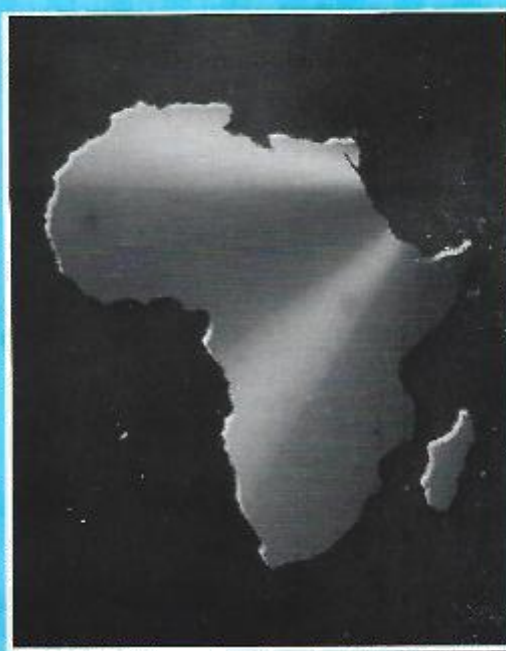


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## **THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN EMPOWERING NIGERIA YOUTH THROUGH HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the role of entrepreneurship in empowering Nigerian youth through home economics education. The paper shows how entrepreneurship taught through home economics can help empower youth. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. 200 students were used as respondents, selected randomly from 10 schools: 5 from Ika North East and 5 from Ika South, all in the Agbor metropolis. Questionnaires were used for data collection. The data were analysed using the mean rating. The importance of entrepreneurship in empowering Nigerian youth and techniques that can be adopted to integrate entrepreneurship education into the school system were highlighted. Conclusions and recommendations were made.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria is currently experiencing a problem of unemployment arising from an increase in population and the high turnout of school leavers and university graduates. Nigerian youths are said to be confronted with poverty, unemployment, urbanization, and a lack of capacity and skills needed to move the economy forward. According to Onu (2008), many youth lack marketable skills because they lack the basic knowledge of self-reliant education. So

They are left with no choice but to roam the street; some take to robbery, prostitution, cultism, kidnapping, etc. Oguejiofor (2003), citing Olayinka (1983), stated that the country is replaced with adolescents who roam about our urban cities without employment as well as those who contribute minimally to the national economic development. Many Nigerian graduates are faced with problems of unemployment because they lack the necessary

productive skills to make them effective in the society. This denies them their human rights: looking at the unemployment situation in the country and the myriad of problems ranging from it, There is a need to equip learners with skills that will help them get self-employment in order to be able to adapt to life's changing situations. These endemic generational problems can be solved by emphasising more entrepreneurial education. Ojo and Vincent (2000) stated that education is many things to a man: a passport to the unknown, a visa to success, and a catalyst to great heights. Education empowers, emboldens, refines, civilises, enlightens, enriches, and gives confidence to man. Since education empowers youth, they must acquire and master the skills that will help them move forward. According to Ewubare (2007), "empower" means "to enable a person or a group of persons to gain power or authority." Empowerment is the process whereby the powerless or less powerful members of society gain greater access to and control over material resources, knowledge, challenges, and transformation. Mayoux (2005) stated that empowerment involves a transformation of power relations throughout society, resulting in increased well-being, community development, and self-sufficiency. An economy does not expand unless it is pushed forward by the activities of key persons (youths). So it is good to teach them the concept of entrepreneurship. in order to help them learn about wealth creation and boost Nigeria's situation. Onu (2008), citing Wolfolk (1998), stated that the youthful period is a very critical one that has been noted as an essential time for training in entrepreneurship and provides a positive, constructive alternative to the self-destructive behaviour frequently associated with adolescents and growing up. Hence, there is a need for effective implementation of entrepreneurial education at all levels of education in our school. Onu (2006) defines entrepreneurship as the ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in the environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. Egwuelu (2004) stated that "entrepreneurship is the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and actions with the management and organisation skills necessary to mobilise the appropriate people." It is the vital factor in the process of economic development of any country. Entrepreneurship education provided youth with the necessary skills, knowledge, and facilities needed to create new ventures. Ossai (2008), citing Williamson (1986), opined that entrepreneurial education could be an effective way of helping people gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for success in business. One who has this

