

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT, POVERTY REDUCTION AMONG WOMEN IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOKOTO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education is introduced into Nigeria educational system to provide the necessary skills, competence, understanding, and prepare the Nigerian graduate for self-reliant, thereby contributing in nation building. This paper examines the effect of entrepreneurship education and employment, poverty reduction among women in tertiary institutions in sokoto state. The research design adopted for this research was survey research design. The population of this study is made up of all women in tertiary institutions in Sokoto state. The sampling adopted was simple random sampling technique. The sample of this study is made up of three hundred and seventy nine respondents randomly selected from ten tertiary institutions in the state. The main instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire and in-depth interview designed by the researcher. The items in the questionnaire were drawn in reflection of the hypotheses generated by the variables under study. The instrument was validated by experts in research and statistics. The reliability of the instrument was obtained by pilot testing using sixty women whom are not part of the sample. Data obtained for analyses was obtained through self-administered questionnaires. In addition, the data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. The qualitative data collected was analyzed through thematic analysis by coding and transcription. The major findings of the study were: entrepreneurship education has significant effect on women employment; entrepreneurship education has significant effect on poverty reduction. The study recommends that: Government through the centre for entrepreneurship development should work in collaboration with the existing entrepreneurs/business organizations around them in providing entrepreneurship training to students in order for them to develop self-employment initiatives. the school management through centre for entrepreneurship development should always organize an exhibition programme on academic session basis, inviting stakeholders both from the public and private sector to evaluate students entrepreneurial activities.

The importance of education in the development activities of any nation cannot be overemphasized. Education is generally acknowledged as the panacea for socio-economic development in any country. Indeed the development of education sector is sine-qua non for the development in all other sectors of the economy. In the same line of reasoning Sule, (2004) stresses that education is a sure pathway to liberation of the mind and the improvement of socio-economic development in any nation.

In line with the principle above, many governments and international agencies are constantly making serious efforts in both developed and developing countries to develop the education sector. Although a number of achievements have been made in this regard in Nigeria, a lot still needs to be done to meet the ever increasing demands and challenges posed by rising unemployment amongst its people. Under the present circumstances the need for education as a driver of development has become self-evident and inescapable. When people are poorly trained or are without skills, then education has failed to serve effectively as a growth driver (Obandan, 2013).

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education has been defined by Alberti, Sciacia and Poli (2004) as a structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurship competencies which carries with it the concept of skills and mental awareness which are needed to understand the functioning of an already existing business. Studies of Alberti and Sciacia (2004) have equally laid great emphasis on the benefits of entrepreneurship education to include acquisition of skills, abilities and competencies that yield self-reliance and in turn play a major role in societal development.

Entrepreneurship education, therefore, occurs when an individual or group initiate(s) approach in the market place to the provision of a product or service by using resources in a new way under condition of risks, it implies venture. Therefore, entrepreneurship education as used in this study refers to a planned leading/learning process leading to it. The acquisition of skills, ability, competence which equip the recipients with initiative, creativity, risk taking ability, enthusiasm, independence, vision for business venture.

Patterson (2006) submitted that, the massive unemployment that has designed Nigerian women has made entrepreneurship key to survival in the present economy. Entrepreneurship education is about transforming an idea into reality. Entrepreneurship initiative exist in every individual and most people have the ability to start a business, it may be dormant, but needs to be activated. This can be achieved through core knowledge about starting a business in following entrepreneurship spirit, the women needs specific and general instruction in business disciplines using appropriate teaching methods such as case studies, internships and study projects. This will enable the women to identify business opportunities and develop entrepreneurial ability. This is followed by implementation plans/activities. After this, you then evaluate and monitor some aspects as profit, number of employees, and identify aspects that need improvement and restructuring. Then you determine experience needed, such as re-training, further education, strengthening publicity and seeking for sponsorship.

