



ENTERPRENUERSHIP EDUCATION: EMERGING ISSUES IN EDUCATION INDUSTRY IN NIGERIA

Dr. James Oladiipo Folorunso & Dr. Sunmola Kadiri Adegoke

Jofolorunso77@gmail.com & dokitakadiri@yahoo.com

University of Ilesa, Ilesa

Abstract

This study addresses the significance of entrepreneurial skill development in education and its role in national development. It emphasizes that investments in human capital through education are essential for long-term economic progress. Education enhances people's productivity, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit while encouraging technical advancement. Moreover, it contributes to economic and social growth and improves income distribution. The study also provides practical advice for students during academic strikes, suggesting free online training opportunities to develop essential skills in coding, event planning, decoration, manicure and pedicure services, hairdressing and salon services, and online sales and marketing. Furthermore, the study highlights the conflicting views of entrepreneurship schools of thought and the lack of a standard definition of entrepreneurship in the existing literature. The study comprehensively analyzes the emerging entrepreneurial issues in the education industry and suggests ways to address them. It was concluded that entrepreneurial education is a critical component of national development and recommended that policymakers and stakeholders prioritize investments in human capital development to ensure long-economic progress.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Education, National Development, Skill Development.

Introduction

Education has been the pivot for social, economic, and political revolutions in all cultures. It functions as a societal integrator, instilling principles that promote individual excellence,

social harmony, and national progress. Acknowledging the vital role of education in fostering national development, international policymakers such as the European Union, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) have placed a strong emphasis on a contemporary educational concept called 'entrepreneurial skill development via education' across various educational levels (Guatam & Singh, 2015).

Education is a cornerstone of development across all facets (Stoliarchuk et al., 2023). It is irrefutable that the absence of substantial investments in human capital represents an insurmountable obstacle to any nation's attainment of enduring economic advancement. Moreover, education engenders a broadening of individuals' perspectives regarding their self-perception and their comprehension of the global milieu (Mohebi & Bailey, 2020). It augments the quality of their lives and bestows many societal benefits, both at the individual and collective levels. This educational process begets heightened productivity and creativity among individuals, concurrently fostering entrepreneurship and driving technological advancements (Audretsch et al., 2023). Furthermore, it emerges as a linchpin in the facilitation of economic and social growth, while concurrently ameliorating income distribution (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020).

A review of existing literature highlights that there are conflicting viewpoints in the field of entrepreneurship. Additionally, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of entrepreneurship among professionals, as different researchers and authors interpret it differently. Entrepreneurship can be described as a dynamic process involving vision, transformation, and innovation (Diandra & Azmy, 2020). It requires individuals to harness their energy and enthusiasm in order to create and implement new ideas and creative solutions. This process entails a readiness to take carefully considered risks concerning time, investment, or one's professional path. It also involves the capacity to assemble an effective team for a business venture, the creative skill to gather necessary resources, and the essential ability to craft a well-structured business plan. Lastly, it necessitates having the vision to identify opportunities in situations that might appear chaotic, contradictory, or confusing to others (Kuratko, Fisher & Audretsch, 2021).

Frank H. Knight argue that entrepreneurship involves taking risks, as noted by (Audretsch, & Belitski, 2021). On the other hand, Schumpeter defines entrepreneurs as individuals who seize market opportunities through technological or organizational innovations (Chaurasia, 2022). An entrepreneur is an individual who consistently engages in development and innovation to create something valuable based on identified opportunities (Chaurasia, 2022). Hisrich in Oshineye & Alo (2024) describes an entrepreneur as someone who takes initiative, possesses innovative thinking, can coordinate social and economic systems to make resources practical, and is willing to take risks and accept failure. Adegbite (2010) defines being an entrepreneur as someone who employs

innovation, financial expertise, and business acumen to convert innovations into economic goods. This may involve establishing new organizations or revitalizing established ones in response to perceived opportunities.

Starting a new business is the most common type of entrepreneurship. The National Policy of Education (2004) emphasizes a united, strong, and self-sufficient nation. The policy emphasises the importance of acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to secure paid employment in an office or to be self-employed. In their opinion, Oshineye & Alo (2024) noted that entrepreneurs tend to show initiative, organize and reorganize social and economic systems to make resources and situations useful, and are willing to take risks. Defining entrepreneurship is a complex task as it encompasses various aspects. It is often described as a mindset, a way of thinking, and a set of behaviors. Entrepreneurship can involve initiating and growing one's own business, typically on a small scale (Eijdenberg et al., 2015). It is also seen as the process through which new organizations are created, involving a creative act that generates value from nothing (Idowu, 2006). Moreover, entrepreneurship involves acquiring skills essential for undertaking the risk associated with establishing a business. It encompasses formulating effective strategies and their resolute implementation, demonstrating determination, persistence, and passion, analogous to engaging in a strategic endeavor (Ademiluyi, 2022).

Origin of the term Entrepreneurship

Notably, the word's meaning, scope, and acceptance have evolved. The concept of entrepreneurship is complex and has undergone evolution over time. Gangaiah and Viswanath (2014) trace the etymology of the term "entrepreneurship" back to the French word "entreprendre," originally signifying an individual organizing musical or other entertainment events, a usage dating back to the 16th century. In the Medieval Era, an "entrepreneur" oversaw significant projects, primarily managing them with available resources rather than assuming risks (Lakeus, 2014).

