

# ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ENUGU STATE

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## Abstract

Education is the key to National Development. This is because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people, empowers and equips individuals in the society to participate in and benefit from their national economy. The main aim of this study was to assess the impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Youth Empowerment and National Development in Enugu State of Nigeria. The study was carried out in Enugu State using descriptive survey design. Three hypotheses and three research questions guided the study. The population of the study was 1500 registered members of youth's organizations in Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial Zone. The sample and Sampling technique adopted was proportionate stratified random sampling, the sample was 150 registered Youth. The Instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The findings revealed that there was a significant Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Youth Empowerment and National Development in Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial Zone. The study recommends among others that government agencies responsible for youth empowerment should ensure that the funds voted for Entrepreneurship Education is judiciously used to achieve results and that the youths should take more advantage of the Entrepreneurship Education Scheme to enhance their entrepreneurial skills towards a successful management and operations of their business.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurship Skills, Youth Empowerment and National Development.

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## Introduction

Nigeria faces numerous numbers of problems that can only be solved if she has innovative, well-educated entrepreneurial citizens, who have the spirit and inquisitiveness to think on new ways of solving issues that challenge them. Our current socio-economic and political stance of the

country needs a number of young people who are willing and able to become entrepreneurs who can launch and successfully develop their own commercial or social ventures and who will become innovators in the wider organization in which they work. It is a common experience that many of our youths who graduate from school of

higher Learning find it difficult to get employment every year, this is because the curricular of the higher institution which lay emphasis on training for white-collar jobs (Osibanjo 2006) and this poses a serious treats and challenges to both government and individuals of the nation. The issue of unemployment in our nation has called for different strategies and actions in order for it to be ameliorated.

Entrepreneurial education is essential not only to shape the mindsets of young people but also to provide the skills and knowledge that are central to developing an entrepreneurial culture.

Entrepreneurship Education is needed in this time of fierce economic meltdown and unemployment in order for our youths to generate jobs. Entrepreneurship Education is important because it provides strategies of ensuring that youths are trained to meet up with the skills needed to survive in the society. It prepare youths for self-employment which goes further to empower them economically and socially by providing youth with generic lifelong and life copying skills, knowledge and understanding. According to Onojetach (2022) the rationale for Entrepreneurship Education is provided for in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

Education at all levels including Entrepreneurship Education has been recognized as a means of youth empowerment and employment generation that promotes national growth at all levels and in all fields as observed by the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD; 2007). Entrepreneurship Education is a strategy for youth empowerment because it inculcates in youth the skills, knowledge and ability for self-employment thereby encouraging employment generation in the youths. Entrepreneurship Education aims at empowering the youth by giving them an understanding of economics and business as well as encouraging them to be “enterprising” and to view business as “positive and worth doing” (Beder, 2009). Alain (2009) describe entrepreneurship education as all “activities aiming to foster entrepreneurship mindsets, attitudes and skills and covering a range

of or aspects such as idea generation, start-up, growth and innovation”. Developing mindsets, generic attributes and skills which are the foundations of entrepreneurship can be achieved through indoctrination from an early age that is it should be incorporated into the national educational system with the seriousness it deserves because education is key to shaping young people's attitudes, skills and a culture”

The benefits and positive effects of entrepreneurship among youth cannot be overestimated. Any government that shows no good interest in ensuring that their youth are entrepreneurially inclined has failed to plan and planned to fail. Thus it is good to improve the equality of entrepreneurship education in Enugu State and Nigeria at large.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

In spite of the attempts at encouraging entrepreneurship development among our youths, the following problems persist and hinder progress, difficulty in securing in, most of the entrepreneurs face financial crunch in setting up business because of the non-supportive attitude of financial institutions and banks which hark more on papers. The producers and conditions to avail a loan is time consuming that its delay the youths, due to this, the youths are forced to take credit from village money lender who charge exorbitant interest rate.

The fear to take risks and the stigma of failure are the key factors why young people don't engage in entrepreneurship skills. Some who engage in small scale business usually discontinue after a little while if it does not prosper as they wish. Many are highly impatient to see their business grow at a small speed, poor state of infrastructure in Nigeria, unstable state of Nigeria economy and inconsistent government policies are factors that hinder effective entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

This study intends to assess the impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Youth empowerment in Enugu State North and Enugu East Senatorial Zone.

