

## **Strategies for Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education among Youths in Tertiary Institutions in Imo State**

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### **Abstract**

This study ascertained strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State. Specifically, the study determined the challenges to effective entrepreneurship education and strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among the youths in Tertiary Institutions in Imo State. Two research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting 200 undergraduate youths from two tertiary institutions in the State capital territory. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Data were analyzed using mean statistics and standard deviation. Results showed eighteen (18) challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among others which include; poor planning by the government and school management, lack of qualified and experienced teachers, poor infrastructure, materials and equipment. The result also showed nine (9) strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education which include; creating awareness programs through mass media, technical training, seminars, workshops and practical demonstration of entrepreneurship education among the youths. The study concludes that there is urgent need for enhancement of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. The study recommended among others that the Federal government should provide enabling environment and all the necessary equipment for easy teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Education, Challenges, Youths, Tertiary Institutions, Strategies.

### **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship is the engine fuelling innovation, employment generation and economic growth. Globally, there is a growing emphasis on encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation as a means of fostering economic growth

(Russell, Atchison & Brooks, 2008). Entrepreneurship has been viewed and described as the art or science of innovation designed to teach one the skills and knowledge needed to know before embarking on a new business ventures (Ochigbo, Kingsley & Ugah

2018; Woolfolk, 2010). Traditionally, it has been identified as the process of designing, launching and running a new business, which typically begins as a small business, such as a startup company offering a product process or services for sale or hire. It has been identified as the capacity and willingness to develop, organize, and manage a business venture along with its risks in order to make a profit.

Entrepreneurship can be conceptualized as the discovery opportunities and subsequent creation of new organization and how entrepreneurs use these opportunities to develop new products or services and create wealth. It is for this reason that Nigeria in her *National Policy on Education* (FRN, 2014) conceived that some enduring objectives like achieving a self-reliant nation, building a great and dynamic economy be connected towards achieving self reliance, effective citizenry, efficiency and national consciousness through the education system.

Entrepreneurship education is the process of acquiring the knowledge, attitudes and skills of entrepreneurship. Such education is a programme that inculcate creativity, innovation, managerial and productive skills needed in business enterprises for self reliance and consequently in national development. Olawolu and Kaegon (2012) confirms that entrepreneurship education prepares youths to be responsible by exposing them to real life learning experience where they will be required to think, take risk, manage circumstances and incidentally learn from the outcome.

Entrepreneurship education deals with the acquisition of the right habits, attitude and skills as well as means of surviving in the face of unemployment. Entrepreneurship education is important for the entrepreneur, in that the valuable skills needed by the entrepreneur can be learnt through trial and errors, but most of these errors can be eliminated by education. Lemchi (2016) noted that entrepreneurship education is about creating awareness amongst students with regards to entrepreneurship as a career option. The awareness will encourage and nurture individuals who have entrepreneurial quotient to become entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship education therefore, among other things seeks to provide youths in tertiary institutions with the knowledge, skills and innovation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of ventures. It is offered at all levels of schooling from primary or secondary schools through tertiary institutions.

Tertiary institutions are important research institutions established in most developed and in many developing countries, in which an increasing proportion of relevant age group participate in higher education to learn and cope with complexity of sustainable development. Igbo (2013) described tertiary institution as society's power house for research thus, educating students to examine critical policies, ideas, concepts and systems that will promote learning and sustainable development. Tertiary institutions include universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and

research institutes among others. They are therefore expected to develop individual's intellectual capabilities to understand and appreciate their local and external environments through teaching, research and development, sustainable development programs generation and dissemination of knowledge

In Nigeria, the need for entrepreneurship education among tertiary institution's students has led to the frequent change of the curricular and system of education in view of making the populace self reliant. This development is expected not only to address the problem of unemployment and underemployment but will ensure an entrepreneurial human capacity for national development (Ojeifo, 2013). It is with the hope that through the introduction of entrepreneurship education in our tertiary institutions, the institutions will be better repositioned, to become centers of excellence with the equipping of technical laboratories. This is to ensure that the students are well equipped with saleable skills for creation of goods and services aimed at making them self-reliance at graduation so as to reduce the problem of unemployment in the country. However, the step taken by government by making entrepreneurship education one of the compulsory general course for students in universities across the country is indeed a positive step in right direction as it will serve as a panacea for youth unemployment. Notwithstanding the Federal Government efforts, much has

not been achieved. The students are not fully competent on the trained skills.