Moreover, during the 17th century, the term expanded to include professionals like architects and contractors in construction, fortification, and public works. Only in the early 18th century did the term begin to be associated with economic aspects. Some economists propose that the term might have originated from the German word 'Unternehmen,' conveying the notion of 'undertaking' or 'to take on,' capturing the essential attributes of an entrepreneur. French economist Richard Cotillion is widely credited with coining the term "entrepreneurship" in its modern sense around 1730 (Gautam & Singh, 2015).

They further note that in the 19th and 20th centuries, prominent economists and scholars, including Adam Smith and Alfred Marshall, expanded upon Cotillion's ideas. They introduced elements like leadership and acknowledged entrepreneurship within organizational activities. Nevertheless, the core principles of risk-taking and the pursuit of

profit consistently remained central to entrepreneurship. Specific individuals consistently demonstrate innovative thinking in the contemporary context of global work practices and technological advancements. These individuals exhibit a passion for novelty and endeavor to set themselves apart. Eminent global entrepreneurs, including Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Narayana Murthy, Larry Page, Sergey Brin (co-founders of Google), and Mark Zuckerberg (CEO of Facebook), have emerged as highly inspirational and influential figures in their respective fields.

Balasubramanian (2012) posited that entrepreneurship constitutes a crucial element of any nation's economy, functioning as a primary catalyst for creating employment opportunities and economic growth. Introducing novel technologies, products, and services profoundly affects human lives. Entrepreneurs, guided by their creative insight and resolute determination to overcome challenges, contribute to societal improvement through innovation. They play a pivotal role in cultivating a society that is economically prosperous, socially adept, and technologically advanced (Stoica et al., 2020).

Benefit of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship represents a valuable national asset, with entrepreneurs as the driving force behind creating economic value within a country. This dynamic process has the potential not only to foster wealth accumulation but also to generate additional value, ultimately contributing to enhanced societal well-being (Boldureanu et al., 2020).

The fundamental objective of entrepreneurship is optimizing the efficient allocation of underutilized resources, including labor and capital. Entrepreneurs willingly embrace risks intending to attain profitability or, in the context of social entrepreneurship, address communal challenges. Consequently, the significance of entrepreneurs and the broader role of entrepreneurship extend beyond the confines of the business realm.

- Entrepreneurs found new businesses that increase/improve economic activities

Entrepreneurs' innovative contributions, such as new goods and services, generate new jobs, which can create a ripple effect or gainful loop in the economy. The stimulation of complementary firms or industries that support the new enterprise contributes to future economic development.

- Reduced unemployment

In Nigeria, joblessness and unemployment are current challenges. Entrepreneurship creates jobs by harnessing an entrepreneur's inventive abilities, the capacity to perceive a gap that needs to be filled or a need that needs to be fulfilled, and taking the initiative to fill the gap or meet the demands.

As a result, entrepreneurs employ themselves and other jobless individuals as their companies expand.

- Increased National INCOME

Nigeria's national income will rise as more individuals pursue entrepreneurial opportunities. Entrepreneurs are seen as national assets and building blocks for a country's economic progress. In Nigeria, the Federal Government recognizes the critical role that entrepreneurship plays. It is encouraging more individuals to pursue it by providing low-interest loans and making the economy more entrepreneur-friendly.

- Development

When new enterprises, projects, and firms are established in a specific location, it generally brings development to the community and neighbouring communities.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

The academic literature debates the terminology associated with concepts such as entrepreneurship education, enterprise education, and entrepreneurial education. The fundamental premise emphasizes a conceptual differentiation between entrepreneurship education and enterprise education: the former accentuates the fostering of self-reliance, while the latter focuses on nurturing individuals with a propensity for recognizing opportunities. Nevertheless, as exemplified by Gibb and Price (2019), certain scholars argue that these two terms are theoretically synonymous but contextually distinct.

Gibb & Price (2019) further contends that entrepreneurship education is predominantly used in the United States and Canada, while enterprise education is more commonly employed in the United Kingdom and Ireland. In contrast, Jones and English (2004) consistently utilize the term entrepreneurial education, defining it as "a process aimed at equipping individuals with the capacity to discern commercial opportunities and providing them with the necessary insight, self-assurance, knowledge, and skills to act upon them." Despite this ongoing debate, it is noteworthy that most scholarly publications interchangeably use these phrases, including entrepreneurship education, enterprise education, or even entrepreneurial education.

An entrepreneur is characterized as someone capable of translating ideas into actionable initiatives. This capacity encompasses elements of creativity, innovation, and risk-taking, along with the aptitude for strategic project planning and management aimed at achieving predetermined objectives. Thus, entrepreneurship education can be defined as a structured procedure facilitating the practical utilization of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and competencies for professional purposes. Its scope extends beyond mere imparting skills related to becoming independent business proprietors; rather, it endeavors to establish and nurture a pedagogical environment conducive to cultivating entrepreneurial qualities and behaviors. These attributes encompass fostering creativity, promoting independent thinking, encouraging risk-taking, instilling a sense of responsibility, and fostering an appreciation for diversity (Gautam & Singh, 2015).