The purpose of the study was:

1. To assess the approaches of providing Entrepreneurial skills in Enugu North and East Senatorial Zone.
2. To determine the challenges militating against acquirement of entrepreneurship skills among youths of Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial Zone.
3. To assess the impact of Entrepreneurship Education among youths.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION:**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. What are the effective approaches in providing the right entrepreneurial skills on the youths?
2. What are the challenges militating against acquirement of entrepreneurship skill among the youths?
3. What are the impacts of Entrepreneurship Education among the youths?

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Entrepreneurship Education is a lifelong and work based in learning that prepares youths to be future business owners. Alain (2009) described entrepreneurship education as all “activities aiming to foster entrepreneurial mindset, attitudes and skills and covering a range of or aspects such as idea generation, start-up, growth and innovation. Coman (2008) viewed Education and Entrepreneurship as the main enabling conditions for future change. In this regard, Entrepreneurship Educational prepares and builds persons to be responsible and enterprising individuals capable of deep entrepreneurial thinking that contribute to economic and sustainable development. It focuses on expertise that is needed and used to conceive and commercialize business opportunities. Nigeria especially in the face of the global economic crisis requires youths who will be job “creators” and job “seekers” (Unachukwu 2009) Garba (2010) stated that entrepreneurship Education is a strategy or Instrument for channeling necessary energies of the Nigeria youth away from paid employment to self-employment. Entrepreneurship Education is a need especially in this time of extensive unemployment condition. Entrepreneurship skill acquisition prepares individuals for self-employment, it is a

creative and innovative response to the environment (Onyemah2011) Osuala (2009) argued that in pursuance of this goal, youths trainees who complete entrepreneurship education should be able to setup their own business, become self-employed and be able to employ others.

#### **ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS**

Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying an opportunity and turning it into a venture. An entrepreneur is a person who undertakes risk to start a business of his or her own.

Entrepreneurship skill is the process of strengthening the skills and knowledge of budding and existing entrepreneurs by handholding them doing their entrepreneurial journey.

According to Suleiman (2010), Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) is the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institutional building programmes. Akpomi (2009) stated that entrepreneurial skill and attitudes provide benefits to the society even beyond their application to business activity. The author further states that personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity and spirit of initiative can be useful to everyone in their responsibilities and in their daily existence, industrial or business concerns with the application of the right managerial skills.

#### **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT**

Empowerment refers to the ability of an individual to make choices regarding his or her life. It enhances an individual's or group's capacity to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcome.

If a person or group is empowered, they possess the capacity to make effective choices, that is to translate their choices into desired actions and outcomes. Youth empowerment is a process whereby youth people gain the ability, authority and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of others people including youths and adults.

According to Fletcher (2005), Youth empowerment means creating and supporting the

enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf and on their own terms rather than at the direction of others. It simply means assigning the youth to overcome the difficulties which might prevent them from achieving their desire. Olakulehin and Ojo (200) note that empowerment means assigning people to overcome obstacles which might prevent them from achieving their potential. The need for empowerment arises from the inability of an individual or a group of people to actualize their dreams and reach their greatest potential due to artificial barriers created by individuals and other groups with the same society.

### **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

National Development is the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people e.g by providing social amenities like quality Education, portable water, transportation infrastructure, medical care etc. The term National development is referred to a more desirable one. National development is people oriented and its success is evaluated in terms of the impact it has in improving the lot of the masses.

According to Onabajo and M Bayo (2009) says National Development should be man oriented and not institution oriented, that is individually in collectiveness and not individual.

