.) education provides employers and society in general with graduates of specific fields. It is a process of helping students develop, acquire skills and knowledge that will help them become somebody in life. Thus, according to Agi and Yellowe (2013) education is important to the development of human resources, impartation of appropriate skills, knowledge and attitude. It is the basis for transformation, industrialization and a high way to global knowledge economy.

Higher education has the main responsibility for equipping students with the advanced knowledge and skill required for professions. World Bank (2006) cited in Onyilofor (n.d) higher education is a place where the frontier of knowledge is developed through practical work and exercise. The entire intellectual and professional life of a country depends on sound higher education, especially tertiary education that provides quality products (graduates) of international standard for high productivity. Indeed, higher education is a crucial arena of transformation and imperative to economic and social transformation, bringing development to a society.

Quite recently, a number of higher educational institutions in Nigeria including Universities and Polytechnics have started offering entrepreneurship education to their students as a way of transformation and creating awareness and encouraging students to consider self-employment as a career option. Entrepreneurship dwells on basic concepts and precepts such as vision, change, opportunity seeking, creativity, innovation, risk taking and ability to manage activities in order to achieve specified objectives. These principles form an integral part of human activities in the home, at the work place and in other places of human socialization, although the extent and intensity of applicability may be higher in one setting than the other (Mavis, 2013). Entrepreneurship education is a catalyst in the reduction of unemployment in Nigeria.

People exposed to entrepreneurship frequently express that they have more opportunity to exercise creative freedoms, higher self-esteem, and an overall greater sense of control over their own lives. As a result, many experience business people, political leaders, economists, and educators believe that fostering a robust entrepreneurial culture will maximize individual and collective economic and social success on a local, national, and global scale (Isaac, 2013).

Based on the above, entrepreneurship education is seen as a distinct social institution that seeks the establishment and maintenance of a functioning economy through job creation with a wide range of interest put into consideration especially as regards unemployment reduction (Ekundayo and Babatunde, 2014). Entrepreneurship education is an orientation that seeks to transform graduates from job seekers into job creators in order to reduce graduate unemployment and it increases students' interest in entrepreneurship as a career. The rationale for introducing entrepreneurship course in universities curricular development is to help the students to acquire increased understanding of entrepreneurship. The focus is to equip them with relevant skills and competences that prepare the students to become entrepreneurs and managers of new businesses soon after graduation in order to increase their household income (Gerald, 2014).

However, promoting entrepreneurship education in higher education, particularly within the small, micro, and medium enterprises (SMME) sector, is identified as an imperative and transformative for development in Nigeria (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2011) cited in Richard (2013). As such, this has led to the call to transform the higher education sector to accommodate entrepreneurship education by making it a core course irrespective of discipline or field. This introduction and implementation of entrepreneurship education had transformed the initial orientation of higher institutions preparing undergraduate students for white collar job to be self-employed. Government and educationist have seen the need of training students to be self-employed and employer of labour as a key national priority, especially to arrest joblessness resulting to social vices and societal unrest. Mavis (2013) asserted the positive impact of entrepreneurship courses and programmes in higher education, on the employability of graduates, and on society and the economy (specifically employment, innovation and welfare effects) has well been established and acknowledged across the globe. Through such education, persons are better prepared to unleash their entrepreneurial potentials.

Studies, especially in developed countries have examined the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in academic institutions and confirmed the enormous benefits associated with it. These studies have found that the field of entrepreneurship has contributed largely to the transformation of many developed economies. Entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in sustaining the level of development already achieved and aiding further development. In developing countries,

entrepreneurship education is viewed as the key that unlocks the door to modernization as a determinant of all aspects of change (Smile, 2014).

Gerald (2014) on the study on evaluating entrepreneurship education as a tool for economic growth: the Ghanaian experience, revealed that entrepreneurship courses are important and have a significant effect on reducing graduate unemployment. Most graduates study the course (entrepreneurship) because it is perceived to be the most appropriate means to job creation leading to economic development. Similarly, Richard, Kwabena and Gabriel (2015) on their study on factors that impact on entrepreneurial intention of tertiary students in Ghana. The study revealed that all the factors were significant indicators of entrepreneurial intention of students. According to the study if a tertiary institution provides adequate knowledge and inspiration for entrepreneurship, the possibility of choosing an entrepreneurial career might increase among students after graduation. It is obvious that this result confirms the key role of education in the development of entrepreneurial intention. Therefore it might be stated that entrepreneurship can be enhanced as a result of a learning process.

