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## Business Education and Entrepreneurship Challenges in Nigeria

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper looks into the concepts and the need for entrepreneurship which is very paramount in effecting the needed change in the society. It discusses the importance of entrepreneurial roles of business education programme as a way of enhancing wealth creation and provision of employment opportunities. A survey design was adopted for the study while the population was made up of the graduates of business education of tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. Questionnaire was the main instrument used in collecting the data used for the study. The findings shows that entrepreneurship through business education programme in Nigeria is bewildered with a lot of challenges, which may deprive the nation from enjoying the maximum benefits accrued from it. It was therefore concluded that the enormous contributions of entrepreneurship to the economy of the nation demands that greater attention is paid to its development through sustainable business education in Nigeria. Finally, it was recommended that training and development programme through sustainable business education programme should be rigorously pursued as this would adequately improve entrepreneurial skills.*

**Keywords:** Business education, entrepreneurship, development

### **1. Introduction**

The need for a self reliant and resilient economy has resulted into the introduction of courses, which presently includes entrepreneurship and according to Amadi et al in Ngenegbo (1999) cited by Umemezia (2006), entrepreneurship connotes the ability to set up a business, be gainfully productive through self-employment as against being employed. It is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully. In the view of Oborah (2006), making the graduates to be job producers rather than job seekers (employers of labour rather than the employees) is the sole aim of entrepreneurship education. Citing Osuala (2004), he maintained that entrepreneurship education is a specialized training given to students to acquire the skills, ideas and the management abilities necessary for self-reliance. Oborah (2006) further gave the major objectives of entrepreneurship education to include

- To provide meaningful education for the youths which could make them self-reliant and subsequently encourage them to derive profit, and be self-independent.
- To provide small and medium sized companies with the opportunities to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to the management of the small business centre.
- To provide graduates with the training and support necessary to help establish a career in small and medium sized businesses.
- To provide graduates with training in skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society.
- To provide graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty nearing possible and easy.
- To stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed areas.
- To provide graduates with enough training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities.

No doubt, Nigeria is richly endowed and blessed with abundant natural resources, be it human, materials and minerals and in the opinion of Adeyemi (2006), the desire of any government is the achievement of self-reliant and resilient economy capable of resulting in economic development and growth. According to Adeyemi (2006), several belt-tightening measures have been adopted in Nigeria in order to promote the economy through the following ways

- To restructure and diversify productive base of the economy to rely less on importation of goods and services and reduce dependence on the oil sector.
- To achieve a realistic foreign exchange rate.
- To obtain a viable fiscal and balance of payment position.

- To maintain a sustainable non-inflationary growth over long and medium term.
- To maintain acceptable level of employment and full capacity utilization of manufacturing sector.

The increasing attention on entrepreneurship therefore according to Azubuike (2006), is not a surprise because the challenges of living posed by global economic crunch leaves nobody in doubt that one has to create something new with value, different and attractive to increase ones financial status and to have a living that worth it. He further asserted that entrepreneurship facilitates national development and engenders competition in the economy. Entrepreneurship through business education programme therefore becomes very imperative for the achievement of national educational, economical and industrial goals. No nation according to Ray (1998) cited in Azubuike (2006) can achieve the employment goals without emphasis on entrepreneurial development which is better achieved through a vocational programme as business education.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. The Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the process of utilizing one's skills and knowledge to identify a need or want in the society and the taking of practical steps to meet and satisfy the need for an economic gain (Olawole, 2013). Citing Nwaokolo (1997), he viewed that entrepreneurship involves the ability to set up a business enterprise as different from being employed. According to him, the ability involves the acquisition of skills, ideas and managerial competence necessary for personal self-reliance. This was corroborated with the view of Appleby (1994) cited in Olawole (2013) who sees entrepreneurship as the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coping them with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified needs and thereby create wealth.

