

## Entrepreneurship and Adult Education: A Panacea for Economic Emancipation and Development in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** Education is the most powerful weapon which can be used to affect any society positively. Entrepreneurship and adult education are identified as imperative and transformative tools for national development and poverty eradication in Nigeria. This is the key factor for increasing economic efficiency and social consistency by increasing the value and efficiency of the labour force and the basic instrument for poverty eradication. The paper, therefore, recommended that classroom work is basically theory. Undergraduate students should be mandated to go for apprenticeship training with a successful entrepreneur for at least a period of three months. This will help them to build confidence to take risk in career during and after graduation due to the desire to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed to succeed. The apprenticeship period of training may be during the long vacation period.

## INTRODUCTION

The state of development of any nation is a clear indication of the type of education' given to her citizens, especially at the formative and higher levels: primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Education has been defined in various ways as the aggregate of processes through which an individual acquires knowledge, values, attitude and all other forms of behaviour that are of positive value to the society to which a person belongs or as the process of learning to live as a useful and acceptable member of the community. According to Frackmann<sup>[1]</sup> education provides employers and society in general with graduates of specific fields. It is a process of helping students develops; acquire skills and knowledge that will help them becomes creative in life. Thus, according to Agi and Yellowe<sup>[2]</sup> education is important to the development of human resources, impartation of appropriate skills,

knowledge and attitude. It is the basis for transformation, industrialization and a high way to global knowledge economy.

Higher education as the main responsibility for equipping adults with the advanced knowledge and skill required for professions. Timi-Johnson and Richard<sup>[3]</sup> opined that, higher education is a place where the frontiers of knowledge are developed through practical work and exercise. The entire intellectual and professional life of a country depends on sound higher education, especially tertiary education that provides quality products (graduates) of international standard for high productivity. Indeed, adult education is a crucial arena of transformation and imperative to economic and social transformation, bringing development to society. Quite recently, a number of higher educational institutions in Nigeria including Universities and Polytechnics have started offering entrepreneurial education to their students

as a way of transformation and creating awareness and encouraging students to consider self-employment as a career option.

Education is life; it therefore, means that, there must be adequate investment, vision and sacrifice. We have sadly enough been observing a situation in the developing world where greater part of the budgetary allocation goes to the defense sector and other security related agencies. It must be noted that none of these countries are locally manufacturing armaments; this situation further deepens importation from the developed world, transferring funds resulting in economic stagnation. The issue here is the type of leadership; when the political elites are honest and transparent enough to themselves, all forms of security problem facing developing countries today will be drastically reduced to a minimal level, if not totally eliminated.

However, it must be noted that even in societies where there are equity and justice, they still suffer some pockets of crime but not too devastating. No society is absolutely free from crime. Please, despite the temptation, we must not be forced to deviate from our target in order to have a safe landing. Who is an entrepreneur? An Entrepreneur could basically be seen in the light of someone who undertakes to start and conduct a business, assume full control and take risk. Someone who originates and manages any form of business, trade especially production of any good(s) or services with the main objectives or motivation of making profit.

Entrepreneurship dwells on basic concepts and precepts such as vision, change, opportunity seeking, creativity, innovation, risk taking and ability to manage activities in order to achieve specified objectives. These principles form an integral part of human activities in the home, at the work place and in other places of human socialization, although, the extent and intensity of applicability may be higher in one setting than the other<sup>[4]</sup>. Entrepreneurship education is a catalyst in the reduction of unemployment in Nigeria.

Thus, entrepreneurship and adult education is the key factor to increasing economic efficiency and social consistency by increasing the value and efficiency of the labour force and the basic instrument for poverty eradication. It provides a foundation for eradicating poverty and enhances economic development in any society. It increases the overall productivity and intellectual flexibility of the labour force and ensures that a country is competitive in the world market now characterized by changing technologies and production methods<sup>[5]</sup>. The adoption of entrepreneurship education into Nigeria education system at all levels has placed emphasis on skill acquisition rather than academic excellence; this will help prepare the individual for a more useful and fulfilling life within the society and for the betterment of the economy. At the long run, accelerating

economic growth and development while eradicating all the component of poverty such as social vices, unemployment, societal unrest and others.

The word, entrepreneurship, invokes names as Bill Gates and Paul Allen of Microsoft; Colonel Harland Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook and Aliko Dangote of Dangote Group, among others. Their popularity is not just because they are among the world's richest men but because they are self-employed and involved in lifelong economic development of individuals and nations.