Education is an effective and veritable instrument that can be used to bring about redress. It is as well one of the greatest investments that a nation can make, and use for quick development of its economic, political, sociological and youth empowerment. Despite the importance of education in the society, it looks as if there is a steady increase in youth unemployment even among the so called graduates of vocational technical education (VTE). Adegbenjo (2012) states that the type of education that is needed for self employment and national development involves a process aimed at creating wealth for the purpose of growth, development of the environment and eradication of unemployment for sustainability. This need explains why the Nigerian government stipulated in the National Policy on Education, the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences, both mental and physical, as a pre-requisite for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society (FRN, 2014). Unfortunately, most of the graduates of VTE were lacking on the needed skills and competencies required to progress in the job area which they are trained. The situation supposed not to be so if the necessary training was given to the students and the needed skills acquired.

One of the major reasons for the clamor for entrepreneurship education in Nigerian schools today is to reposition the education system in order to make innovation effective in the

market and elsewhere for youth empowerment. Entrepreneurship education cannot guarantee youth empowerment and reduction of youth unemployment in the near future if effective strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship are not observed and followed. Based on this, the study tends to find out the effective strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to evolve strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State.

Specifically the study determined;

1. challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in Imo State
2. strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among the youths in Imo State.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by two research questions;

1. What are the challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State?
2. What are the strategies for promoting entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State?

### **Hypotheses**

Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female youths on the challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female youths on the strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State.

### **Methodology**

**Design of the Study:** Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study as it entailed the collection of data from a defined population to describe opinion status, benefits and views of the population using the variables under study, to collect detailed and factual information that describes an existing phenomenon.

**Area of the Study:** Area of the study is Imo State. Two tertiary institutions in Owerri Municipal Council in Imo State were selected. These include Imo State University and Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. Owerri Municipal is one of the 27 local government areas of Imo State situated at the heart of the city. It has pre-primary, primary, secondary and two tertiary institutions. Most youths in Imo State are undergraduates who are not fully competent on the trained skills and given the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills in tertiary institutions. The study therefore, focuses on the strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among the youths in Imo State.

**Population for the Study:** Population of the study comprised final year undergraduate students of Imo State University and Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri in 2016/2017 academic session. The total population was 8,702 youths from the two institutions comprising 3,817 males and 4,885 females (Registry Departments of both Institutions).

**Sample and Sampling Techniques:** A sample of 367 (200 students from Imo State University and 167 from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education) was used. Krejai & Morgan (1970) in Ohaka & Ohaka(2017) stated in their tables for determination of sample size for population that with a known population of 8000 and below 9000 a sample size of 367 can be used.

**Instrument for Data Collection:** Questionnaire was used for data collection. It was developed through literature review based on the research questions. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Responses to the questionnaire was based on a 4 point rating scale of strongly agree=4, agree=3, disagree =2, strongly disagree =1.

**Validation of the Instrument:** Face validation of the instrument was done by three experts in the field in terms of clarity and appropriateness. Validity and a reliability coefficient of 0.96 were obtained based on experts' ratings of questionnaire items and this was adjudged to be reliable.

**Method of Data Collection:** Three hundred and sixty seven (367) copies of the instruments were produced and administered to respondents in the two tertiary institutions in the study area. The method of administration was by direct contact. The students responded to the questionnaires appropriately.

**Data Analysis Techniques:** The data were collated and analyzed using four point rating scale assigned to the following values; strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Any mean above 2.5 was accepted while means less than 2.5 was rejected.

#### **Results:**

**Research Question 1:** What are the challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in the tertiary institutions in Imo State?

Table 1 below shows that all the items were agreed by respondents as challenges confronting effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State. All the mean scores were above the criterion mean of 2.50 which is the cut-off point for acceptance. The standard deviation ranged between 0.71 and 1.33, showing that the opinion of the respondents did not differ so far. This finding showed various challenges confronting effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions.