In his own submission, Akinola (2006) citing Nwaokolo (1997) defined entrepreneurship as the venture that involves taking up a business enterprise quite distinct from obtaining a paid job. According to him, the entrepreneur needed to possess entrepreneurial skills, ideas and management skills which are necessary for the success of the venture. The individual therefore sets the objectives and makes concerted efforts to achieve them. Osuala (1999) in Awojobi (2006) further asserted that entrepreneurship is the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and combining them with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth. Entrepreneurship therefore according to Awojobi (2006) enhances self-employment or self-reliance and thus promotes national survival. He further submitted that the current massive unemployment of both the youths and adults has caused the federal government to emphasize the need for all Nigerian citizens to strive for self-reliance through self-employment. Thus citing Anyakoha (1997), he maintained that entrepreneurship has the main goal of encouraging and training graduates to take up self-employment. This has resulted in many higher institutions putting in place courses of study in this area where undergraduates could be intimated with necessary tools for self-reliance and self-employment.

Entrepreneurship essentially entails venturing into activities where others fear to trend and according to Adeyemi (2006), entrepreneur has a responsibility of managing resources in terms of human and materials and further takes decision on what investment opportunities to explore taken into consideration the following criteria namely

- The profitability of the venture
- The available resources
- The desire, interest and knowledge of the entrepreneur
- The growth of the enterprise

To further contribute to the potentials of entrepreneurship, Ozuomba (2003) cited in Adeyemi (2006) described entrepreneurship as a process that has five stages. The stages include dreams and desires, status and prestige, challenge, freedom and financial independence. In the stages, he asserted that the entrepreneur imagine what to consider or become, he then ascertain the legal implication of the entrepreneurship, focuses on the challenges the entrepreneurship may face, possesses the freedom to invest his funds in a venture he wants and finally thinks of expanding his enterprise and diversification to other areas.

The view of Azubuike (2006) agree with this when he submitted that being entrepreneurial means having the ability to find and evaluate business opportunities, gather the necessary resources, initiate appropriate action to ensure success, and implement actions to take advantage of the opportunities for rewarding outcome. He further opined that entrepreneurs take calculated risks and enjoy challenges that involve moderate risks. They strongly believe in themselves and in their ability to make good decisions and a great deal of time is spent by them in planning business activities and utilize their time effectively through better management.

### 2.2. Business Education

Business education plays a significant role in equipping graduates with entrepreneurial skills, competencies and attitudes for self reliant. Ubulom cited in Kolawole and Elemure (2007) referred to entrepreneurial skills as business skills, which an individual acquires to enable him function effectively in a turbulent society and business environment. Citing Osuala, Kolawole and Elemure (2007) further pointed out that business education is an appropriate tool for equipping beneficiaries with entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to set up their own business instead of struggling and making efforts in seeking government employment at all cost. This will in turn according to them make the individual

to become a master in his own field of specialization thereby becoming an employer of labour in the environment, which invariably leads to good means of livelihood.

A critical look at the goals of business education programme shows that it strives to accomplish the goal of building the much needed vocational and entrepreneurial skills in individuals thereby improving training and exposure to life pursuits through wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction, and value re-orientation. Economic self reliant can only be achieved through skillful and qualitative education, hence the need for business education. Business education, which is an integral part of vocational education, is designed to equip its recipients with entrepreneurial skills, competencies and attitudes for self reliant which will enable them to set up their own businesses that will remove total dependence on government and improve economic survival.

Business education possesses high potentials in entrepreneurship development and according to Isyaku and Ojukwu cited in Kolawole and Elemure (2007), the integration of entrepreneurship education in business education programme in various level of our institution will further equip individuals and the graduates with necessary entrepreneurial skills that will promote the growth of small business thereby reducing total dependence on government for job that does not exist. A functional business education therefore will not only promote entrepreneurship development but will make the beneficiary to be self reliant and employer of labour.