skill is always a good business tycoon, industrialist, or financier. An entrepreneur is a groundbreaker, a highly motivated one, who takes risks, converts ideas into businesses, and manages them profitably; he or she accounts for economic change, growth, and development. since youth compose a great majority of the unemployed population. Skill training in business, agriculture, home economics, and other related areas should be emphasised as it enhances productivity and creates small, medium, and large-scale enterprises for self-reliance and nation-building. Onu (2008) stated that "dream youths" should have strong skills in business, planning, finance, and accounting, as well as the ability to create new and innovative marketing plans. So, emphasis should be placed on entrepreneurial education as early as possible at all levels of education, starting with primary school, because the high level of unemployment in the country is particularly common among young school leavers because they do not have the marketable skills to become self-employed. Since entrepreneurship helps one to gain the knowledge, skill, and attitude necessary for success in a business, and since Home Economics is a skill-oriented subject that is capable of equipping the participants with basic skills and knowledge that will help them for self-employment, it can serve as a fertile ground for entrepreneurship education. According to Ogbene (2006), home economics is an aspect of vocational education that deals with the knowledge, skills, competencies, and aptitude that one needs wholly and entirely for work or business. So one needs to have skills so as to be self-sustaining after leaving school because skill-oriented courses have the potential to inculcate marketable skills that sustain one throughout life. A lot of business opportunities are available for graduates of Home Economics, in which they can engage as either owners or partners (Odo, 2004). Entrepreneurship via home economics leads to job careers that would further empower youth to function well for wealth creation or small-scale decisions. Such careers include establishing a fashion centre, an interior decoration business, a dyeing business, and a batik shop. Hairdressing and beauty care, daycare centres, catering services, hotel management, baking, fast food businesses, knitting and crocheting, etc. All the careers mentioned above are entrepreneurial in nature, so students who study entrepreneurship via Home Economics education would be exposed to skills that enable them to own a business. Giving one skill means giving one person the power to fight for himself. When youth are empowered, it leads the country to a high economic standard. So entrepreneurship education via home economics should be encouraged at

all levels of education since it encourages the expansion of knowledge and development of skills by every individual in the society.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to identify the importance of entrepreneurial education in specifically empowering Nigerian youth. The purpose of the study was to:

1. Find out the importance of entrepreneurial education in empowering Nigeria's youth.
2. Identify the techniques that can be adopted in the integration of entrepreneurship education in the school system.

### **Research Questions**

The study finds the following:

1. Of what importance is entrepreneurship to empowering Nigerian youth?
2. What are the techniques that can be adopted for the integration of entrepreneurship education in the school system?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Design of Study**

#### **Area and Population of Study**

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in the Agbor metropolis in Delta State. It is made up of 39 schools. 20 in Ika East and 19 in Ika South. The population for the study comprised all the secondary school students in the area.

#### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

A simple random sampling technique through the use of balloting was carried out to select five schools from each of the two local government areas in the metropolis, giving a total of ten schools for the study. From these 10 schools, 20 students were randomly selected, making a total of 200 students.

## Research Instrument

The instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire containing 20 items. The instrument was based on the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was developed using a Likert-style 5-point rating scale.

## Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was face-validated by three experts from the department of vocational education at the College of Education at Agbor.

## Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability coefficient of the instrument was estimated at 0.05.

## Data Collection Technique

Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered by hand by the researcher, and the collection of the filled questionnaires was also done by hand by two assistants.

## Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed and used to answer all the research questionnaires using a means rating. The mean value of the 5 points on the Likert scale was 3.00. Therefore, any item whose mean rating from the respondents was 3.00 and above was accepted, and less than 3.00 was rejected.

## Research Question One

Of what importance is entrepreneurship to empowering Nigerian youth?