Entrepreneurship education is strategically designed to cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets among prospective entrepreneurs. It serves as a catalyst, prompting young individuals to contemplate entrepreneurship and its significance within the broader business community, bearing in mind its economic and social development implications. This educational approach allows students to scrutinize the rapid transformations transpiring in their surroundings, thereby fostering a propensity to consider self-employment and enterprise establishment as viable career choices (Boldureanu et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship education is a specialized instruction aimed at equipping individuals with the essential principles, skills, and methodologies necessary for recognizing and assessing business opportunities. It emphasizes the ability to mobilize requisite resources, the motivation to seize these opportunities, and the initiation of appropriate actions to ensure success in various professional or occupational pursuits. This educational paradigm is the bedrock for cultivating the adaptable competencies imperative for active engagement in knowledge-intensive economic endeavors. Notably, entrepreneurship education constitutes a targeted training program for students within the vocational and technical education realm. Its primary objective is to endow them with the proficiencies, innovative insights, and managerial aptitudes required to embark on self-employment rather than seeking traditional wage-based employment opportunities (Kirby, 2004).

Dabale and Masese (2014) posit that entrepreneurship education comprises three components: creativity, involving the generation of various ideas; innovation, entailing the identification of value in chosen ideas; and entrepreneurship, encompassing the establishment of a business based on innovative ideas. Fayolle and Gaily (2015) have elucidated that entrepreneurship training is formulated to impart the requisite skills and knowledge before embarking on a novel business undertaking. Although the program does not offer an absolute assurance of success, it serves the valuable purpose of mitigating numerous pitfalls that less prepared contemporaries might otherwise encounter.

According to Swargiary (2024), entrepreneurship education holds paramount significance in entrepreneurship development. It serves as the catalyst that drives the transformation of creativity and innovation into tangible expressions, often taking the form of business ventures and diverse investment prospects. The absence of a robust educational foundation can impede the realization of entrepreneurial skills within individuals, potentially hindering their ability to translate these skills into practical endeavors effectively.

Aide'Ojeifo (2012) posited that entrepreneurship education is an enduring and continuous learning journey that commences as early as elementary education and extends across all educational tiers, encompassing adult education. Establishing standards, accompanied by their corresponding performance indicators, serves as a foundational framework for educators. This framework aids them in constructing precise and objective learning activities and assessment strategies tailored to their intended audience. Leveraging

this framework, students can engage in progressively more intricate and demanding educational experiences. These experiences equip them with the necessary insights for identifying and cultivating entrepreneurial endeavours. Additionally, they acquire the proficiency required to initiate and effectively manage their enterprises, thus enabling them to harness emerging opportunities successfully.

Justification for Entrepreneurship Education

There is a discernible pattern of business failure, with approximately 20% of newly established businesses experiencing failure within the initial two years of operation, followed by a 45% failure rate within the first five years and a 65% failure rate within the initial decade (Black, 2023). The data further reveals that only a quarter of newly established businesses manage to endure for 15 years or longer. Numerous factors have been advanced to elucidate the causes behind business failures, and one noteworthy factor is the dearth of knowledge among entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs. Dasgupta et al. (2015) note that early scholars once argued that entrepreneurs possess inherent traits rather than acquiring them through education and training. They believed that the role of educating individuals to become more entrepreneurial was beyond the purview of business schools and colleges. Amaral et al. (2024) posited that many individuals exhibit reluctance toward pursuing entrepreneurial careers due to their perception of the field as inherently unpredictable and fraught with risks.

In contrast to earlier viewpoints, modern research indicates that entrepreneurship is susceptible to development through systematic education and training (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). According to Bechard and Toulouse (1998), entrepreneurship education is a structured curriculum specifically crafted to educate individuals interested in initiating their own enterprises. The principal aim of entrepreneurship education is to foster an entrepreneurial mindset among students, as Cui et al. (2021) articulated. Zhou et al., (2021) affirmed, based on a research endeavor involving college students in China, that it is imperative to incorporate entrepreneurship education into the reform and development initiatives, personnel training frameworks, and teaching evaluation criteria of colleges and universities.

Recent studies have firmly established the imperative necessity for entrepreneurship education. However, a contentious discourse persists regarding the methodologies for delivering such education and the perceptions held by students regarding entrepreneurship education. Kirby (2004) initiates an ongoing discourse regarding the contributions of universities and business schools to entrepreneurship education. There is a prevailing argument that the conventional education system inadequately nurtures the attributes and

competencies crucial for fostering entrepreneurs. It is asserted that traditional education primarily imparts skills geared toward employment preparation rather than equipping individuals for entrepreneurial success (Zahari, 2023). Thus, there is an advocated paradigm shift in the learning process, emphasizing that entrepreneurship should extend beyond new venture creation to encompass broader concepts of creativity and transformative change (Kirby, 2004).

Scholars and professionals advocate for entrepreneurial education based on its perceived role as a substantial driver of economic growth and the generation of employment opportunities (Stoica et al., 2020). Gibb and Price (2019) also highlight that entrepreneurial education responds to the contemporary globalized, unpredictable, and intricate socio-economic landscape. The increasing imperative for individuals and organizations to equip themselves with entrepreneurial competencies is emphasized. Beyond economic development and job creation justifications, there is a growing focus on the impact of entrepreneurial activities on the perceived relevance, engagement, and motivation of students and employees within educational and occupational domains (Amabile & Kramer, 2011). Moreover, entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized for its capacity to address significant societal concerns, positioning entrepreneurial education to empower individuals and organizations to generate social value for the broader public good (Zahra & Wright, 2016).