The challenging paths trod successful by entrepreneurs make them unique super-humans. For instance, Mark Zuckerberg was said to have launched Facebook from his hostel on 4th February 2014, assisted by his three roommates at Harvard University. Colonel Harland Sanders started the famous KFC from his road side restaurant in Kentucky. Aliko Dangote started by selling sweet to his classmates in elementary school despite coming from an affluent home. The analysis of the humble beginning of today's celebrated wealthy entrepreneurs may be endless. What is important about them is that they are not only self-employed for a lifetime but instrumental to the employment of very many others and development of their countries. With economic recession staring countries of the world in the face, use should be resorting to grooming the likes of Bill Gates, Colonel Sanders, Mark Zuckerberg and Aliko Dangote, to turn our hailing economies around through adult education.

Adult education means learning that takes place among adults. Scholars in adult education refer to it using different terms and concepts. These necessarily depend on who they are, the culture they represent, whom they are writing for, the social economic and political prevalence at the time of their writing and the context in which their terms and concepts are used. Thus, Sarumi defined adult education as a product of culture. He noted that adult education is a process, which is part of cultural development, primarily the establishment of a means of communication between the cultural systems of the transmitters (inventors, research workers, creative minds) and the cultural systems of the receivers (i.e., groups for whom adult education is intended). Some scholars in developed countries tend to define adult education as the kind of learning that is expected to be undertaken by those who need to catch up on their formal education or who need to use their leisure purposefully or who need to upgrade their skills and knowledge in the face of changing technology. These scholars residing in or writing for the developing world conceptualized adult education in terms of the circumstances prevailing in the developing countries, such as high illiteracy, the problem of free and compulsory education and the need to catch up technologically among others. Nwagbo Ebiringa and

Nzeneri referred to adult education as “education for people (young and old) who missed formal education for one reason or the other”. They went on to elaborate that these are people who are old enough to work, vote, fight and marry and who are now desirous to make up for their lack of formal education. Adult education tends to teach, train or sensitize a new member to the demands of the society. Another area whereby poverty can be minimized is by looking up to role models in the society. A role model is a person who serves as a model in a particular behaviour or social role for another person to emulate. Each role model teaches a person about themselves thereby reducing poverty.

Thus, adult education can be seen as a lifelong education for the purpose of human and national development. This study aims at revealing how entrepreneurship and adult education can be a powerful tool for economic emancipation and development in Nigerian society

### **CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION**

Adult education is a practice which adults engage in a systematic self-sustaining educational activity in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitude, activities and values. This type of education can be provided through formal, non-formal and informal modes. However, the definition that seems all embracing is the one by UNESCO which defined adult education as: The entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level or method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools or colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them into a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced, independent, social, economic and cultural development. Implying that adult education is learning that takes place among adults.

It is important to target adults because they, rather than children hold the destiny of modern society in their hands. In support of Anyanwu’s view, Obi maintains that adults are those who are already working and participating in development efforts. Obi further emphasizes that adult education programmes unlike education for children and adolescents, centre on the immediate needs and problems of the adults in their homes, social and occupational roles, civic and economic interests and therefore have immediate direct positive relationship with development objectives. Nzeneri opined that “living in Nigeria is becoming more and more difficult” not because of inflation, not because of armed

robbery, not because of the new political system we are experiencing but mainly because the individual in Nigerian does not understand himself adequately well” for Nigeria to move meaningfully forward, her adult population must be educated.

Scholars in adult education refer to it using different terms and concepts. These necessarily depend on who they are, the culture they represent, whom they are writing for, the social economic and political prevalence at the time of their writing, and the context in which their terms and concepts are used. It can be defined as the provision of all forms of education to the adult, it’s obtainable in formal, informal and non-formal situations. Formal education takes place in a school where there must be a teacher or teachers and learner or learners. Informal education involves the inculcation of societal values at home and in age-grade organization for example, home instruction remains most vital to the development of habits and attitudes. According to Seya adult education is transmission of process of general, technical or vocational knowledge as well as skills, values and attitudes which takes place outside the formal education system with a view of remedying early education inadequate mature people or equipping them with knowledge and cultural elements required for their self-fulfillment and active participation in the social, economic and political life of their societies. Thus, repositioning adult education curriculum for economic empowerment through entrepreneurship education and enhancement of entrepreneurial skills of adult learners in Nigeria will not only make adult education programme culturally relevant, but will also equip learners with employable life skills with which to become an entrepreneur and improve their living condition.

Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings.

Variants of entrepreneurship education are offered at all levels of schooling from primary to secondary schools through graduate university programmes.

Entrepreneurship education focuses on the development of skills or attributes that enable the realization of opportunity, where management education is focused on the best way to operate existing hierarchies. Entrepreneurship is the key driver of our economy. Wealth and a high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneurial minded individuals, many of whom go on to create big businesses. People exposed to entrepreneur/ship frequently express that they have more opportunity to exercise creative freedoms, higher self-esteem and an overall greater sense of control over their own lives. As a result, many experienced business people, political leaders, economists and educators believe that fostering a robust entrepreneurial

culture will maximize individual and collective economic and social success on local, national and global scales. It is with this in mind that the National Policy on Education for Entrepreneurship Education was developed: to prepare youth and adults to succeed in an entrepreneurial economy.

Entrepreneurship is also being developed as a way of developing skills such as risk-taking and problem solving that facilitate achievement of life goals and in education. Entrepreneurial and Adult Education is the form of education given to people to make them employers and not employees. Not only that, it is a continuous education because it can be acquired at any point of an individual's life. In addition, when acquired, the recipients are productive throughout their lifetime; they do not have retirement age as long as their acquired skills and ventures are still marketable.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ENTREPRENEUR**

In order to qualify as a successful entrepreneur, one must have the following traits and characteristics:

- Passion and motivation
- Risk taking
- Self belief, hard work and disciplined
- Adaptability
- Money management
- Networking abilities
- Being prepared to take exist where necessary<sup>[6]</sup>

### **IMPORTANCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP/ADULT EDUCATION**

A look at the importance of Entrepreneurship and Adult Education is synonymous to looking at the importance of entrepreneurs themselves. This is so because Entrepreneurship Education is intended to produce entrepreneurs. Equally, the end product of Entrepreneurship and Adult Education is the production of entrepreneurs to drive the private sector, thereby increasing the number of individuals participating in economic activities of the nation and reduction of government participation and intervention.

Entrepreneurial and adult education is oriented towards different ways of realizing opportunities. The importance of entrepreneurship education to any economy cannot be undermined. Entrepreneurial activity and the resultant financial profitability are always of benefit to individuals and the nation in general. The importance of entrepreneurs to the economy of any country includes:

**Employment generation:** Through entrepreneurial education, small and medium enterprises have offered realistic prospects for creating jobs and improving

standard of living while on the long run eradicating poverty in the society. This has helped provide productive and self-employment to young graduates from higher institutions. Instead of being job-seekers and waiting for a white collar job, they are self-employed. Venturing into entrepreneurship creates jobs, in business form. According to him the more enterprising people are the more the chances of investing in new businesses and the more new jobs are created.

**Wealth creation:** Through entrepreneurial education, products and services are combined from local resources available to create wealth by individuals. The skills acquired from entrepreneurship education enable entrepreneurs to create wealth for themselves and the society at large which in the long run generate profit from the business. The profit generated can be used for sustenance and expansion of the business whereby poverty will be eradicated in the society.

**Increase in national income:** Entrepreneurial will not only increase individual income but also national income of a country. Aside creating more wealth to the entrepreneur (value added approach of computing national income), the government gets more tax revenue which could be used for other sectors of the economy. This tax revenue adds to the national income of the country.

**Improving favourable balance of payment:** When there are few entrepreneurs in a country, the country has to depend on foreign countries for variety of products which weakens the balance of payment position of a nation. If there are many entrepreneurs, there will be variety of products for consumption and even exports which improves the balance of payment position of a nation.

**Interdependence of business:** The truth of the matter is, no matter the prospect of any business firm; no business can succeed without interdependent on other firms for sustenance. Entrepreneurship education will contribute to the economic and national development with the intension of eradicating poverty in the long run and promoting interdependence among businesses. It must buy raw materials from other existing firms and sell the finished goods and services to needed firms.

**Promotion of effective domestic resource utilization:** Entrepreneurial education will contribute significantly in the use of local resources rather than depending on foreign raw materials for produce. This will help promote domestic resources especially in the agricultural and manufacturing sector. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) will not need to sought for loan to finance foreign raw material for produce. Reason being that, the require raw materials are locally produced and available

at cheaper and affordable prices. This can discourage and reduce a country's excessive dependence and spending on imported raw materials.