An Overview of the Concept of Employment and Unemployment

According to Gbosi (2005), employment is defined as, when collectively specified or not collectively specified, the total number of persons 15 years and above who are employed in civilian occupations. With this, Gbosi is agreeing that employment is associated with those who are, at least, 15 years of age. However, this definition fails to give the upper age limit for those who may be considered employed. According to National Bureau of Statistics(NBS, 2015), a person is considered employed if he or she is engaged in the production of goods and services, thereby contributing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in legitimate manner, which is a component of the national

account and receives any form or amount of money for that activity. The Bureau goes further to state that for a person to be considered employed, he or she must work full time, i.e. at least, 40 hours, on average, a week. This is a more comprehensive definition.

According to Badamosi (1999), as cited by Okafor(2014), unemployment refers to a state where able-bodied, qualified men and women are available for and willing to work but get no job to do. In congruent with this is the submission by Collander (2001), also cited by Okafor (2014), that unemployment occurs when people are looking for jobs but cannot find one. In the words of Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa (2011) as cited by Amupitan (2011) unemployment in Nigeria is defined as the proportion of the labour force that was available for work but did not work in the week preceding the survey period by, at least, 39 hours. In line with this, the International Labour Organization (ILO) defined the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but are available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa, 2012).

The NBS (2015) defines unemployment as the proportion of those in the labour force (not in the entire economic active population nor the entire Nigerian population) who were actively looking for work but could not find work for at least 20 hours during the reference period to the total currently active (labour force) population. This means that one is unemployed if he or she did absolutely nothing at all or did something but not for up to 20 hours in a week. In an economy, the unemployment rate is the number of persons unemployed expressed as the percentage of the total labour force. The total labour force is the number of people employed plus the number of people unemployed within the ages of 18-60 years (Idada et al, 2014).

According to Osumah and Osaghae (2008), the level of unemployment rises when the inflow (the newly absorbed) exceeds outflows (persons getting new jobs or quitting the labour force altogether). The different categories of unemployed persons are: sacked people or redundant ones (job losers); temporarily laid off but eventually being retired by the same organization; while some people voluntarily quit their present jobs. Besides, inflow to unemployment can also come from people not previously in the labour force such as school leavers (Idada et al, 2014).

Unemployment occurs when people are without jobs and they have actively sought for jobs within the past four weeks (Okafor, 2011). Unemployment refers to a situation where people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment. Unemployment is a situation in which people who are willing to work at a prevailing wage rate are unable to find jobs. It is one of the macro economic problems which every responsible government is expected to monitor and regulate. The higher the unemployment rate in an economy the higher would be the poverty level and associated challenges. Unemployment is one of the developmental problems that face every developing economy in the 21st century (Patterson, 2006) and Nigeria is not an exception. Its effect is felt more by the youths leading to youth unemployment and restiveness.

A published report from Punch Editorial of June 10, 2003 referred to a report by the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) as saying that universities and other tertiary institutions in the country produce an average of 120,000 graduates each year while another 500,000 school leavers are turned out each year without hope of any job. The agency believes that 50% of the unemployed in the country are youths (The Punch Newspaper, 2003). The level of unemployment is a reflection of the state

economy of the nation. It therefore means that youth unemployment is dependent of the overall status of the economy. Economic activity measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is probably the single factor that most influences the chances of young people finding jobs. Low or negative GDP and low investments are direct causes in the shrinking demand for labour. The disenchantment and frustration of young people is largely due to mass poverty and unemployment and this has increased the number of aggrieved youth (Ibrahim, 2006).

In Nigeria, poverty is concentrated among unemployed youths, small farm households, households headed by informal sector workers, women and elderly persons without social safety nets (Ibrahim, 2006). Poverty is a state of deprivation and is manifested in illiteracy, lack of access to water, poor housing and declining purchasing power. Poverty has deepened in Nigeria since the 80s and many Nigerians, especially women, are worse off today than they were in the 60s. The incidence, depth and severity of poverty have tasked to the limit the ability of the extended family to serve as a safety net to the extent that poverty reduction strategies in the country are synonymous with economic growth and development strategies. Hence poverty reduction is one of the most urgent tasks facing the government. The critical challenge is, first, to have a clear understanding of the specific causes of it, in this case female poverty, at the micro level, and to develop appropriate strategies to reduce – and in the long term eradicate poverty.