**Table 1: Responses on importance of entrepreneurship in empowering Nigeria youth.**

S/N	Items	Means ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Remark
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1	It is an effective way of helping youth gain skill and knowledge necessary for business	3.87	1.16	Agreed
2	It is the vital factor in the process of economy development of any country	4.72	.46	Agreed
3	It provides youth the necessary facilities needed to create new ventures	4.21	1.0	Agreed
4	It helps one to seek out investment opportunities in the environment	4.70	.66	Agreed
5	It provides a fertile ground for nurturing of business.	4.06	.94	Agreed
6	It provides an a venue for discovering knowledge and skills that are relevant to life	4.30	.86	Agreed
7	It exposes youth to various aspects of businesses	3.53	1.24	Agreed
8	It makes youth competent to contribute greatly to national development	4.02	1.07	Agreed
9	It leads to the development of small, medium and large scale businesses	4.46	.68	Agreed
10	It equips the learner with skill on decision making and acquisition of new ideas in business	4.74	.55	Agreed

Table I on importance of entrepreneurship in empowering Nigeria youth. The results show that all the items got mean ratings of above 3.00. This shows that the respondents agreed that all the items knowledge on entrepreneurship will help to empower youth, provides an avenue for discovering knowledge and skills that are relevant to life, as such leads to the development of small, medium and large scale businesses.

### Research Question Two

What are the techniques that can be adopted in integration of entrepreneurship in school system?

Table 2: Responses on the techniques that can be employed in empowering the youth.

S/N	Items	Means ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Remark
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1	Making it compulsory at all level	3.02	1.41	Agreed
2	Inviting a successful small entrepreneurs to teach students real life experiences	4.44	.62	Agreed
3	By making youths realize the importance of entrepreneurship as regard to self employed	3.85	1.06	Agreed
4	Career education talks in Home Economics should emphasis entrepreneurship as a viable career option for student	4.47	.89	Agreed
5	Making entrepreneurship a subject area in Home Economics	3.03	1.41	Agreed
6	Field visits to vocational institutions, training/industrial support institution and small enterprises to view things in process	4.45	.88	Agreed
7	Making practice session for acquiring various skills on the subject compulsory	3.53	1.24	Agreed
8	Discussion on the importance of business entrepreneurs to Nigerian economy	4.51	.71	Agreed
9	Sponsoring practical class by the government	4.08	1.27	Agreed
10	By emphasizing on difference venture, which one can establish outside white collar job.	4.74	.55	Agreed

In Table 2, techniques that can be adopted in integration of entrepreneurship in school system. The results show that all the items have mean of above 3.00 which is the cut-off-point. This showed that by making Entrepreneurship Education compulsory at all level and exposing them to necessary skill and knowledge will help them have saleable skills to make them self-employed.

## DISCUSSION

The result from the data on Table I reveals that entrepreneurship education will help to empower youth. Since it helps to gain necessary skills and knowledge that can make one self-employed, many youth are confronted with unemployment due to a lack of marketable skills. Besides, it exposes youth to various aspects of business that can help contribute to the economic development of the country. These findings are in line with Onu (2006), who opined that entrepreneurship enables individuals to seek



out investment opportunities in the environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. Ossai (2008) opined that entrepreneurial education could be an effective way of helping people gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for success in a business. Table 2 revealed that students should be exposed to real-life experience by visiting vocational institutions and small enterprises to see things in process, emphasising different ventures in which they can engage, emphasising the importance of business entrepreneurs in the Nigerian economy, and making youth realise the importance of entrepreneurship with regard to being self-employed rather than roaming the streets in search of a white collar job. Onu (2008) opined that "dream youths" should have strong skills in business, planning, finance, and accounting, as well as the ability to create new and innovative marketing plans. When entrepreneurship via Home Economics is introduced at an early stage of a child's education, it will give the child an insight into relevant skills since giving him one skill means giving him the power to fight for himself.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study revealed that entrepreneurship via home economics should be encouraged because it equips one with skills and knowledge that make him or her competent to contribute greatly to national development. Giving one skill means giving one the power to fight for him or her without relying on anyone or the government for salaried jobs. So, Nigerian youths need skill-oriented courses in order to enable them to fend for themselves and contribute to the national economy's development.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Workshops and seminars should be organised by the department of home economics to create awareness about the numerous careers in home economics that can make one self-employed.
2. Practical sessions should be given more time to create opportunities for students to master the skills required for self-reliance. The federal government should include entrepreneurship education in home economics curriculum starting from primary to tertiary institutions.
3. Entrepreneurial skills should be built in the students by making them go through an industrial training programme.

4. Funds should be made available for young entrepreneurs to enable them to start small-scale businesses.

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