However, despite the growing emphasis on economic success and employment generation, entrepreneurial education has not yet evolved into an integrated pedagogical approach encompassing all students at various educational levels. Thus far, the predominant focus has predominantly centered on elective courses and programs targeting a select group of secondary school and university students who already exhibit some degree of entrepreneurial inclination, thereby self-selecting into entrepreneurial education (Kuluchumila, 2020). Up to this point, the predominant focus on the economic ramifications of entrepreneurial education has hindered its widespread integration into other facets of the educational system. Instead, some educators perceive it with skepticism, often viewing it as a potential threat, contending that the encroachment of "capitalism" into educational institutions is a disconcerting development.

A more viable point of departure in education might be to regard entrepreneurial education as a vehicle for enhancing students' interest, enjoyment, engagement, and creative thinking (Lackéus, 2013). Some experts have recently postulated that entrepreneurial education has the potential to augment students' perceived relevance of the subjects they study, consequently bolstering motivation and fostering greater school engagement. This, in turn, could mitigate issues such as student boredom and dropout rates (Lackeus, 2015). This is, however, a very unusual approach so far in practice. Another unconventional yet intriguing point of departure for entrepreneurial education lies in the burgeoning interest

among students in social entrepreneurship (Kickul & Lyons, 2020). In this context, entrepreneurship can be positioned as a powerful tool for young people to endeavour to effect meaningful societal change. If such an interest can be mobilized as part of the curriculum, it may push deep learning and apply theoretical information in relevant ways for students. Entrepreneurship education is justified at multiple levels, encompassing individual, organizational, and societal dimensions. One commonly asserted rationale at the individual level is the promotion of job creation, aiming to cultivate individuals capable of contributing to job growth (Lackeus, 2015). Additionally, economic success for individuals is emphasized, positioning entrepreneurship as a pathway to economic prosperity (Lackeus, 2015).

Shifting to the organizational level, the focus turns to the significance of entrepreneurial education in organizational renewal. The argument posits that instilling entrepreneurial skills is fundamental to firms' long-term success and vitality (Lackeus, 2015). Furthermore, the role of entrepreneurial firms in creating job opportunities and contributing to organizational growth is highlighted (Lackeus, 2015). On the societal level, entrepreneurship and innovation are underscored as primary drivers of overall economic growth and job creation (Lackeus, 2015). This perspective aligns with the view that a deregulated and flexible market necessitates individuals with advanced general skills to navigate evolving economic landscapes (Lackeus, 2015).

Less frequently cited but promising reasons for entrepreneurial education include considerations of joy, engagement, and creativity. Entrepreneurial skills and abilities are posited as vital for individual joy and pride, with the creation of value identified as a significant source of satisfaction (Lackeus, 2015). At the organizational level, employee creativity and joy are essential for new and existing organizations (Lackeus, 2015). Moreover, the economic wealth of nations is suggested to correlate with the happiness of their citizens (Lackeus, 2015). Another less commonly stated justification revolves around addressing societal challenges. This perspective underscores that individuals, irrespective of background, can contribute to society and achieve economic success (Lackeus, 2015). The potential collaboration between corporations and small social entrepreneurship initiatives is highlighted as a means to create social value. Furthermore, social entrepreneurship is acknowledged for its capacity to address societal problems that traditional market mechanisms may fail to resolve (Lackeus, 2015).

Connection of Entrepreneurship Education to Other Fields

According to Wei et al. (2019), entrepreneurship education is primarily oriented toward cultivating creative talents that can be effectively applied in various contexts, including practices, educational settings, and environments conducive to fostering innovation. Within the learning network framework, student entrepreneurs harness multi-faceted interactions to

facilitate the process of knowledge iteration (Wei et al., 2019). The genesis of innovation is a product of dynamic interactions among elements encompassing the environment, organizational dynamics, and the entrepreneurial actors themselves. Entrepreneurial competence manifests through the adaptation of behaviors and strategies aimed at influencing the actions of others within relational contexts, yielding substantial returns and fostering innovation.

Presently, entrepreneurship has solidified its status as a standard component of university curricula worldwide. Many academic institutions have expanded their entrepreneurship education initiatives to encompass cross-disciplinary courses, incorporating learning objectives that span both entrepreneurship and specific academic disciplines. Canziani and Welsh, in their 2019 content analysis study, scrutinized 345 learning goals within a comprehensive cross-disciplinary entrepreneurship program. Their research findings underscore the pivotal role of entrepreneurship education in equipping individuals in diverse professions with entrepreneurial skill sets while serving as a bridge to impart conventional business concepts (Canziani & Welsh, 2019).

General education primarily centers on fostering holistic student development, encompassing a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills. In contrast, the entrepreneurial curriculum system is the foundational framework for comprehensively enhancing students' entrepreneurial competencies. Consequently, entrepreneurship education establishes a multifaceted learning infrastructure, enabling student entrepreneurs to refine their proficiencies continually through a network of social learning. Consequently, entrepreneurship education holds the potential to bolster students' self-assurance in their capacity to address novel and unforeseen challenges. Each domain within education confronts a distinct array of challenges. Embracing entrepreneurship education as a multidisciplinary domain effectively equips learners across diverse fields to navigate current, evolving, and prospective issues.

Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Osuala (2013) delineates the objectives of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria as outlined below:

1. Providing young individuals with a substantial and purposeful education that promotes self-reliance and encourages them toward self-sufficiency.
2. Equipping graduates with the necessary training and support for careers in small and medium-sized enterprises.
3. Endowing graduates with skills and training to meet societal manpower demands effectively.
4. Imparting graduates with comprehensive risk management training facilitates a more feasible approach to risk-taking.

5. Stimulating industrial and economic development in rural and underdeveloped regions.
6. Providing graduates with training that fosters creativity and innovation, enabling them to identify novel business opportunities.
7. Offering small and medium-sized enterprises the opportunity to recruit highly qualified graduates with training and mentorship in relevant business management skills.

In 2006, the Nigerian government introduced entrepreneurship education, known as entrepreneurship studies, into the university curriculum. This initiative mandated entrepreneurship studies as a compulsory course for all students, regardless of their field of specialization, as reported by Okojie in 2009. The practical implementation of this curriculum change began in the academic year 2007/2008. Many educational institutions established coordinating centers dedicated to entrepreneurship education to facilitate student training. The Ministry of Education granted the Nigerian University Commission (NUC) presidential directives to oversee and manage the implementation of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian higher learning institutions, as detailed in Okojie's work in 2009, initially hailed as a solution to youth unemployment and a catalyst for long-term private-sector-driven economic prosperity, entrepreneurship education aimed to furnish tertiary-level students with knowledge, skills, and motivation for entrepreneurial success across various pursuits (Oriazowanlan, 2013).

The Nigerian University Commission (NUC) has delineated ten specific categories within the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BEMAS) guidelines to facilitate the effective delivery of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. These categories encompass diverse aspects of entrepreneurship education, including an introductory understanding of entrepreneurship, the theoretical and practical dimensions, an exploration of business types, staffing considerations, and marketing strategies. Additionally, the guidelines cover crucial topics such as capital requirements, financial planning, management, feasibility studies, and innovation. Legal issues related to business, considerations regarding insurance and the environment, and exploring potential business opportunities in Nigeria constitute integral components of the outlined standards.

Despite the comprehensive nature of these guidelines, the initial optimism and momentum surrounding entrepreneurship education have subsided over more than a decade since its introduction. This decline in enthusiasm has resulted in unmet expectations, reflecting a need for renewed efforts and strategies to invigorate and enhance the impact of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

State of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has made notable progress through government initiatives such as the Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN!) and the Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS), aimed at fostering youth entrepreneurship and reducing

unemployment. Non-governmental organizations like the Tony Elumelu Foundation and Fate Foundation also provide entrepreneurship training, mentorship, and funding to aspiring entrepreneurs (Oladeji et al., 2022). Empirical Review of Entrepreneurial Youth Empowerment Initiatives in South-Western Nigeria. Additionally, Nigerian universities offer entrepreneurship programs through institutions like the Entrepreneurship Development Centers (EDCs), which aim to equip students with the skills to start and run businesses. However, despite these efforts, several challenges hinder the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in the country.

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has undergone significant developments and reforms over the years. Its introduction was met with considerable optimism and high hopes, with the belief that it would not only address issues of youth unemployment but also spur economic growth through cultivating entrepreneurial skills and mindsets among the country's youth (Aliu, 2008). However, as time has passed, a series of challenges have surfaced that have hindered the realization of these lofty expectations. These challenges include:

- **Inadequate qualified manpower:** A notable challenge within the realm of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria pertains to the scarcity of qualified instructors possessing practical expertise in entrepreneurship. While exceptions exist, such as the Lagos Business School, which incorporates accomplished entrepreneurs into its faculty, most educational institutions employ faculty members lacking firsthand experience in entrepreneurship (Ezenwakwelu *et al.*, 2019).
- **Curriculum issues:** The entrepreneurship program is not included in the main school curricula at certain levels. Furthermore, the curriculum for many school fields concentrates more on the practice of the discipline and less on the entrepreneurial viewpoint. The curriculum of various areas needs to be evaluated to make it more entrepreneurially rich.
- **Capital:** It is imperative to acknowledge that entrepreneurship education is capital-intensive, necessitating financial resources for educators and students to translate theoretical knowledge into the practical realm of initiating, establishing, and managing businesses. This financial demand is a significant impediment that hinders the seamless integration of entrepreneurship into the academic curricula of Nigerian universities. Moreover, the deficiency in essential teaching and learning infrastructure, along with inadequate equipment for practical-oriented courses, compounds the challenges faced by educational institutions in delivering effective entrepreneurship education (Amoor, 2008).