Education and training for entrepreneurship is coming up and it is going to take a larger dimension in Nigeria. Women need to be exposed to complete entrepreneurship education courses that will assist to develop entrepreneurial ability of Nigerians, reduce entrepreneurs' ignorance and increase the survival rate of newly established enterprises. Such training is organized by Centre for Management and Development. Individual management consultants also organize seminars and workshops on planning and implementation of entrepreneurship education. In Nigeria, colleges, polytechnics and universities have started fostering entrepreneurship spirit of students by offering entrepreneurship courses and promote cooperation between the industries and universities. In spite of the realization that technical vocational education are indispensable to rapid and sustainable development, various research have shown that there is inadequate basic infrastructure, poor quality manpower, poor students enrolment in these areas, inadequate opportunities for recipients of technical education and inadequate funding in Nigeria,

Theoretical Framework

Human capital theory (HCT): the human capital theory advocates education as a tool for improving human capital, stimulating labour productivity and boosting the levels of technology across the globe (Robert, 2003). Human capital theorist encourage investment in nation's workforce (people working with public and private sector organizations) because expenditure on training and development is a productive investment like investment on physical assets (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008). Beside, human capital enhancement through quality education is a critical factor that propels economic growth and sustainable development in east Africa, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008).

Furthermore, Schumpeter (1934) views entrepreneurship training as responsible for creative destruction, implying that education acts as an impetus for creating new ideas, improved techniques, new technologies and new products. In addition, van-den-

berg (2011) establishes a correlation between the level of education and new products development in knowledge based economies that invested massively in education, technology and related growth elements.

Risk Taking Theory (RTT): Another theory that supports entrepreneurship education is the risk taking theory of Richard Cantillon and John Stuart Mill. The theory perceives entrepreneurship as a mental education that stimulates individuals to take calculated risk for which future stream of benefits are guaranteed and people taking big risk to have to contend with a great responsibility (Alamand Hossan, 2003). The summary of the theory is that entrepreneurship education improves the ability and potentials of individuals to undertake risks for which economic benefits are ensured.

Statement of Problem

In the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report on Nigeria 2000/2001, it is observed that 70% of women are in abject poverty while massive unemployment of women and the under-utilization of the resources are the order of the day. The UNDP Report places Nigeria amongst the countries of the world that recorded the least achievement in the upgrade of the welfare of their citizens (UNDP, 2002). The situation is even worse today that the country is in economic recession.

Statistics on poverty in Nigeria indicate that 70 per cent of poor Nigerians are women. Indeed more than a half of rural women live below the nationally defined poverty line, lacking access to basic education, decent nutrition, adequate health and social services. Nigerian women, like their counterparts in developing countries perform complex multiple roles as mothers, workers and managers of households, taking care of their husbands, children and members of their extended families. They perform the majority of the work in food processing and dominate the rural and urban informal sector activities. Yet less than 20 percent of women own their own farm lands, fewer than 10 percent have access to agricultural inputs and less than 5 percent have access to agricultural credits to enhance their productivity and incomes. Women in the towns are engaged predominantly in the informal sector, in commerce and distributive trade. It is against this background that this study intends to evaluate the impact of entrepreneurship education on women employment, poverty reduction among women in tertiary institutions with a particular reference to Sokotostate.

Research questions

Does entrepreneurship education have significant effect on women employment
To what extent does entrepreneurship education address poverty among women

Research objectives

To find out if entrepreneurship education have significant effect to women employment
To find out to what extent does entrepreneurship education address poverty among women

Research hypotheses

There is no significant effect between entrepreneurship education and women employment

Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this research was survey research design. The population of this is made up of all women in tertiary institutions in Sokoto state. The sampling adopted was simple random sampling technique. The sample of this study is made up of three hundred and seventy nine respondents randomly selected from ten tertiary institutions in the state. The main instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire and in-depth interview designed by the researcher. The items in the questionnaire were drawn in reflection of the hypotheses generated by the variables under study. The instruments were validated by experts in research and statistics. The reliability of the instrument was obtained by pilot testing using sixty women whom are not part of the sample.