**Table 1:** Mean scores and standard deviation on challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths.

S/N	Challenges to Effective Entrepreneurship Education	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Poor planning by the government.	3.75	1.33	challenge
2.	Negative societal attitude towards Technical and Vocational Education.	3.22	0.93	challenge
3.	Lack of qualified and experienced teachers	3.19	1.11	challenge
4.	Poor incentives to the teachers by the government.	2.97	0.84	challenge
5.	Poor infrastructure.	3.33	1.19	challenge
6.	Poor accounting skills.	2.85	0.87	challenge
7.	Overcrowded classroom/workshop.	3.38	1.14	challenge
8.	Changes in education policies	2.9	0.79	challenge
9.	Poor record keeping skills	2.72	0.71	challenge
10.	Inadequate financial assistance	3.06	1.015	challenge
11.	Lack of entrepreneurial skills	3.27	1.1	challenge
12.	Low subject knowledge matter	2.9	0.92	challenge
13.	Lack of essential facilities (e.g water, light etc).	3.05	1.03	challenge
14.	Poor inspection of institution	2.96	0.94	challenge
15.	Lack of effective leadership	3.15	0.93	challenge
16.	Lack of expertise	3.28	1.04	challenge
17.	High cost of raw material	3.41	1.22	challenge
18.	Obsolete learning equipment.	3.06	0.98	challenge

Note:  $\bar{X}$  = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; A = Agree; N = Number of Respondents

**Research Question 2:** What are the effective strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions?

**Table 2:** Mean scores and standard deviation on effective strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths.

S/N	Effective strategies for promoting entrepreneurship education	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1..	Awareness program through mass media	3.51	1.24	Strategy
2.	Technical training e.g. seminar/workshop, practical demonstration on entrepreneurial skills	3.6	1.28	Strategy
3.	Proper organization of the teaching sessions	3.04	1.09	Strategy
4.	Active involvement of the youths to promote interest toward entrepreneurship education	3.43	1.14	Strategy
5.	Financial support by government or adequate funding for entrepreneurship education	3.51	1.24	Strategy
6.	Creating economic business environment	3.33	1.05	Strategy
7.	Review of curriculum to be creativity oriented	2.94	1.12	Strategy
8.	Develop entrepreneurship internship programs	3.42	1.18	Strategy
9.	Provide small businesses in the institutions where interested youths can participate.	3.38	1.11	Strategy

Note:  $\bar{X}$  = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; A = Agree; N = Number of Respondent

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the responses of respondents on the effective strategies for promoting entrepreneurship education among youths. All the items have their mean above 2.5 which is the cut-off point for acceptance. The standard deviation ranged between 1.05 and 1.28, showing that the

opinions of the respondents did not differ so far.

### Hypothesis One

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female youths on challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions. The data for testing hypothesis one are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** t-test result of mean ratings of male and female youths on challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions.

{N<sub>1</sub> 134 (Females); N<sub>2</sub> = 66 (Males)}

S/Challenges to effective entrepreneurship education.	$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	T-cal	P-value	Decision
1. Poor planning by the government.	3.73	1.32	3.7	1.35	-0.30	0.764	NS
2. Negative societal attitude towards Technical and Vocational Education.	3.14	0.85	3.3	1.08	-1.45	0.147	NS
3. Lack of qualified and experienced teachers	3.1	1.11	3.3	1.1	-1.57	0.11	NS
4. Poor incentives to the teachers by the government.	3.16	0.85	2.5	0.82	4.65	0.000	S
5. Poor infrastructure.	3.31	1.24	3.3	1.07	-0.29	0.772	NS
6. Poor accounting skills	3.04	0.88	2.4	0.82	4.67	0.000	S
7. Overcrowded classrooms	3.52	1.2	3.0	0.99	2.69	0.007	S
8. Changes in education policies	2.91	0.63	2.88	1.04	0.22	0.826	NS
9. Poor record keeping skills.	2.83	0.63	2.48	0.85	2.97	0.0037	S
10. Inadequate financial assistance	2.97	0.97	3.24	1.1	-1.69	0.091	NS
11. Lack of self reliance and entrepreneurial skills.	3.14	1.04	3.52	1.21	2.18	0.0292	S
12. Low subject knowledge matter	2.81	0.87	3.12	1.02	2.12	0.34	NS
13. Lack of essential/basic facilities e.g .water light etc.	3.19	1.08	3.46	1.12	-1.62	0.105	NS
14. Poor inspection of institutions	3.1	0.95	2.67	0.93	3.05	0.0022	S
15. Lack of effective leadership	3.11	0.82	3.21	1.13	-0.64	0.522	NS
16. Lack of expertise	3.11	0.82	3.45	1.21	2.06	0.039	S
17. High cost of raw materials	3.3	1.161	3.45	1.33	-0.78	0.435	NS
18. Obsolete learning equipments	3.14	1.06	2.88	0.87	1.85	0.064	NS