Ekundayo and Babatunde (2014) on the study on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions among Nigerian undergraduates. The study revealed that there is a strong relationship between students' exposure to entrepreneurship education and their intentions to becoming self-employed. This was observed as majority of respondents in the study indicated their willingness and believed they have developed capacity to establish their own business based on the fact that they have benefited from entrepreneurship courses offered in the University.

Edem and Adjimah (2013) studied entrepreneurship training and capacity building of Ghanaian polytechnic graduates. In contrast, the study found rather a weaker link between the entrepreneurship development course of the polytechnic and preparedness of grandaunts to create businesses, at least from the student perspective. Few agreed that the knowledge and the skills acquired have developed their capacity to create businesses. Of course, the study also revealed counter evidence of increasing student interest in entrepreneurship.

However, the National Youth Service Corps office in 2013 estimated that, for the last five years, between 2008 and 2013 about 108,000 graduates each year have been given discharge certificates after their one year service to the nation. At the end of the day, less than 12 percent of the graduates were given jobs while about 88 percent remain unemployed. Hence, entrepreneurship education may be the absolute panacea to youth unemployment.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite, the introduction of entrepreneurship education to benefit individuals, government and the society at large through Nigerian universities, many graduates still

remain unemployed for a long time after graduation. As graduate unemployment rate in Nigeria continues to rise, one wonders what could be responsible for this. This scenario of unemployment will lead to illegal acts of hostage-taking, kidnapping, bombing and vandalism and homelessness. One question that runs across the minds of the public, is the goals of the entrepreneurship education not clear enough for higher institutions of learning? Or is the curriculum design not capturing the objectives of entrepreneurship education? This study seeks to investigate towards transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to investigate steps required for transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. Specifically, there are other objectives:

1. To find out the steps require for transforming entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.
2. To examine the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

### **Research questions**

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions are designed:

1. What are the steps require for transforming entrepreneurship education in universities?
2. What are the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

Based on the research questions for the study, the following research hypotheses are tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of academic staff and undergraduate on the steps require for transforming entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of academic staff and undergraduate on the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

### **Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The descriptive research involves collecting data from the existing situation without manipulating the study subject in order to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses concerning the current status of the subject of study or for the purpose of describing existing conclusion.

### **Population**

The population consisted of all the final year students in two higher institutions in Bayelsa State. The population of this study consists of twenty thousand, two hundred and seventy (20,270) respondents obtained in two higher institutions in Bayelsa State. There are twelve thousand, six hundred and eighty (12,680) students and teaching staff of eight hundred and thirty (830) in Federal University Otuoke; while in Niger Delta University (NDU), there are six thousand two hundred and forty (6240) students and teaching staff of five hundred and twenty (520). The total number of students was eighteen thousand nine hundred and twenty (18,920) and teaching staff of one thousand three hundred and fifty (1,350). **Source:** Pay roll unit of the bursary department of the Federal and State Universities, 2013; and students' admission list between 2011-2013).

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample size of 1014 respondents represents 5% of the population of 20,270. The study employed stratified sampling technique for the selection of the respondents. The respondents were also selected using random sampling method of balloting without replacement. This gave all respondents equal chance of being selected for the study. The strata comprise of students and academic staff. The students selected were 664 while the academic staff was 350 for the study.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument was a well structured questionnaire titled Towards Transformation of Entrepreneurship Education in Universities in Bayelsa state Questionnaire (TTEEUQ). The questionnaire which contained 11 items was divided into sections A and B. Section A, elicited information on the demographic background while section B dealt with issues towards transformation of entrepreneurship education in Universities. This section is structured on a modified likert four-point rating scale; that is:

Strongly Agree (SA)	-	4 points
Agree (A)	-	3 points
Disagree (D)	-	2 points
Strongly Disagree (SD)	-	1 point

To get the criterion mean for scoring the questionnaire, all the points of the alternative responses was added up and divided by 4, that is  $(4+3+2+1)/4 = 10/4 = 2.50$ . Therefore any mean value that is 2.50 and above was accepted and anyone below it (2.50) was rejected.

### **Validity**

To validate the research instrument, the researcher presented the questionnaire items to two experts in the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education of University of Port Harcourt for scrutiny. Also, all the corrections and observations made were incorporated into the final draft.

**Reliability**

To ensure the reliability, the instrument was administered to 10 respondents outside the study area. After two weeks, the same instrument was administered to the same respondents. The scores obtained were collated and computed using the statistical method known as Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The reliability coefficient index for the study was determined at 0.90.

**Administration of instrument**

The researcher administered one thousand and fourteen (1014) instruments for the participants and was able to retrieve 950 instruments.