### **IMPORTANCE OF YOUTHS IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The important of youth empowerment in national development cannot be overemphasized. Youths could be a source of labour inputs as well as human capital in production, which would improve total factor of productivity in a region of the world where capital formation is limited. When employed, youths could be a reliable source of demand for the economy through their consumption activities. In addition, the youths of Nigeria could be critical for the development of a new class of entrepreneurs that Nigeria needs to prosper. That National Youth Development Policy asserts that:

The youth are the foundation of a society. Their energies, inventiveness, characters and orientation define the pace of

development and security of a nation. Through their creative talents and labour powers, a nation makes giant strides in economic development and socio Political attainments. In their dreams and hopes, a nation finds her motivation; on their energies, she builds her utility and purpose, and because of their dreams and aspirations, the future of a nation is assured (FGN, 2001:1)

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research design employed for this study was the descriptive survey design, the population of the study was 1500 registered youths in youth organization who had gone through entrepreneurship education programme in Enugu North and East Senatorial Zone of Enugu State. The sample for the study was 150 registered members of youth organization from Enugu North Senatorial Zone comprising of 80 and registered youth organization from Enugu East Senatorial Zone comprising of 70. The researchers used proportionate stratified random sampling technique to sample 10% of the registered members from each local government area giving a total of 150 respondents the study. The use of the technique with the adoption of sampling with replacement agrees with Nworgu (2015).

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaires developed by the researchers titled Assessing the Impact of Entrepreneurship on Youth Empowerment and National Development in Enugu state. The instrument has two sections, A and B. Section A deals with the personal data of the correspondents while Section B deals with the responses from the research questions. A four point response of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree(A) Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree(SD) with nominal values of 4,3,2,1.

In order to establish the validity of the instrument, it was subjected to validation by expert in the area

of study to ensure that the items of the questionnaire adequately cover the research questions for the study and to ensure language appropriateness as well as remove ambiguity in the items of the questionnaire. Data collected

were presented and analyzed using tables, percentage and mean, where the mean score was above 2.50 was adjudged “Agreed” in explaining the phenomenon while below 2.49 was adjudged “Disagreed” in explaining the situation.

#### DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULTS:

Results were presented according to the research questions used for the study, all presented in a tabular form.

Section A: Demographic Data

Table 1: Respondents by sex

(N=150)

Gender	No of Respondents	percentage (%)
Male	66	44
Female	84	56
Total	150	100

Table 3.1 shows that 66 of the respondents were male with a percentage of 44% while 84 respondents were female with a percentage of 56%.

Table 2: Employment Status of Respondents

(N=150)

Employment Status No of Respondents Percentage (%)

Working	93	62
Not working	57	38
Total	150	100

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents 62% were employed while 57 (38%) of the respondents were not employed.

## Section B: Research Questions

**Table 3: what are the effective approaches in providing the entrepreneurial skills on the youth in Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial**

S/N	Questioners items	4	3	2	1	Mean ( $\frac{\sum fx}{\sum x}$ )	Decision
1.	Support from government by providing entrepreneurship Skills to youth to engage them Actively to release their Creativity and innovation	12	8	59	71	1.74	disagreed
2.	Facilitators involved are Professionally trained in Entrepreneurship	13	19	61	57	1.92	disagreed
3.	Workshops and seminars Are organized by youth Organization to facilitate Skills acquisition disagreed		38	7	49	56	2.18
	Sectional mean					1.95	disagreed

**Table 3:** Present approaches of providing entrepreneurial skills among youth in Enugu state with a sectional mean of 1.95. The table shows that youths are engaged actively to release their creativity and innovation with a mean score of

1.74 followed by engaging facilitators who are professionally trained with a mean score 1.92. Finally organizing workshops and seminar by youth origination entrepreneurship skills with mean score of 2.18

**TABLE 4: What are the challenges militating against entrepreneurship skills among youths in Enugu East and Enugu North Senatorial Zone.**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	4	3	2	1	Mean ( $\frac{\sum fx}{\sum x}$ )	Decision
1.	Lack of adequate Finance	60	69	18	3	3.24	Agreed
2.	Lack of awareness And enlightenment	55	71	15	6	3.13	Agreed
3.	Insufficient skilled Manpower to train Youths on entrepreneurship	4	37	65	44	2.01	Disagreed
4.	Lack of adequate Facilitating methods And materials	19	18	51	62	1.96	Disagreed
5.	No foundation Knowledge of Entrepreneurship Education	71	38	13	28	3.01	Agreed
6.	Incompetent and Unprofessional Trainers	61	78	11	-	3.33	Agreed
	Sectional mean					2.67	Agreed