### 2.3. Statement of the Problem

Business education is a veritable tool and essential part of vocational education which is designed to serve as an instrument for the development of entrepreneurship, which should be recognized as a tool for reducing unemployment among the teeming populace. Invariably today, there is the problem of producing graduates who seems to be unable to meet the demands of the Nigerian society riddled with high rate of unemployment. Inability to identify the entrepreneurial roles of business education and to tap from the various opportunities derivable from business education is not only perceived to be robbing the society from reaping the benefits of this laudable programme but seems also to be leaving the implementation of the programme with many unresolved challenges.

### 2.4. Purpose of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

- To determine the entrepreneurial roles of business education in the development of the economy.
- To examine the opportunities that is derivable in business education for entrepreneurship development.
- To identify the various challenges of business education as it relates to entrepreneurship development.
- To determine the remedies to the various challenges of business education as it relates to entrepreneurship development.

### 2.5. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the purpose of this study:

- What are the entrepreneurial roles of business education in economy development?
- What are the opportunities derivable in business education for entrepreneurship development?
- What are the challenges of business education as it relates to entrepreneurship development?

### 2.6. Research Hypotheses

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: Business education does not have entrepreneurial roles in economy development.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There are no opportunities derivable in business education for entrepreneurship development.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There are no remedies to the challenges of business education as it relates to entrepreneurship development.

## 3. Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a simple survey. The population for the study was made up of business education graduates of the institutions running the programme in Ekiti State. A total of eighty business education graduates from the institutions were selected to constitute the sample frame for this study. They were randomly selected from among the graduates in the area of study. The main instrument used for the study was a questionnaire. This was developed by the researcher and validated by experts in the field. It has two sections. Section A has information on demographic variables and section B has information on the research question. It was a 30-item questionnaire which was structured on a Likert type 4-point rating scale of Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire was organized into three sections in conformity with the research questions raised for the study. The data collected were analysed using the statistical mean and standard deviation for the research questions and chi-square for the research hypotheses. The responses to the questionnaire were weighted and values were assigned as Strongly agree – 4 points, Agree – 3 points, Disagree – 2 points and Strongly Disagree – 1 point. The calculated mean rating of responses of respondents that is equal to or greater than 2.50 were accepted while responses that are less than 2.50 were rejected.

## 3.1. Data Analysis

S/No	Items	X	SD
1.	Employment creation	3.23	0.77
2.	Income generation	3.00	0.79
3.	Employer of labour	3.15	0.74
4.	Wealth redistribution	2.57	0.98
5.	Promotion of indigenous business	3.07	0.83
6.	Wealth creation through self employment	3.20	0.79
7.	Mobilization of savings	3.21	0.76
8.	Equipping graduates for self-reliance	3.15	0.69
9.	Enhancement of standard of living	3.15	0.73
10.	Growth of local industry	3.11	0.79

*Table 1: Mean Response on Entrepreneurial Roles of Business Education in the Development of the Economy*

From the analysis of the data presented in the above table, all the entire item raised was believed to be the entrepreneurial roles of business education in the development of the economy. This is evident from the response of the respondents with all the items having a mean of not less than 2.50.

S/No	Items	X	SD
1.	Job satisfaction	3.01	0.75
2.	Discovery of hidden potentials	3.00	0.80
3.	Creativities	3.18	0.74
4.	Employment generation	3.01	0.75
5.	Unlimited profit	2.93	0.86
6.	Self recognition	3.07	0.77
7.	Economic development of the society	3.07	0.80
8.	Control of one's destiny	3.03	0.84
9.	Wealth creation	3.07	0.74
10.	Poverty reduction	2.90	0.92

*Table 2: Mean Response on Opportunities Derivable in Business Education for Entrepreneurship Development*

The result in the above table shows that the entire item raised stand to be the opportunities derivable in business education for entrepreneurship development. This is clear from the response of the respondents with a mean of not less than 2.50 in all the items.