**Method of data analysis**

The research questions were analyzed with the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation (SD) and rank order statistics while the hypotheses formulated were tested with the z-test analysis of 0.05 level of significance .

**Presentation and Analysis of data**

**Research Question 1:** What are the steps required for the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities?

**Table 1: Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ),SD and rank order of respondents' scores on the steps required for the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities**

S/N	Items	Under-graduate N= 630	Academic N= 320	Weighted mean	Rank Order	Remark
		$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$			
1	Graduate with the training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size business.	2.92	2.69	2.81	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
2	Graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.	2.99	2.92	2.96	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
3	Graduate with adequate training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities	2.72	2.83	2.78	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
4	The curriculum must be designed to focus on more on practice than theoretical.	3.08	2.84	2.96	1st	Agreed
5	Functional education that will make graduate self-reliance.	2.69	2.73	2.71	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed

From table 1, the high mean scores ranging from 2.96 to 2.71 indicates that all the items identified were accepted as steps require for the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. Hence, the mean scores were

above the criterion mean. It is evident that, graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy, and the curriculum must be designed to focus on more on practice than theoretical had the high weight mean score from the respondents. In summary, the items identify were gear towards transforming entrepreneurship education in higher education with national goal as a priority.

**Research Question 2:** What are the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State?

**Table 2: Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), SD and rank order of respondents' scores on the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities**

S/N	Items	Under-graduate N= 630	Academic N= 320	Weighted mean	Rank Order	Remark
		$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$			
6	Students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship.	3.21	2.94	3.08	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
7	Inappropriate syllabus and contents for entrepreneurship education.	3.12	2.97	3.05	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agreed
8	Inappropriate teaching methods	3.08	2.64	2.98	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
9	Lack of entrepreneurial supports	2.68	2.86	2.77	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
10	Students' lack of exposure	2.75	2.73	2.74	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
11	Lack of research and experimentation in entrepreneurship before introduction and implementation.	2.73	2.88	2.69	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed

From table 2, the high mean scores ranging from 3.08 to 2.69 indicates that all the items identified were accepted as challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. Hence, the mean scores were above the criterion mean. It is evident that, Students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship and inappropriate syllabus and contents for entrepreneurship education had the higher weight mean score from the respondents. In summary, the items identify gear towards the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in higher education.



**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of academic staff and undergraduate on the steps require for transforming entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

**Table 3: Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation, and Z-statistic on the steps required for transforming entrepreneurship education in universities.**

	N	$\bar{X}$	Std	Z-cal	Z-cri	DF	Decision
Academic staff	320	2.81	0.89	1.16	$\pm 1.96$	948	H <sub>0</sub> was accepted
undergraduate	630	2.88	0.87				

**Note: Level of significance = 0.05; N=950**

The table revealed that the Z-calculated value of 1.16 is less than the Z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$  at 0.05 level of significance with the degree of freedom of 948. The null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of undergraduate and academic staff on the steps require for transforming entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of academic staff and undergraduate on the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

**Table 4: Mean, standard deviation, and Z-statistic on challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities**

	N	$\bar{X}$	Std	Z-cal	Z-cri	DF	Decision
Academic Staff	320	2.84	0.90	0.98	$\pm 1.96$	948	H <sub>0</sub> was accepted
Undergraduate	630	2.93	0.86				

**Note: Level of significance = 0.05; N=950**

The table revealed that the Z-calculated value of 0.98 is less than the Z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$  at 0.05 level of significance with the degree of freedom of 948. The null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of undergraduate and academic staff on the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study revealed that the items identify were geared towards transforming entrepreneurship education in higher institutions in Bayelsa State. For transformation of entrepreneurship education, the curriculum must be designed to focus on more on practice than theoretical. According to Francis and Uke (2015) assert that there is a missing link in the National Universities Commission (NUC) policy on entrepreneurship education with the absence of a standard curriculum and course outline/content to guide and develop entrepreneurship in the Universities, since entrepreneurship education in Nigeria schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities is not given serious attention it

deserves. Therefore there should be a systematic coordinated planning and implementation carried at producing well course structured, teaching contents, methods and materials.

Also, graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy. If graduates are truly committed to their own real ideas and can actually be entrepreneur rather than jobs seeker after graduation, the goal and objectives of entrepreneurship education would be achieved with national objectives. The study have hypothesis which state that there is no significance difference between the mean scores of academic staff and undergraduate on the steps require for transforming of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. This finding agreed with Ekundayo and Babatunde (2014) which revealed that there is a strong relationship between students' exposure to entrepreneurship education and their intentions to becoming self-employed. This was observed as majority of respondents in the study indicated their willingness and believed they have developed capacity to establish their own business based on the fact that they have benefited from entrepreneurship courses offered in Landmark University.