**Key Note:**  $\bar{X}_1$  = Mean-of-females,  $\bar{X}_2$  = Mean of males, SD<sub>1</sub> = Standard deviation of females, SD<sub>2</sub> = Standard deviation of males, t-cal is significant at 0.05 (two tailed) when t = ≤ -1.96 or ≥ +1.96.

The results in Table 3 on hypothesis one showed that p-value of 11 out of 18 items was greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference between the responses of male and female youths in tertiary institution was accepted for eleven items while in seven items they

(male and female students) have differing opinion.

### Hypothesis Two

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female youths on effective strategies for promoting entrepreneurship education among youths.

The data for testing hypothesis two are presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4:** T-test analysis of mean ratings of male and female youths on effective strategies for promoting entrepreneurship education among youths.

		{N <sub>1</sub> 134 (Females); N <sub>2</sub> = 66 (Males)}						
S/↑	Strategies for promoting entrepreneurship education among youths	$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	T-cal	P-value	Decision
1.	Awareness programme through mass media.	3.64	1.27	3.24	1.16	2.2	0.0264	S
2.	Technical training seminar, workshop practical demonstration on entrepreneurial skills.	3.73	1.32	3.33	1.21	2.13	0.0331	S
3.	Proper organization of the lesson and teaching sessions	3.27	1.09	2.58	1.08	4.23	0.000	S
4.	Active involvement of the learners/youth to promote interest towards entrepreneurship education	3.52	1.2	3.24	0.99	1.75	0.080	NS
5.	Financial support by government or adequate funding of entrepreneurship of education	3.69	1.31	3.15	1.1	3.06	0.0022	S
6.	Creating economic friendly business and political environment	3.39	1.08	3.21	0.99	1.17	0.242	NS
7.	Review of curriculum to make it creativity oriented	3.21	1.14	2.39	1.08	4.96	0.000	S
8.	Develop entrepreneurship internship programme	3.12	1.15	3.58	1.23	-2.54	0.011	S
9.	Provide small businesses in the institution where interested youths can participate.	3.45	1.16	3.24	0.99	1.33	0.183	NS

**Key Note:** X<sub>1</sub> = Mean-of-females, X<sub>2</sub> = Mean of males, SD<sub>1</sub> = Standard deviation of females, SD<sub>2</sub> = Standard deviation of males, T-cal is significant at 0.05 (two tailed) when t = ≤ -1.96 or ≥ + 1.96..

The result in Table 4 showed the p-value of 4, 6 and 9 items ranged from 0.080 to 0.242 which were greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that the null hypothesis of no

significant differences in the mean rating of male and female youths in tertiary institutions on the effective strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship skills were accepted.



### Discussion of Findings

In Table 1, the 18 items identified by the study as challenges to effective entrepreneurship education were all accepted by the respondents. The result of the study indicated lack of funds, lack of expertise and obsolete learning equipment, poor planning by the government and schools among others are challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State. The findings agreed with the views of Ojo (2014), who asserted that the above challenges such as poor planning by the government, lack of qualified and experienced teachers on skills training, changes in education policies, poor incentives are some of the challenges bedeviling youths in tertiary institutions which have been hindering the institution from achieving its lofty goals. Supporting this Esiowu, Ezenwanne and Obunadike(2018) suggested that students should be exposed to entrepreneurial competencies and skills necessary for becoming entrepreneurs. The above finding is in line with the findings of Ugwunwoti and Okorojiofor (2017) who outlined various strategies of managing entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions as the establishment and use of functional laboratories, employment of qualified teachers, and provision of funds among others. These findings agreed with the views of Ejinkonye and Chukwuone (2014) that majority of lecturers teaching entrepreneurship education courses are not competent. Many of them do not have any form of entrepreneurial skills.

