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# **Entrepreneurship Education as a Strategy to Achieve the Seven (7) Point Agenda for National Development in Nigeria**

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By

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## **Abstract**

*The main focus of this paper is on entrepreneurship education as a strategy to achieve the seven (7) point agenda of the current Federal Government of Nigeria for national development. The agenda can be viewed as the main development focus of the government in the country with specific target year of 2015 to achieve them. The areas of focus in the seven (7) point agenda include power and energy, food security, wealth creation, transportation, land reforms and education. This paper specifically focused on the first three (3) in the seven (7) point agenda namely power and energy, food security and wealth creation. The paper examined the strategies of using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria.*

## **Introduction**

The seven (7) point agenda of the present government in Nigeria can simply be described as the main development focus of the Government of Federal Republic of Nigeria by the year 2015. The areas of focus of the of Federal Government of Nigeria are the followings:

1. Power and Energy
2. Food Security
3. Wealth Creation
4. Transportation Sector
5. land Reforms
6. Security
7. Education

**1. Power and Energy:** The concern of both state and federal governments in this current democratic dispensation in Nigeria is to generate adequate power supply for distribution in Nigeria in order to stimulate the development of the economy in the country. Understandably, it is only through adequate power generation and distribution that an efficient industrialized economy in Nigeria capable of competing

favourably with the economies of industrialized countries of the world today can be guaranteed. Aliogo (2009) noted that infrastructural reform in this area is very critical to guarantee enhanced power generation and distribution in Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria should as a matter of urgency allow many entrepreneurs and corporate organizations with the relevant technological knowledge and skills to get into this critical area of power generation and distribution in Nigeria since it is now obvious that the government and Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) cannot do it alone in the country. This must, of course, be approached with a lot of caution in order to guarantee safety of life and property in the country. Indeed, with adequate power generation and distribution in Nigeria, entrepreneurship education can conveniently help many people to acquire the entrepreneurship ability to develop Nigerian economy as a modern economy and industrialized country by the year 2015.

**2. Food Security:** Food security is an important area of focus in the seven (7) point agenda of Federal Government of Nigeria by the 2015. Essentially, food security is agricultural-based initiative to enhance agricultural production in the country. The idea is basically to revolutionize agricultural sector with the ultimate aim of enhancing food production for the teeming population in Nigeria. Indeed, this food security requires the services of modern technology, research and development as well as adequate funding in order to achieve the much desired increase in agricultural production for the teeming population in the country. Aliogo (2009) stated that this will lead to massive domestic and commercial production and technological knowledge transfer to farmers in Nigeria.

Sadly enough, Nigeria still has to rely on importation of food such as rice to be able to feed its population today. The reason for relying on importation of food into Nigeria is because of the country's over dependence on the revenue from crude oil at the expenses of agriculture. Understandably, agriculture which was, indeed, the mainstay of the country's economy before the discovery of oil is today being neglected in a country with a population of about 135 million people. Consequently, a good number of the people, especially the poor in the country are poorly fed and this affects their ability to contribute to the development of the country. As Arnold (1985:134) rightly remarked that:

*A factor of great if often unrecognized importance is that a poorly fed person simply does not perform as well as a properly fed one does. Many developing countries can produce enough food to feed their populations adequately but fail to do so. In part, this is because they devote too much of their agricultural land and energies to producing cash crops for export-sugar, tea, coffee or cocoa. They do this to earn foreign exchange to finance other developments. But the result is neglect of the food producing sector.*

The implication of this is that Nigeria in spite of its huge and enormous available human and natural resources, cannot boast of providing sufficient food for its great population of about 135 million people without importing some food items from other countries. However, if actually food security ranks high in the development initiatives of this current government in Nigeria, let there be clear evidence for this in the huge investment in agriculture and agro-based industries not only to produce sufficient food for the population, but to enhance the quality of food

being consumed in the country. This can be achieved through appropriate intervention of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

**3. Wealth Creation:** Wealth creation is equally an important area of focus of the present government's seven (7) point agenda in Nigeria. It is regrettable that Nigeria which has relied on crude oil production as the main source of the country's revenue for many years now has not developed industrially. There is obviously the need to diversify Nigerian economy as a developing country. This calls for urgent attention to the development of non-oil sectors of Nigerian economy in order to catch up with other industrialized countries in the contemporary global economy. This reform for wealth creation should have special focus on diversified production in agricultural and solid mineral sectors of the economy. Aliogo (2009) asserted that this reform is on wealth creation through diversification of productions, particularly in agricultural and solid mineral sectors. There is certainly the need to diversify the country's economy if Nigeria is really to survive in the contemporary highly competitive global environment. It should be noted that Nigerian's economy is over dependent on crude oil production today.