Presentation of Result

Hypotheses one

H0₁ *There is no significant effect between entrepreneurship education and women employment*

The hypothesis was tested by subjecting the scores on entrepreneurship educational and women employment to Pearson's correlation analysis as shown in table 1

Table 1: Significant Effect between Entrepreneurship Education and Women Employment

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Women employment	379	20.56	3.64	.230	.000	H ₀ Rejected
Entrepreneurship education	379	17.47	4.68			

From the result of table 1, entrepreneurship educational and women employment were positively related and significant, Pearson's $r(377) = .230$, $p = .000$. This indicates a significant relationship between entrepreneurship educational and women employment because the p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, H0₁ which states that there is no significant effect between entrepreneurship educational and women employment was rejected.

H0₂ *There is no significant effect between entrepreneurship education and poverty among women*

The hypothesis was tested by subjecting the scores on entrepreneurship education and poverty among women to Pearson's correlation analysis as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Significant Effect between Entrepreneurship Education and Poverty Reduction among Women

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Poverty among women	379	19.06	4.08			
Entrepreneurship education	379	17.47	4.68	.392	.000	H ₀ Rejected

From the result of table 2, entrepreneurship education and poverty among women were positively related and significant, Pearson's $r(377) = .392, p = .000$. This indicates a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and poverty among women because the p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, H₀ which states that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and poverty among women was rejected

Major Findings

There is significant effect between entrepreneurship education and women employment. There is significant effect between entrepreneurship education and poverty reduction among women

Discussion of the Major Findings

The findings revealed that entrepreneurship education does have a significance effect with women employment and poverty reduction in Nigeria. But, it does not have a major status because it has not been properly accommodated in the curriculum of Nigerian education system. This is in line with Aladekomo (2003) who opined that Nigerian education system does not encouraged creativity and innovation in students. The National University Commission (NUC) though has been lauded for the introduction of entrepreneurship education to women employment has been emphasized as majority of the respondents positively asserted it. This was affirmed by Alberti and Sciascia(2004) that acquisition of skills, abilities and competencies equip the beneficiary with self-reliance which is necessary for societal development. It would not be out of place to say that Nigeria has embraced the idea of entrepreneurship education as a strategy to address the serious problem of employment and poverty reduction in relation to women.

Conclusion

Nigerian education system should actively embrace and strategically sustain the good spirit of entrepreneurship that has begun. Entrepreneurship education and development in Nigerian education system can take a good root by encouraging the students women in particular replicate the products and production process that have been invented elsewhere in the world while they are told that the ultimate is for them to invent something new that the world can copy. For entrepreneurship to evolve, from the present stage of imitation into critical stage of invention, it requires a favorable entrepreneurship climate. Nigeria as a developing nation is facing many challenges ranging from institutional development to management of its enormous resources for industrialization and sustainable development. Entrepreneurship training will help the very many women in tertiary institutions to create new jobs and start new business on

their own. Entrepreneurship will help to harness women's potentials and channel them to the development of our natural resources. This will industrialize the nation and sustain rapid development. The possibility of Nigeria actualizing her vision at 20:20:20, the seven Point Agenda and some international mandates are assured.

Recommendations

1. Entrepreneurship training should be made compulsory for all students
2. Entrepreneurship facilitators in schools should provide articulated guide to students in the choice of project/business idea to install in the students, continuous interest in the business idea even after school.
3. That the school management through centre for entrepreneurship development should always organize an exhibition programme on academic session basis, inviting stakeholders both from the public and private sector to evaluate students entrepreneurial activities.
4. Government through the centre for entrepreneurship development should work in collaboration with the existing entrepreneurs/business organizations around them in providing entrepreneurship training to students in order for them to develop self-employment initiatives.
5. Adequate funds should be provided; the federal government should adhere to UNESCO recommendation of 26% of the national budget to education.

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