S/No	Items	X	SD
1.	Poor infrastructure	3.01	0.87
2.	Poor funding	2.90	1.03
3.	Loss of self value by graduates	3.01	0.87
4.	Poor implementation of government policies	2.87	0.75
5.	Corruption and fraud	2.97	0.97
6.	Lack of creative environment	2.96	0.79
7.	Low public awareness and insensitivity by government	3.11	0.79
8.	Shortage of teaching and technical support personnel	2.87	0.91
9.	Neglect of functional education	2.81	0.88
10.	Deficiency in training procedure	2.88	0.75

*Table 3: Mean Responses on Challenges of Business Education in Relations to Entrepreneurial Development*

The data presented in table 3 above shows that the respondents agreed that the entire item raised stand as challenges of business education in relations to entrepreneurial development. This can be inferred from the response of the respondents which has a mean of not less than 2.50 in all the items.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	57.600 <sup>a</sup>	27	.001
Likelihood Ratio	51.001	27	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.421	1	.233
N of Valid Cases	800		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.30.			

*Table 4: Chi-Square Test for Entrepreneurial Roles of Business Education in the Development of the Economy*

A critical observation of table 4 revealed that the P-value (0.001) is less than the level of significance of 0.05. It shows that the result is highly significant. Therefore,  $H_{01}$  is rejected. That is, business education has entrepreneurial roles to play in the development of the economy.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.686 <sup>a</sup>	27	.244
Likelihood Ratio	30.245	27	.303
Linear-by-Linear Association	.235	1	.628
N of Valid Cases	799		
a. 10 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.75.			

*Table 5: Chi-Square Test for Opportunities Derivable in Business Education for Entrepreneurship Development*

A close look at table 5 above shows that the P-value (0.244) is less than the level of significance of 0.05. It is clear from the result that it is highly significant. The  $H_{02}$  is therefore rejected. That is, there are opportunities derivable in business education for entrepreneurship development.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.659 <sup>a</sup>	27	.285
Likelihood Ratio	31.167	27	.264
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.597	1	.206
N of Valid Cases	798		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.96.			

*Table 6: Chi-Square Test on Challenges of Business Education in Relations to Entrepreneurial Development*

A close examination of table 6 shows that the P-value (0.285) is less than the level of significance of 0.05. It therefore shows that the result is significant. The  $H_{03}$  is therefore rejected. That is, there are opportunities derivable in business education for entrepreneurship development.

#### 4. Discussion

The result from the findings shows that business education has entrepreneurial roles to play considering the state of Nigerian economy. Entrepreneurship training through business education is a welcome strategy to salvage the Nigerian society from economic hardship. According to Shyllon (2006), majority of our youths have no choice but to embrace any menial job that comes their way as a result of the current unemployment trend in the country. He further viewed that with the introduction of entrepreneurship training, our youths should acquire this training in order to develop their saleable skills and competencies for them to be able to cope with modern business activities. He further stressed that there is no doubt that education and training will keep the entrepreneur informed, knowledgeable and confident on how to go about his trade, and according to Coomb (1974) cited in Shyllon (2006), entrepreneurship and business education is designed to develop particular knowledge and skills that are associated with various economic activities useful in making a living.

The roles of entrepreneurs according to Owualah (1999) in Mebaane (2006) cannot be expected to differ significantly in Nigeria as in other countries except for differences in their scope and contributions as one move from one country to another. He further asserted that the roles played by entrepreneurs and small business sector in any economy are a result of the roles assigned to them by the country's policy makers and planners, and the extent to which they are equipped to carry them out.

Omojola (2013) in his own submission sees entrepreneurship as an undertaking which involves the task of creating and managing an enterprise for a purpose. He stressed that it is about bringing together factors of production and providing continuing management as well as risk bearing machinery which catalyses change in the society. It enhances wealth creation and provision of employment for millions of job seeker. Citing Wheelen and Hunger (2006), Omojola (2013) viewed that global entrepreneurship monitor have found a strong correlation between national growth and level of entrepreneurial activity in prior years.