- **Resource material:** The vast majority of entrepreneurial resource resources are non-African. They were created in Europe and America. It is necessary to provide local material with an African context that is more relevant to Africans.
- Insufficient government policies on entrepreneurship education pose a challenge. Despite one of the education goals in Nigeria's national policy emphasizing the development of skills and competencies for positive societal contribution, interpreted as entrepreneurship education, there is a pressing need for enhanced emphasis and more effective implementation strategies. This is essential to transitioning Nigeria into a producer economy (Ediagbonya, 2013). The absence of a robust policy framework to catalyze the application of entrepreneurial skills acquired in school is a significant factor contributing to Nigerian graduates' lack of entrepreneurial motivation. The dearth of essential support, such as limited access to credit/loans, absence of tax rebates, widespread poverty, elevated inflation rates, technical infringements, political instability, and personal safety and property concerns, further exacerbate this challenge. Notably, the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in the United States is attributed to the unique ability of universities to integrate entrepreneurship, supported by federal initiatives like the Perkins Act (Agbonlahor, 2016).
- **Lack of research support:** The original intent of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria encompassed utilising research outcomes generated by university students. In contrast, the paradigm of entrepreneurship education prevalent in China and various Asian countries has been founded on exploiting the commercial potential inherent in research and development endeavors (Millman et al., 2008). This dimension of education is notably absent in Nigeria, which is marked by a conspicuous dearth of research support mechanisms. A significant portion of student research endeavors is characterized by a lack of focus and a disconnect from practical applications in the real-world context. This deficiency can be attributed to inadequate financial backing, limited research capabilities, and a dearth of viable linkages. Developed nations such as the United States and China, where entrepreneurship education has served as a potent driver of economic growth, innovation, and societal well-being, have achieved these outcomes through sustained investment in long-term research initiatives and strategic partnerships with private sector entities driven by commercial objectives (Agbonlahor, 2016). Zhou et al. (2021) further underscore the stark contrast by highlighting that many Chinese universities maintain dedicated entrepreneurship funds to evaluate students' business proposals and incentivize those demonstrating significant promise. Such forms of support, whether domestic or foreign, are conspicuously absent within the Nigerian context.

Practical Dimension

Entrepreneurship education has proven to be instrumental in developing a resilient and self-reliant workforce in Nigeria, particularly amidst challenges like university strikes and limited access to stable job markets. Through practical, skill-focused training, students are equipped with knowledge and practical tools for real-world application, allowing them to develop marketable skills even outside traditional classrooms. Therefore, the practical dimension of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria revolves around structured and informal training opportunities that empower individuals to innovate, adapt, and thrive in a competitive landscape.

Digital Skill Development

In the digital era, the availability of online learning platforms has democratized access to technology-oriented skills. Many Nigerian students are increasingly taking online courses in web development, software programming, data analytics, and graphic design. Platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and LinkedIn Learning provide cost-effective courses that enable students to acquire skills relevant to the modern job market. This digital literacy prepares them for remote work opportunities and fosters a pool of young entrepreneurs proficient in technology-based solutions.

Hands-on Skill Acquisition and Vocational Training

Practical entrepreneurial training in Nigeria strongly emphasizes hands-on skills that cater to high-demand markets. Students acquire vocational skills in fashion design, hairstyling, event planning, and culinary arts, often through on-campus workshops or internships with local businesses. This training serves as a foundation for students to create self-sustaining businesses that meet the needs of local communities, offering services that improve their economic standing and community engagement.

Startup Incubators and Entrepreneurship Hubs

Entrepreneurship hubs and incubation centers rapidly expand across Nigeria, especially in major cities like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt. These centers offer students access to resources, mentorship, and networks essential for launching their businesses. Through these hubs, students receive guidance in business plan development, funding access, and marketing strategies, which are crucial for startup success. Hubs like the Tony Elumelu Foundation and the Co-Creation Hub (CcHub) foster innovation and provide a supportive ecosystem for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Freelancing and Remote Work Platforms

The rise of the gig economy has introduced Nigerian students to freelance work, enabling them to leverage their skills in a global marketplace. Platforms such as Fiverr, Upwork, and Total offer avenues for students to work as independent contractors in fields like digital marketing, content creation, and virtual assistance. This trend encourages entrepreneurship and allows students to develop a professional portfolio, establishing themselves as credible service providers without requiring significant upfront capital.

E-commerce and Digital Marketplaces

E-commerce is increasingly becoming a viable pathway for entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Many students are tapping into platforms like Jumia, Konga, and social media channels to start small businesses focused on products ranging from fashion items to handcrafted goods. This approach to entrepreneurship education allows students to practice essential business skills like inventory management, customer service, and digital marketing while meeting consumer demands.

Through these practical applications, entrepreneurship education in Nigeria bridges the gap between academic knowledge and employable skills, fostering a culture of self-reliance, adaptability, and resilience among young Nigerians. This dimension also aligns with national objectives for economic growth, as it empowers students to actively contribute to the economy through innovative and scalable business models.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship education emerges as a pivotal tool in pursuing sustained economic growth, job creation, and the enhancement of societal well-being, aligning with fundamental national objectives. Its role in fostering entrepreneurship development positions it as a catalytic force toward realizing these aspirations. Like other facets of education, entrepreneurship education seeks to shape an individual's character and disposition through systematic dissemination of essential concepts, aiming to effect behavioral reorientation. In the Nigerian context, the formal integration of entrepreneurship education into university curricula materialized in 2006.

At its inception, entrepreneurship education garnered substantial attention for its potential to cultivate entrepreneurial competencies, alleviate youth unemployment, and stimulate sustainable economic expansion. It was hailed as a panacea for economic revitalization, particularly in light of challenges such as dwindling government revenue, escalating youth joblessness, diminishing public investments, and the contraction of private sector enterprises. Nevertheless, a decade later, the initial vigour and optimism that accompanied the launch of entrepreneurship education have waned, leaving behind unfulfilled expectations.