However, an important alternative to agricultural and crude oil production is industrialization in a developing economy like that of Nigeria. Arnold (1985:135) observed that:

*The major alternative to agriculture is industrialization. The leaders of developing countries see that the developed countries derive a great deal of their wealth and strength from their industrial sectors; they want to produce comparable industrial wealth. Most developing countries have placed great emphasis upon industrialization wherever this has been at all practicable and they have right to do so.*

The interesting thing to note is that Nigeria as a developing economy should explore the potential of entrepreneurship education to conscientise people on the need for industrialization in the country. The government should remove excise duty on locally produced goods since such exports will compete with other goods produced in developed countries.

### **The Objectives and Goals of Entrepreneurship Education.**

The objectives and goals of entrepreneurship education are to:

1. Stimulate understanding of people's needs in the society.
2. Enhance effective service delivery to people as service providers in the society.
3. Contribute to community development as a prelude of stimulating national development.
4. Improve the poor living conditions of people in the participating communities.
5. Promote innovations in the highly competitive global economic environment.
6. Stimulate human resources development through capacity building of members of the participating communities.
7. Generate employment opportunities in the participating communities.

8. Create wealth among project participants in the participating communities.
9. Develop young entrepreneurs for rural communities.
10. Provide relevant skill trainings for people to enable them to contribute significantly to national development.
11. Provide opportunities to people to meet the demands of seven (7) point agenda for sustainable national development

While commenting on a similar subject, Aruma (2009) stated the objectives and goals of entrepreneurship education in promoting community development enterprises to include among other things the followings:

1. Reduction of poverty at local community level.
2. Creation of wealth
3. Creation of employment opportunities
4. Generating appreciable income
5. Enhancing local production of goods and services.

### **The Strategies of Using Entrepreneurship Education to Achieve the Seven (7) Point Agenda of the Present Federal Government of Nigeria**

The strategies of using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda of the present Federal Government of Nigeria are the followings:

#### **1. Competency-Based Entrepreneurship Education:**

An important strategy of using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda of the present Federal Government of Nigeria is the promotion of competency-based education. Indeed, the acquisition of competency based entrepreneurship education helps very tremendously to make the recipients of entrepreneurship education to be competent in managing private or community-based entrepreneurship projects. Competency Based Entrepreneurship Education tends to focus on establishing an enterprise-culture in the contemporary society. The idea is basically to build a society that encourages people to start new businesses and be very successful in such human endeavours in Nigeria. An entrepreneur means a person who establishes a new business in order to generate income to enhance his living conditions in the society (Aruma, 2009). Longman Dictionary (2003) perceived an entrepreneur as someone who starts a new business or plans business dealings in order to make money which in most cases, involve financial risks in the society. The interesting thing to note is that entrepreneurship education helps people to make a living in the society. As Aruma (2009) observed, entrepreneurship education becomes very important so as to help people to make a living in life.

Essentially, competency-based entrepreneurship education should focus on human resources development as a way of stimulating people's interest in achieving the seven (7) point agenda in Nigeria for national development. Indeed, human resources development is very important if all the relevant stakeholders in the seven (7) point agenda are to achieve remarkable success in promoting national development in Nigeria. Ngwu (2003) asserted that human resources development is

important to help the participants to achieve high level of adaptability and acquisition of management skills that are critical to promote economic success and create self-employment in the society. Aruma (2007) stated that human resources development becomes obvious in an organization in order to provide satisfactory services to its clients. Entrepreneurship education, therefore, helps greatly to improve people's capabilities and efficiency in order to be able to deal very effectively with emerging challenges in development enterprises.

## **2. Responsive Strategy to the Demands of People in the Contemporary Global Environment:**

Responsive strategy to the demands of people in the contemporary global environment is another strategy of using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda of the present Federal Government of Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education, undoubtedly, helps to stimulate concerns mostly among the unemployed members of various communities in the society due to phenomenon of globalization. Essentially, entrepreneurship education tries to narrow the widened social and economic differences between the rich and the poor in the society. The idea of promoting entrepreneurship education is basically to establish community development projects in the areas of agricultural production and agro-based industries, handicraft and other relevant trades that will help to stimulate people's consciousness in achieving the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria. The interesting thing to note is that for entrepreneurship to be relevant enough to national economy, it must respond to educational and community development as well as national development needs of specific areas in Nigeria. Ngwu (2003) rightly stated that the idea is, of course, to establish non-formal education projects that will promote agriculture and food production, handicrafts, industry and manufacturing trades in various parts of the country with a view to responding to the peculiar educational and development needs of the specific areas concerned. Indeed, entrepreneurship education as an instrument for achieving the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria should focus on combining business trainings with the areas of vocational agriculture, technical and managerial skills in order to help people to establish a true enterprise culture in Nigeria that will stimulate collective resolve for national development in the country.