However, Olawole (2013) observed that the gains of entrepreneurship (through sustainable business education programme) to the entrepreneur citing Osuala (2004) are the opportunities they derive from the venture. These include gaining control over one's destiny and job satisfaction, reaching one's full potentials, creating employment for others, reaping unlimited profits which help to expand the business and contributing to the economic development of the society and the nation at large and also being recognized.

The result of the findings showed that in spite of the roles and gains of business education and entrepreneurship in social and economic development of the country, there are challenges hindering its success in Nigeria, which need to be looked into for the nation to be able to maximally enjoy the benefits inherent in the programme. In identifying these problems, Awojobi (2006) listed the following as part of the challenges confronting business education and entrepreneurship. These include under funding, incessant cut in power supply, inadequate equipment, enrolment upsurge, gap between theory and practice, corruption, riots and rancor, and youth laxity.

However, in the view of Omojola (2013), the challenges of entrepreneurship in Nigeria include lack of trust by Nigerians in home made goods and themselves, lack of adequate education/training by many entrepreneurs and employees, political instability and corruption, unguarded/unrestricted importation of goods into the country, inadequate or poor infrastructure, insecurity and piracy, inadequate capital and constraints in accessing credit facilities, inefficient management capabilities, obsolete technology, exposure to strong competition from other industrial business organizations from developed countries, lack of or inadequate feasibility study, indiscipline, lack of experience and skills, and inadequate or lack of functional technical education in the country.

Supporting the above view, Akinola (2006) identified lack of the knowledge of the necessary entrepreneurial skills, lack of funds (capital), lack of managerial skills and experience, risk bearing, insufficient preparation, negligence, fraud, disaster and business environment as part of the problems bewildering entrepreneurship (through business education) in Nigeria. In the same vein, Mebaane (2006) citing Oluboba in Olajide (2005) highlighted the main problems of entrepreneurship in Nigeria to include low level of entrepreneurship skill, poor management practices, low demand for the products of the small enterprises, problem of quality assurance, non-standardization of their products and lack of knowledge of the existence of fringe markets.

To overcome the various challenges facing entrepreneurship through business education in Nigeria, the following factors according to Mebaane (2006) must be learned and improved upon. These include good management, objectivity on the part of owner-manager, prioritization of scarce resources – money and time, provision of excellent goods and services, marketing, pricing and market, accounting and finance, and managing manpower. In the view of Awojobi (2006), to make entrepreneurship (through business education) thrive in Nigeria, the steps that are deemed necessary include blotting out corruption, formation of culture of hard work and dedication to duty, industrial development with contentment and people centre development. According to him, when these skills are well grounded, entrepreneurs will be able to cultivate the right habits towards self-reliance and self-employment.

Akinola (2006) however, suggested that the challenges of entrepreneurship in Nigeria could be solved through good training in entrepreneurial skills, good business plan, achievable objective, loan with low interest rate, laying business foundation on integrity and probity, good human relations, proper implementation of budget, carrying out sellable business and availability of fund.

## 5. Conclusion

Entrepreneurship through business education is a vital tool for developing the economy of the nation. It is the only means by which the nation can attain the needed national self-reliance. It serves as the medium by which the citizens can be empowered so that everyone's source of livelihood can be assured. Notwithstanding, there are mirage of challenges that the entrepreneur must contend with but acquiring the needed skills and knowledge through business education will make entrepreneurs to be properly put on guide to forestall business failure.

## 6. Recommendations

For entrepreneurship programme through business education programme to thrive in Nigeria, the following recommendations are made

- Government at all levels should give the much needed support to business education programme in terms of funds.
- The environment should be made conducive and friendly for business by the government through various incentives for graduates of business education who are the young entrepreneurs.
- There is need for infrastructural development by various tiers of government and other stakeholders and the existing ones should be improved upon.
- The interest of Nigerian entrepreneurs should be protected by the government by embarking on policy that will be favourable to them.

- Training and development programme through sustainable business education programme should be rigorously pursued as this would adequately improve entrepreneurial skills.
- The issue of corruption should be addressed by every stakeholder so that entrepreneurship could thrive in the country.

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