Table 4 presents the challenges militating against entrepreneurship skill among youth in Enugu State with a sectional mean of 2.67, from the analysis it was revealed that incompetent and unprofessional trainers form a large part of the challenges militating against entrepreneurship skill which had a mean score of 3.33 followed by lack of awareness and enlightenment with a mean score of 3.13. Furthermore, the study revealed that lack of adequate finance with a mean score of

3.24 was one of the inhibitors, followed by insufficient and skilled manpower and lack of foundational knowledge of entrepreneurship education were challenges militating against entrepreneurship education with a mean scores of 2.01 and 3.01 respectively. Finally, the study found that lack of adequate facilitating methods and materials was a challenge militating against entrepreneurship education with a mean score of 1.96

**Table 5: What are the impact of entrepreneurship educations among the youths in Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial Zone.**

S/N	Questionnaires items	4	3	2	1	Mean	Decision
1.	Youths setup business Which will enable them Utilize the local resources Available to them	50	63	12	25	2.92	Agreed
2.	Most of the youths own Entrepreneurship skills	9	13	56	72	1.73	Disagreed
3.	Youths become employed Of labour	13	12	63	62	1.84	Disagreed
4.	Youths with entrepreneurial Skills benefit the society	73	65	10	2	3.39	Agreed
5.	Youths with entrepreneurship Skill boss their living condition	53	55	22	20	2.66	Agreed
	Sectional mean					2.94	Agreed

Table 5 present the current impact of entrepreneurship among youths in Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial district in Enugu State with a sectional mean score of 2.94, from the table, youth that were empowered to boost their living condition and youths setup business which will enable them utilize the local resources available to them each with a mean score of 2.66. Furthermore, the table revealed that youth become employer of labor and most of the youth from Enugu North and Enugu East are fully empowered with a mean score of 2.92 and 1.84 respectively.

#### Discussion of Findings

The findings show that organizing workshop and seminar by youth organization by professional will release the creativity and innovations of youths in Enugu State.

The aim for entrepreneurship education among youths in Enugu State Nigeria enable youths to have intention of becoming self employed and it will enable them own their businesses and

identifying business opportunities.

The findings equally that youth in the entrepreneur skills benefit the society, boost their living condition and enable them start up business which will enable them to utilize the local resources available to them.

Finally, the study found out that lack of adequate facilitating methods and materials was a challenge against entrepreneurship education among the youths in Enugu State.

#### CONCLUSIONS:

Youth empowerment is the answer for the moment. Any country left behind in this race will remain perpetually under-developed. This underscores the recent attention given to youth empowerment in Nigeria. The belief is that when youths are exposed to the concepts, principles and theories of entrepreneurship, their entrepreneurial mind will be fired to propel them into thinking of how to create jobs for others instead of being job seekers, they will be able to exploit business



opportunities. Based on the findings of this study, this paper concludes by stating that knowledge of Entrepreneurship education for youth empowerment for national development increases the awareness and understanding of the process involved in initiating and managing a new venture as well as to help to identify and stimulate entrepreneurial drive, talent and skills.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

The study assessed the impact of entrepreneurship education youths in Enugu north and Enugu East Senatorial zone of Enugu state, Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, the study concludes that youths engagement in Entrepreneurship education aids them in releasing their creativity and innovation by becoming potential entrepreneurs. In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

Firstly, government should create more awareness and enlightenment on the impact of entrepreneurship education on youth empowerment in Enugu State.

Secondly, Government should ensure that entrepreneurship workshops/seminars are organized regularly to facilitate the skills acquisition programmes. In addition, government should be consistent in providing the youths with entrepreneurship skills/programmes in order to enable them identify business opportunities and to become self-employed.

Thirdly, government should also provide adequate finance and sufficient manpower to train the youths on entrepreneurship skills acquisition programmes in the state.

Fourthly, appropriate methods and materials should be provided to facilitate effective and efficient entrepreneurship in Enugu North and Enugu East Senatorial Zone of Enugu State and Nigeria at large.

Finally, Nigerian youths should ensure that they become employers of labour instead of waiting for white collar jobs.

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