**3. Participatory Strategy:** Another important strategy of using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda of the present Federal Government of Nigeria is participatory strategy in community development-oriented entrepreneurship education in various participating communities in Nigeria. Indeed, participatory

strategy in community development-oriented entrepreneurship education simply refers to active involvement of all relevant stakeholders that will obviously stimulate urgent need to achieve the seven (7) point agenda in Nigeria. Aruma (2009) rightly stated that people learn better when they enjoy conducive environment to participate actively in learning events in the society. This tends to indicate the obvious need for collaborative teaching and learning process in the society. Nzeneri (2002) observed that adults learn better through active involvement in teaching and learning process in the society. Active participation in entrepreneurship education is an important platform to take the economy of various participating communities in the seven (7) point agenda to an enviable state or next level. Commenting on a similar subject, Nwanze (2010) stated that active participation in International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and its support agencies like Rural Micro Enterprises Development Project is a good instrument to take Nigeria's economy to the next level. There is, obviously, no doubt that active participation in entrepreneurship education will stimulate people's interest and collectively resolve at community level to achieve the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria. This will certainly guarantee to a certain extent food security in the seven (7) point agenda in Nigeria.

Fundamentally, agricultural sector is an important sector of Nigerian economy to achieve food security in the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria. Regrettably enough, different Nigerian governments at different times have neglected meaningful development in agricultural sector, This has partly been attributed to the incessant problems in food production in the country. Nwanze (2010) rightly noted that agricultural sector helps greatly to achieve food security, but it has been neglected by successive governments in Nigeria. Indeed, this neglect in agricultural sector by successive governments in Nigeria has, undoubtedly, made food crisis a serious problem in the country. Consequently, Nigeria with a population of about 135 million people cannot conveniently feed its population with locally produced food in the country.

#### **4. Establishment of Community Based Micro Enterprise Development Projects in the Participating Communities in Nigeria**

Another strategy of using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria is to facilitate the establishment of Community Based Micro Enterprise Development Projects (CBMEDP) in the participating communities in Nigeria. This particular development initiative requires adequate financial support of international agencies such as International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), non-governmental organizations

(NGOs), corporate organizations and Federal Government of Nigeria including other relevant stakeholders. Understandably, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is an agency of United Nations which was established specifically to promote Small and Medium Scale (SMS) agricultural enterprises among other things. Nwanze (2010) categorically stated that Rural Micro Enterprises Development Project was established as an establishment of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The idea is basically to stimulate food development initiatives to meet global challenges in community-based micro enterprise development projects in the participating communities in the contemporary global environment.

The realization of this laudable community- based enterprise development projects depends to a certain extent on adequate financial support by all the relevant stakeholders in the development initiative in the contemporary global environment. Nwanze (2010) asserted that International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is accessed through the World Bank and that it is equally disbursed to member states under counterpart funding. The implication of this is that all the relevant stakeholders in the Community Based Micro Enterprise Development Projects require adequate financial contributions as a clear demonstration of financial commitment towards the realization of community development enterprises in the participating countries.

## **5. The Strategy of Raising People's Consciousness**

The strategy of raising people's consciousness as advocated by Freire (1985) to understand the benefits derivable from using entrepreneurship education to achieve the seven (7) point agenda should be explored very well for people to work collaboratively for the purpose of promoting national development in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education as an instrument for achieving the seven (7) point agenda for national development in Nigeria stimulates national consciousness in people for investments in the economy, especially in areas of agriculture and agro-based industries as well as other sectors of the economy. Indeed, entrepreneurship education as an instrument for achieving the seven (7) - point agenda in Nigeria should certainly focus on how to facilitate the realization of the national educational goals in the country. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) stated the national educational goals to include the followings:

1. The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity
2. The inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society.
3. The training of the mind of people in the understanding of the world.

## **Conclusion**

Fundamentally, entrepreneurship education which is viewed as an instrument for achieving the seven (7) - point agenda for national development in Nigeria should focus greatly on improving people's attitude to start a new business and be successful in the management of community-development enterprises in the participating communities. It is pertinent to note that entrepreneurship education as an instrument for achieving the seven (7) - point agenda for national development in Nigeria helps very tremendously to enhance people's quality of service delivery in the society. Interestingly, entrepreneurship education, undoubtedly, requires members of the participating communities in community development enterprises to become economically effective and efficient in management of such enterprises for profitability in the society.

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