Supporting this, Russel, Atchison, Brook (2008) asserted that majority of Nigerian tertiary institutions find it difficult sponsoring their staff for professional development workshops, to update their knowledge and skills on current trends in entrepreneurship education. This has affected our youths in tertiary institutions in Imo State negatively too, as they graduate from schools without adequate entrepreneurs' skill.

Table 2 showed that all the items on effective strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education among youths obtained mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.50. The findings of the study showed that awareness program through mass media; technical training/seminar, active involvement/practical demonstration of the youths, proper organization of lessons, and financial support by the government, development of internship programmes among others are some of the measures for enhancing entrepreneurship education. The above finding is in line with the findings of Emeka-Okeke (2018) that government should provide adequate funds as well as creating an enabling environment for smooth running of the laudable entrepreneurship education programmes. Teachers should know that the development of skilled workforce and expansions of human capacities through high quality of entrepreneurship education training, skill acquisition, and lifelong learning towards dynamic force for creating job opportunity are boosting the economy towards reducing poverty and protection of human dignity. The

finding equally is supported by that of Aluwong (2010), who noted that development of entrepreneurship education will go a long way in creating employment, empowering the youth to be job creators and not job seekers, as well as providing them with necessary skills and knowledge to raise their output, income and wealth. All these will enrich the entrepreneurial knowledge of the students for sustainable development.

The data presented on the Table 3 with regards to Hypothesis One showed the p-value of 11 out of 18 items in the table ranged from 0.064 to 0.826 which were greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there are no significant differences in the mean responses of male and female youths in tertiary institutions on the 11 identified challenges to effective entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions of Imo State. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) difference in the mean rating of the responses of male and female youths is accepted on 11 items in the Table. This agreed with Woolfolk, (2010), who asserted that inadequate facilities and lack of expertise are some of the challenges bedeviling entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions of Imo State. The P values on the remaining 8 items 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, and 16 are less than 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the study implied that these were significant differences in the mean responses of male and female youths on the seven items. Based on the result, the hypothesis of no significant differences in the mean responses of

the male and female youths is rejected on the above items mentioned.

The data presented in table 4 showed that the P-value of 4, 6 and 9 items in the table ranged from 0.080 to 0.242 which were greater than 0.05 level of significance. This implied that the null hypothesis which states there are no significant differences in the mean rating of male and female youths in tertiary institutions on the effective strategies to enhancing entrepreneurship education in Imo state is accepted.

From the result of the study, it was found that these entrepreneurial skills will enhance entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Imo state. These findings agreed with the view of Amadi (2012), that entrepreneurship education will provide life and occupational skills, reinforces self-sufficiency and improves quality of life of the youths. Lack of entrepreneurial skill is in no doubt a major contributing factor to the problem of unemployment of youths in Nigeria which is also a contributing factor to high poverty rate.

### **Conclusion**

Entrepreneurship education has been viewed as veritable antidote to the endemic problems of poverty, hunger and youth unemployment. It can be concluded that creativity involves multifaceted skills aimed at equipping youth for self reliance and preparing them for the world of work. Youth do not only need the acquisition, understanding and application of knowledge, but also the ability to meet with the ever changing societal needs.

To tackle the challenges plaguing entrepreneurship education among youths in tertiary institutions in Owerri Municipal, administrators, parents and government have roles to play towards ensuring that the challenges are combated by providing youths in tertiary institutions with the knowledge, skills, and innovation to encourage entrepreneurship success in a variety of ventures. The development of entrepreneurship education will go a long way in creating employment ,give young people the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills, empowering the youth to be job creators and not job seekers and provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to raise their output, income and wealth.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Adequate funds should be provided to schools to build and equip entrepreneurship Centers for student's practical work.
2. To empower youths Federal Government should provide enabling environment and the entire necessary infrastructure for easy teaching and learning entrepreneurship education needed for economic enhancement.
3. The youth should shun joblessness and criminality through the cultivation of entrepreneurial spirit and acquisition of relevant skills that will lunch them into enterprise greatness and economics independence

4. The modern-day teachers should be knowledgably, professionally and administratively competent, as well as resourceful so as to complement the effects of the government towards achieving the goals of entrepreneurship education.
5. School administrators and teachers should be encouraged and sponsored to attend seminars, workshops, conferences in order to update their knowledge on skill acquisition

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