**Economic growth:** The entrepreneurs create new business that subsequently creates wealth for those who directly or indirectly engage in those businesses. It specifies that the business owners, suppliers, financiers, distributors, many more people benefit from the wealth created by such new companies.

**Improve standard of living:** Entrepreneurs engage in production of goods and services which are sold to generate income for the people and government. This brings about improved living standard of the consumers and producers alike.

**Investment opportunities:** The new businesses established may open investment opportunities when they succeed. Most of these companies can enlist in stock exchange market for people to invest by way of share purchasing.

**Profit:** Shareholders in successful businesses receive dividend at intervals.

**Tax base of a government:** The more entrepreneurs set up businesses, the more the government earns revenue from tax payment. The workers and entrepreneurs pay wages and taxes. Sometimes additional tax is paid on goods and services, beside those paid by the business owners and the employees.

**Technological development:** In a bid to maximize profit, business owners (entrepreneurs) get involved in competition. By so doing, new technology can be evolved.

### **STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**

In order to achieve viable entrepreneurial and lifelong education that will enhance sustainable development in Nigeria, the following strategies according to Arogundade<sup>[7]</sup> will help to alleviate the problem of entrepreneurial education in the country.

There should be some forms of genuine school work based learning incorporated in some studies as part of the national economic development strategies. The development of apprenticeship scheme would give new graduates some work skills and experience.

Pool local, public and private funds to create a small venture capital fund. School-based enterprises where students identify potential business, plan, create and operate small business using the school as mini-incubators.

Provide small business in schools where interested students and community members can participate. Develop entrepreneur internship programmes matching students with locally successful entrepreneurs with clearly established education programmes. Establishing an enterprise college aimed at fostering the specific skill sets required for entrepreneurship to serve as skill-acquisition centers for the youths. Creating an economic friendly political environment. Improving on the government taxation on small scale businesses.

### **HISTORY AND SCOPE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ADULT EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

We must take note of two issues at this point. One, entrepreneurial and Adult education connotes skills acquisition for self reliance and employment. Two, Nigeria is an example of a developing country where entrepreneurs are not the major drivers of the economy. Infact, Nigeria which epitomizes developing countries is an instance of countries that are just discovering the importance of entrepreneurship in economic advancement. Therefore, reference to Nigeria is synonymous with referring to developing countries.

Entrepreneurship is as old as Nigeria. Before the advent of western education, entrepreneurship existed. Youths (boys) were trained during traditional or indigenous education to emulate their father's skills. For instance, those whose fathers were sculptors automatically became sculptors. Many young men took to their father's occupation. Accomplished traders employed others and many were indeed self-reliant and employed without seeking white-collar jobs<sup>[8]</sup>. The major drivers of the economy between pre-colonial and late colonial era were entrepreneurs who learnt their fathers/guardian's skills or traded on agricultural products. But the situation changed with the introduction of western education. Young male Africans became interpreters to the colonial administration. Some others became teachers and court workers and messengers. Much later, specifically during the oil-boom, Nigerian girls and boys went to school to become oil workers or administrators in oil companies and their subsidiaries. The situation turned to unemployment when many graduates could not be employed by the government and the few parastatals that existed. In order to curb the ever increasing number of unemployed youths, Nigerian Government, through Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), instituted Entrepreneurship Education. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria commenced Entrepreneurship Education in 2007/2008 academic session<sup>[9]</sup>.

Basically, this formed the origin of Entrepreneurial Education in Nigeria. Many authorities in Entrepreneurship Education opined that the programme is

not properly handled to inspire its graduates into taking to self-employment. Anyanwu particularly that Entrepreneurship Education should in addition, perform other roles such as offering tertiary institutions graduates adequate training in risk management to make risk bearing feasible. Denga and Denga observed that the present Entrepreneurship Education does not generate many skills to be selected from. Igwe<sup>[10]</sup> suggested that the schools should also include intrapreneurship education. To enable the students have variety of options choose from. The above observations point to the uniqueness of the conference. Its theme and sub-theme provide a wide-range of areas in which entrepreneurial ventures could contain. It must be mentioned that present Entrepreneurship Education is limited in content and practice. This brings us to the issue of challenges in present day Entrepreneurship Education.