The study highlights the importance of investing in human capital through education to foster long-term economic progress. In line with this, it is recommended that policymakers prioritize investments in education and skill development programs, particularly those focused on entrepreneurship. These investments will be crucial for enhancing the nation's workforce by developing students' productivity, creativity, and technical capabilities, which are essential for national development. Furthermore, educational institutions should play a key role by integrating entrepreneurial education into their curricula, providing students with the necessary skills and mindset to contribute to economic growth.

In addition to formal education, the study suggests that students can use academic strikes or breaks more effectively by engaging in free online training opportunities. These programs can offer practical skills in coding, event planning, decoration, beauty services, hairdressing, and online sales and marketing. Educational institutions should encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities and develop essential skills outside the traditional classroom setting. Training providers, particularly those offering online courses, are also responsible for making these opportunities accessible and relevant to students' career aspirations.

The study also addresses the conflicting views on entrepreneurship and the lack of a standard definition in existing literature. To resolve this issue, researchers and scholars are encouraged to conduct more comprehensive studies that can provide clarity on what constitutes entrepreneurship. A universally accepted definition will be vital for guiding entrepreneurial education and practice, ensuring consistency and alignment across educational institutions and policy frameworks.

Moreover, creating entrepreneurial opportunities for students should be a priority for the government and the private sector. Policymakers and businesses can collaborate to establish entrepreneurial incubators and platforms that allow students to experiment with their ideas and gain practical experience. Successful entrepreneurs can also contribute by mentoring students, offering valuable insights from real-world business operations, and encouraging the next generation of innovators.

Finally, it is crucial to ensure that entrepreneurial education and skill development opportunities are inclusive and accessible to all students, regardless of socioeconomic background. Governments and non-governmental organizations should work to eliminate barriers preventing students from participating in these programs, ensuring that everyone can contribute to national development. Entrepreneurial education should also be embedded in broader national development strategies, helping to build a workforce that can drive economic growth, job creation, and innovation. By focusing on these recommendations, stakeholders can effectively enhance entrepreneurial skill development and contribute to the nation's long-term economic progress.

References

- Adegbite, S. (2010). *Entrepreneurial competence and business performance in Nigeria*. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Ademiluyi, A. B. (2022). Stakeholders' perceptions of competencies and qualities needed for successful entrepreneurship by female polytechnic students (Doctoral dissertation, Kwara State University, Nigeria).
- Agbonlahor, A. A. (2016). Challenges of entrepreneurial education in Nigerian universities: Towards a repositioning for impact. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 6(1), 104-116. MCSER Publishing.
- Ahmad, N., & Seymour, R. G. (2006). Defining entrepreneurial activity: Definitions supporting frameworks for data collection. *OECD*. Retrieved April 10, 2015, from <http://www.oecd.org/industry/business-states/39651330.pdf>.
- Aide'Ojeifo, S. (2012). Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(14), 78-82.
- Amabile, T., & Kramer, S. (2011). *The progress principle: Using small wins to ignite joy, engagement, and creativity at work*. Harvard Business Press.
- Amaral, D. T., Nieuwenhuizen, C., & Schachtebeck, C. (2024). Assessing the influence of entrepreneurial education on individual entrepreneurial orientation of university students. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 13(1), 70.
- Amoor, S. S. (2008). Integrating entrepreneurship education into business education curriculum in Nigerian universities. *Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts*, 2(2). Retrieved from http://ww1.abu.edu.ng/publications/2011-08-24-094933_4831.docx.
- Audretsch, D. B., Belitski, M., Caiazza, R., Chowdhury, F., & Menter, M. (2023). Entrepreneurial growth, value creation and new technologies. *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, 48(5), 1535-1551.
- Audretsch, D. B., & Belitski, M. (2021). Frank Knight, uncertainty and knowledge spillover entrepreneurship. *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 17(6), 1005-1031.
- Balasubramanian, A. (2012). Entrepreneurship education. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from <http://www.thehindu.com/todayspaper/tpfeatures/tpopportunities/entrepreneurshipeducation/article3860321.ece>.
- Bechard, J. P., & Toulouse, J. M. (1998). Validation of a didactic model for the analysis of training objectives in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 13(4), 317-332. doi:10.1016/S0883-9026(98)80006-2
- Black, K. (2023). *Business statistics: For contemporary decision making*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Boldureanu, G., Ionescu, A. M., Bercu, A. M., Bedrule-Grigoruță, M. V., & Boldureanu, D. (2020). Entrepreneurship education through successful entrepreneurial models in higher education institutions. *Sustainability*, 12(3), 1267.