The study revealed that the items identify were challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. Thus, lack of undergraduate students' interest in entrepreneurship is one of the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education programme in Bayelsa State and Nigeria at large. If the attitude of undergraduate students toward embracing entrepreneurship education is positive, it becomes a step to the right direction. Many graduates have to come to terms with the reality of non-existence of white collar jobs. This will lead to a drive for entrepreneurship among undergraduate students in Nigeria. The finding also have hypothesis which stated that there is no significance difference between the mean scores of academic staff and undergraduate on the challenges facing the transformation of entrepreneurship education in universities in Bayelsa State. The finding agreed with Edem and Adjimah (2013) who found that there is a weaker link between the entrepreneurship development course of the polytechnic and preparedness of grandaunts to create businesses, at least from the student perspective.

## **Conclusion**

Transformation of entrepreneurship education exposed undergraduates and the higher institutions on the require steps to create entrepreneurship awareness and encouraging students to self-employment as well as inculcating a positive attitude towards business start-up and training for risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy. However, in order for positive transformation of entrepreneurship education to be successful, certain potential challenges facing the successful transformation of the high career aspirations and overwhelming positive attitude towards business start-up have to be addressed.

### **Recommendations**

1. For actualization of the transformation of entrepreneurship education for national priority, it is important that higher institutions should devise a strategy to assist the undergraduate that indicated interest to start business or enterprise while in school and after graduation through inculcating programme or partner with firms to assist.
2. Entrepreneurship education curriculum for higher institutions should be designed to promote human empowerment and development through entrepreneurial skill acquisition. It is a platform of reducing unemployment since it is skilled oriented and self-employment motivated. All school programmes should be geared toward providing entrepreneurial skills.
3. In order to bring transformation of entrepreneurship education into the society, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) programme should shift from initial orientation of social integration and culture acceptance to practical vocational education. This will help enhance self-reliance and reduces chronic unemployment in Nigeria.
4. Undergraduate should have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education to start-up of business and receive adequate training for risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.

### **References**

- Agi U.K. and Yellowe N.A. (2013). Management Strategies for Regenerating Secondary Education for National Development and Self-Reliance. *Journal of Teacher Perspective (JOTEP)* 7(2). Association of Nigerian Teachers (ASSONT) Calabar.
- Edem, M.A. and Adjimah, P.H. (2013). Entrepreneurship Training and Capacity Building of Ghanaian Polytechnic Graduates. *International Review of Management and Marketing* Vol. 3(3):102-111. [www.econjournals.com](http://www.econjournals.com)
- Ekundayo, B.B. and Babatunde, E.D. (2014). The Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intentions among Nigerian Undergraduates. *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature (IMPACT: IJRHAL)*. Vol. 2(11): 15-26
- Frackman, E. (2003). *Higher Education Information systems*. A Proposal for an over all concept for Higher Education System in Croatia.
- Francis, I.O. and Uke, A. F. (2015). Entrepreneurial Education: A panacea for youth unemployment in Nigeria. *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research*. Vol.3(5):11-22.

- Gerald, D.G. (2014). Evaluating Entrepreneurship Education as a Tool for Economic Growth: The Ghanaian Experience. *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*. Vol. 4(3): 318-335.
- Isaac, O. (2013) Entrepreneurship education: A study of selected private higher educational institutions in Ghana. *Issues in Business Management and Economics* Vol.1 (8):200-207,
- Mavis, S.B.M. (2013). Entrepreneurship Education on Wholesale? Considerations on Didactics and Pedagogy for Enhanced Graduate Employment in Ghana. *European Journal of Business and Management*.Vol.5 (15): 105-113. [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)
- Onyilofor, F.N.C. (n.d.). *Transformation and entrepreneurship education of the special needs students in Nigerian higher education: counseling implication*. Department of Educational Foundations (Guidance and Counseling Unit) Faculty of Education University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria.
- Richard, S. (2013). Barriers to Student Entrepreneurship in South Africa. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*. Vol. 5 (7): 449-459.
- Richard, D., Kwabena, A. and Gabriel, E. N. (2015). Factors that Impact on Entrepreneurial Intention of Tertiary Students in Ghana. *International Journal of Business and Social Research*. Vol.5(3):19-29.
- Smile, D. (2014). Entrepreneurship Education: Towards an Innovative Approach. *Journal of Education and Practice*. Vol.5(20). [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)