### **INHIBITION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND ADULT EDUCATION IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY LIKE NIGERIA**

Entrepreneurial Education is done as General Studies (GST) without enough practical's. Infact, it is more or less handled with nonchalant attitude. Students do it without enough commitment; they do the course just to pass examination. Brown<sup>[11]</sup> agree that the present Entrepreneurship Education lacks in content and practice, hence it does not produce Entrepreneurs as expected, because it lacks:

- Adequate facilities and equipment that enhance teaching and learning
- Enough skills to be chosen from
- Enough Entrepreneurial teachers and adult educators
- It suffers poor social attitude to technical and vocational education development
- It lacks capital
- Lacks effective policy on entrepreneurship. Mustapha *et al.*<sup>[12]</sup> added that Entrepreneurship Education in many developing countries is poorly planned and executed to produce results. It can be countries, particularly Nigeria had still birth

### **THE WAY FORWARD**

Anything worth doing is worth doing well. Since developing countries have recognized the crucial place of Entrepreneurial ventures in revamping their economies, we ought to commit much into planning and implementing Entrepreneurship and Lifelong Education to make it productive. There are comparative studies in all fields of human endeavours. Therefore entrepreneurial and Lifelong Education should not be left out. A more tenable way to productive.

Entrepreneurship Education in developing countries is to have a Comparative Entrepreneurial Education in the curriculum. This will give an idea of what is done in other climes. Sull<sup>[13]</sup> in an article titled: "a strategy to meet the challenges of entrepreneurship students of Entrepreneurship Education should be taught the following:

**Screening opportunities:** The writer Pointed out that no businesses is risk-free, emphasizing that the fear of risks scare prospective young entrepreneur from going into business. According to him, a good orientation on how to surmount risks can encourage young entrepreneurs.

**Match money and opportunity:** Another obstacle that discourages intending entrepreneurs is money and capital in general. The fears of how to rise take off fund business when they graduate. To surmount this obstacle, Entrepreneurship Education should include, not only how to source fund but also provision of fund.

**Stage experiments:** The training of entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship Education should include practical workshops. The source suggested that there should be experiment production before going in "the full-blown" production. This would give the young entrepreneur what the whole exercise would look like.

**Write good contracts:** According to Sull<sup>[13]</sup> writing good contracts would involve "drawing the value chain of all the activities and resources needed to pursue the opportunity" partners into the business.

**Assemble a team:** He said the strength of team to be assembled depends on the rate of production the entrepreneur is to indulge in. In other words, an assemblage of work force, Igwe<sup>[10]</sup> suggested that durable and productive Entrepreneurship Education should look beyond entrepreneurial ventures. Rather, it should include intrapreneurship where young entrepreneurs should be allowed to practice m Entrepreneurship education inside existing businesses. They would be engaged in commission or on part-time basis to invent ideas that would improve and broader the production capacities of existing businesses. The more such businesses expand the more jobs will be created for the teaming population of the unemployed. Again, this is one area in which the conference is unique because it proposes to explore and unveil entrepreneurial chances in every discipline.

### **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that entrepreneurship and adult education is the key factors to increasing economic

efficiency and social consistency by increasing the value and efficiency of the work force and the basic weapon for poverty eradication. Through entrepreneurship and adult education, the students are better prepared to unleash their entrepreneurial potentials after graduation for self profiting and that of the national development respectively. These efforts will enhance the economic, technological and industrial development of the nation, as well as reduce poverty to its minimum in the nearest future.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper, therefore, recommended that: for actualization of entrepreneurship and adult education, it is important that higher institutions and government at all levels should device a strategy to assist the undergraduates and graduates that indicated interest to start business or enterprise while in school and after graduation through inculcating programmes or to partner with firms to assist them. This will go a long way to curb poverty and reduce societal unrest in every society in Nigeria.

Classroom work is basically theoretical. Undergraduate students should be mandated to go for apprenticeship trainings with a successful entrepreneur for at least a period of three months. This will help them to build confidence to take risk in career pursuit during and after graduation due to the desire to acquire entrepreneurial skills needed to succeed. The apprenticeship period of training may be during the vacation period.

There should be entrepreneurship education centres in every higher institution with constant conduction of seminars and workshops for the students by professionals and successful entrepreneurs. This will stir up students' interest in becoming an entrepreneur rather than being a job seeker after graduation.

Every higher education institution in Nigeria should inculcate a culture of entrepreneurship education by supporting, training and rewarding their self-reliant graduates. This can be achieved by institutional recommendation of graduates to state, federal government and non-governmental organization for encouragement. This approach would stir up entrepreneur interest among students in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship education curriculum should be designed to promote human empowerment and development through entrepreneurial skill acquisition. This would lead to skilled oriented and self-employment motivated.

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