- Canziani, F. B., & Welsh, D. H. (2019). How entrepreneurship influences other disciplines: An examination of learning goals. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 100278.
- Chaurasia, S. (2022). Concept of entrepreneur and entrepreneurship. In *Agricultural Microbiology Based Entrepreneurship: Making Money from Microbes* (pp. 3-24). Springer Nature Singapore.
- Cui, J., Sun, J., & Bell, R. (2021). The impact of entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial mindset of college students in China: The mediating role of inspiration and the role of educational attributes. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 19(1), 100296.
- Dabale, W. P., & Masese, T. (2014). The influence of entrepreneurship education on beliefs, attitudes, and intentions: A cross-sectional study of Africa university graduates. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 3(9), 1-13.
- Dasgupta, U., Gangadharan, L., Maitra, P., Mani, S., & Subramanian, S. (2015). Choosing to be trained: Do behavioral traits matter? *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 110, 145-159.
- Diandra, D., & Azmy, A. (2020). Understanding definition of entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics*, 7(5), 235-241.
- Ediagbonya, K. (2013). The roles of entrepreneurship education in ensuring economic empowerment and development.
- Eijdenberg, E. L., Paas, L. J., & Masurel, E. (2015). Entrepreneurial motivation and small business growth in Rwanda. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 7(3), 212-240.
- Ezenwakwelu, C. A., Egbosionu, N. A., & Okwo, H. U. (2019). Apprenticeship training effects on entrepreneurship development in developing economies. *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal*, 25(1), 1-21.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004). *National policy on education*. Lagos: NERDC.
- Fayolle, A., & Gailly, B. (2015). The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial attitudes and intention: Hysteresis and persistence. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53(1), 75-93.
- Gangaiah, B., & Viswanath, J. (2014). Impact of Indian management education in developing entrepreneurial aspirations and attitudes among management students. *Asia Pacific Journal of Research*, 1(1), 1-10. Retrieved February 14, 2015, from http://www.academia.edu/7603959/IMPACT_OF_INDIAN_MANAGEMENT_EDUCATION_IN_DEVELOPING_ENTREPRENEURIAL_ASPIRATIONS_AND_ATTITUDES_AMONG_MANAGEMENT_STUDENTS.
- Gautam, M. K., & Singh, D. S. K. (2015). Entrepreneurship education: Concept, characteristics, and implications for teacher education.

- Gibb, A., & Price, A. (2019). *A compendium of pedagogies for teaching entrepreneurship*. National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education.
- Hisrich, R. D., Peters, M. P., & Shepherd, D. (2005). *Entrepreneurship*. Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited.
- Idowu, K. A. (2006). *The Nigerian entrepreneur and technical advancement*. University Press, Ibadan.
- Johannison, B. (2010). The agony of the Swedish school when confronted by entrepreneurship. In Skogen, K., & Sjøvoll, J. (Eds.), *Creativity and Innovation: Preconditions for Entrepreneurial Education* (pp. 91-110). Tapir Academic Press.
- Jones, C., & English, J. (2004). A contemporary approach to entrepreneurship education. *Education + Training*, 46(8/9), 416-23. Retrieved February 20, 2015, from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/00400910410569533>.
- Kickul, J., & Lyons, T. S. (2020). *Understanding social entrepreneurship: The relentless pursuit of mission in an ever-changing world*. Routledge.
- Kirby, D. A. (2004). Entrepreneurship education: Can business schools meet the challenge? *Education + Training*, 46, 510-519.
- Kuluchumila, R. C. (2020). Teaching and learning entrepreneurship in Tanzanian higher education institutions: A systematic literature review (1961 to 2018). *Enterprising Africa*, 171-190.
- Kuratko, D. F., Fisher, G., & Audretsch, D. B. (2021). Unraveling the entrepreneurial mindset. *Small Business Economics*, 57(4), 1681-1691.
- Lackeus, M. (2015). Entrepreneurship in education: What, why, when, and how. *Entrepreneurship 360 Background Paper*. Available at http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/BGP_Entrepreneurship-in-Education.pdf (http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/BGP_Entrepreneurship-in-Education.pdf).
- Lakeus, M. (2014). Entrepreneurial education – Why, what, how. Paper presented at Capacity Building Seminar Promoting Entrepreneurial Education in Schools, 2-6 November.
- Mohebi, L., & Bailey, F. (2020). Exploring Bem's self-perception theory in educational context. *Encyclopaedia*, 24(58), 1.
- Oladeji, O. S., Oyediji, T. O., Adenika, A. O., Ayinla, F. Z., Otayokhe, E. Y., & Ajiboye, W. T. (2022). Empirical review of entrepreneurial youth empowerment initiatives in South-Western Nigeria.
- Oriazowanlan, A. O. (2013). Status of entrepreneurship education in South-South Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

- Osuala, Q. I., & Orutugu, I. (2013). Entrepreneurial education for peace and sustainable development. *Challenges and Prospects in African Education Systems*, 95.
- Oshineye, A., & Alo, E. A. (2024). Promoting entrepreneurship through managerial skills: A survey of selected private universities in Osun State, Nigeria. *Adeleke University Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 54-65.
- Stoliarchuk, O., Liang, K., Khrypko, S., Ishchuk, O., Serhieienkova, O., Kalishchuk, S., & Divchuk, T. (2023). Bridging education and sustainable development: Assessing future psychologists' perspectives. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 12(3), 307-307.
- Stoica, O., Roman, A., & Rusu, V. D. (2020). The nexus between entrepreneurship and economic growth: A comparative analysis on groups of countries. *Sustainability*, 12(3), 1186.
- Swargiary, K. (2024). *Empowering India: The Imperative for Entrepreneurship Education*. Scholars Press.
- Wei, X., Liu, X., & Sha, J. (2019). How does entrepreneurship education influence students' innovation? Testing on the multiple mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1557.
- Zahari, A. (2023). Access to entrepreneurship education in India: A study in both formal and informal ways for youths and young adults to acquire entrepreneurship skills and knowledge.
- Zhou, Y., Li, H., & Shahzad, F. (2021). Does college education promote entrepreneurship education in China? *Sage Open*, 11(3), 21582440211031616.