

## Strategies Towards Effective Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education for Global Competitiveness and Wealth Creation

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### Abstract

The focus of this study was to identify the major challenges to and strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. Two research questions were answered while two hypotheses were formulated and tested. Through Semi-structured interview and questionnaire, data were collected from 160 respondents selected through random sampling technique from four institutions of higher learning in Delta and Edo States of Nigeria. Data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using percent and mean to answer the two research questions and one way analysis of variance to test the hypotheses. Findings emanating from the study indicated that funding, lack of entrepreneurial curriculum and lack of skilled personnel were among the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education institutions in Nigeria. Findings further revealed that establishing entrepreneurship programme centers in institutions and designing entrepreneurial curriculum in line with market demand were among the strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. The study recommended among others that Nigerian government should give priority to higher education funding by meeting up with the 26% budgetary allocation recommended by UNESCO so as to endure effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in schools.

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**Keywords:** entrepreneurship education and training, employment, global competitiveness, higher education, nigeria, wealth creation

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### INTRODUCTION

In all countries of the world, education has been recognized as the engine for economic growth and as a catalyst for national transformation. All discussion on poverty reduction, wealth creation and innovation begins with education. In today's knowledge based economy, individuals of any country need the right type of education and training to be able to function effectively in their society, create wealth and compete globally. Nations can compete based on a variety of factors such as abundant natural resources and by their skilled and educated work force. The skill base of a nation's human capital can be developed in institutions of higher learning via entrepreneurship education and training. Entrepreneurship education is the educating and training process that provides learners knowledge, skills and motivation thereby ensuring entrepreneurial success in different long life learning (Nwadiani, 2011). Becoming an entrepreneur requires an efficient and effective education and training which requires a driving spirit characterized by creativity, critical thinking, initiative, innovation and risk taking. These attributes are lacking in most graduates of Nigerian higher education system which is certificate oriented (Nwadiani, 2011).

World Economic Forum (2011) defined competitiveness as a set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country. World Economic Forum (2012) maintained that the level of productivity of a country sets the level of prosperity that can be earned by the economy and determines the rates of return on investments in the economy, which in turn are the fundamental drivers of a nation's economy growth rates. Competitiveness is the ability of a country to achieve sustained high rates of growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capital (World Economic Forum, 2012). Global competitiveness refers to the employability of the graduates of a country's educational system. According to Kalu (2013), global competitiveness is the ability of a country or firm to provide goods and services which provide better value than their overseas rivals. Nigeria's competitiveness depend on her natural resources and the level of productivity of her human capitals majority of which are products of institutions of higher learning. Productivity requires a combination of domestic and foreign firms operating in the nation. The productivity of domestic industries in a country could be fundamental to the nation's competitiveness. World Economic Forum (2011) maintained that only nations having high levels of productivity are capable of becoming domestically and globally competitive

and are capable of exploring existing market opportunities to sustain real income growth and create jobs on the long run. Porter-Magee (2013) argued that the 20th century industrial economy driven by productivity has been replaced by the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge economy driven by ideas. This assertion by Porter-Magee appears to be emphasized by Kalu (2013) who noted that in a knowledge economy what one knows is as important as what one can do with knowledge. According to World Bank (2009), the ability to produce and use knowledge is a major factor in development which is critical to a nation's competitive advantage. Education for a knowledge economy should cultivate the highly skilled, flexible human capitals needed to compete in global markets (Kalu, 2013).

The ranking of 142 countries by World Economic Forum for 2011-2012, Nigeria ranked 127 with a score of 3.46. In Sub-Saharan Africa the statistics for the ranking is shown in the table below

Table 1: Global Competitiveness Index focus on Sub-Saharan African Countries

S/N	Economy	Score	Rank
1	South Africa	4.34	50
2	Mauritius	4.31	54
3	Rwanda	4.19	70
4	Botswana	4.05	80
5	Kenya	3.82	102
6	Benin	3.78	104
7	Ethopia	3.74	106
8	Ghana	3.65	114
9	Cameroun	3.61	116
10	Nigeria	3.46	127

Source: Adapted from World Economic Forum, 2011

From the data in table 1 above Nigeria can be said to be lagging behind globally. The basic requirements for the ranking are the nine pillars of global competitiveness index such as institutions, infrastructure, macro-economic environment, market efficiency, business sophistication, health and primary education, higher education and training, technology readiness and innovation. Abdullah (n.d) noted that the imperatives for global competitiveness involve addressing the issues such as: macroeconomic policies, government practices and regulations, the cost of doing business, education and skills upgrading, R&D and innovation, sustainable environmental management, conformity with international standards, and Total Factor Productivity (TFP). The government role in improving international competitiveness should be to formulate policies aimed at:

- Encouraging research and development spending
- Reduce tax rates to stimulate enterprise effort and investment
- Improve the skill base of citizens
- Improve economic infrastructure
- Reduce interest rate to stimulate investment

- Operate macro-economic policies that favour business expansion
- Encourage investment in human capitals
- Deregulation to promote competitiveness
- Reduce bureaucracy (Riley, 2012).

Nigeria must strive to improve her global competitiveness via education by integrating entrepreneurship education and training into all disciplines in institutions of higher learning. With entrepreneurship education and training wealth creation and job creation can be attainable through higher education. This study examined strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness and wealth creation.

### THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

One of the goals of higher education in Nigeria is to produce individuals who will become productive workers, self reliant entrepreneurs upon graduation from institutions of higher learning. But this goal of self-reliant has not been attained in Nigeria. Many of the graduates from institutions of higher learning in the country roam the streets unemployed. Majority of them are not capable of starting off a business of their own and managing it. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria surged from 11.9% in 2006 to 14.6% in 2007 and 21.1% in 2010 (FRN cited by Babalola, 2012). Emejo (2013) put the current rate of unemployment in Nigeria at 23.9%. Emejo emphasized that the number of jobs generated yearly in Nigeria is grossly inadequate to match the number of people seeking for the jobs and this situation creates a big challenge. The ranking carried out by World Economic Forum for 2011-2012, Nigeria ranked 127 out of 142 countries with a score of 3.46. Since 2007, Nigeria embraced entrepreneurship education in all academic programmes in institutions of higher learning aimed at helping to reduce unemployment but however, progress has been slow since most institutions of higher learning are yet to start offering courses in entrepreneurship development in several disciplines. Though literature is replete on entrepreneurship education, studies on strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training for wealth creation and global competitiveness are lacking in Nigeria. This study attempts to fill this gap by examining the strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education for wealth creation, global competitiveness and employment.

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study focused on strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness and wealth creation. In specific terms, the study intend to:

1. Identify the major challenges facing the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment.
2. Find out the strategies that can be adopted for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study provided answer to two questions as follows:

1. What has been the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment?
2. What strategies can be adopted for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment?

### HYPOTHESIS

Two hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study as follows:

1. There is no significant difference among academic staff, senior staff and students in their views on the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment.
2. There is no significant difference among academic staff, senior staff and students in their views on the strategies to be adopted to ensure effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies on the benefits of entrepreneurship education for instance Obiunu and Ebebuwa-Okoh (2011) suggests that entrepreneurship education should offer students the tools to be creative, be an effective problem solver, analyze a business idea objectively and communicate, network, lead and evaluate any given project. With entrepreneurship education and training, students can be empowered with relevant skills that will enable them to fit into many sectors of the economy. Studies conducted by the Global Economic Monitoring (GEM) and other

agencies based in Babson College USA, their research findings revealed that there is a strong relationship between the level of entrepreneurship in a country and national economic development. The findings further indicated that a positive correlation existed between the prevalence of new firms and projected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and a correlation between total entrepreneurial activity and projected GDP. Odu (2011:165) highlighted the benefits of entrepreneurship education as increased economic competitiveness, poverty alleviation and economic growth. With functional entrepreneurship education and training, production of genuine and purposeful entrepreneurs who can create jobs, contribute to increased economic growth, changes and development in the economy is ascertainable. Entrepreneurship education can help in Nigerian economic recovery and growth by catalyzing innovations and employment generation. In developed economies, the rapid economic growth and industrialization is attributable to the emergence of entrepreneurship class (World Bank, 1993). A study conducted by Adeniyi-Kle (2004) noted that the application of ICT tools by entrepreneurs have been considered a fundamental engine for enhancing economic development stressing that entrepreneurs run a good number of ICT business which create new jobs and wealth. According to Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring (2010), many countries have recognized the importance of entrepreneurship education to national development and sustainability and have since been actively involved in entrepreneurship education and training

Studies have shown that lack of strong government policy, acute shortage of equipment, laboratory facilities, erratic power supply, lack of skilled personnel to teach entrepreneurship are constraints to entrepreneurship development in Nigeria (Uwameiye, 1994; Asiyai, 2010; and Kayoma, 2011). Akpotu (2009) decried that educational policies in Nigeria with good intentions to empower people with skills and training for self-reliant have remain mere principles devoid of concrete actions and implementation. From the review, it is clear that with entrepreneurship education and training integrated into students' disciplines of studies in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, wealth creation, poverty reduction, self-employment, improved economic competitiveness and economic growth can be attainable in the country.

### METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative survey research ex-post facto in nature. It made use of interview and questionnaire as methods for data collection from 160 respondents selected through simple random sampling technique from four institutions of higher learning in Delta and Edo States of Nigeria. The breakdown of the sample is academic staff (n=70),

senior staff (n=40) and students (n=50). Only staff who have worked in the institutions for a minimum of five years and students who were in their final year were selected to represent the sample of this study.

The interview was considered appropriate for use because, through the use of interview, the respondents feel relaxed and were able to express themselves about the phenomenon under investigation. The interview questions were later transmitted into questionnaire to enhance easy analysis of data. The questionnaire entitled “Major Challenges and Strategies for Effective Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education and Training in Higher Education Questionnaire” (MCSEIETHEQ) comprised of fifteen items structured along a 4 point rating scale of Strongly Agree, SA = 4, Agree, A = 3 Strongly Disagree, SD = 2 and Disagree, D = 1. The face and content validity of the instrument was censured by two experts in educational management who read through the items and made useful suggestions which was incorporated into the final draft. The instrument was administered by the researcher on 10 each of a set of

academic staff, senior staff and students. The result of the split half reliability coefficient computed through Cronbach Alpha formula was 0.70. This is an indication of the items being internally stable and supports the use. One hundred and sixty copies of questionnaire were administered but one hundred and forty six copies were retrieved valid for analysis of data. The descriptive statistics of percent and mean was used to answer the research questions while the parametric statistics of one way analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis; the level of Significance was 0.05. Percentage score from 50% and above and mean score from 2.50 and above were accepted as agreed while the reverse was not accepted and hence regarded as disagreed.

**RESULTS**

The results of the study are presented in tables below:

RQ1. What has been the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria?

Table 2: Identified major challenges to effective implementation of EET in higher education

Items	Academic Staff		Senior Staff		Students		Remark
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Funding	3.84	0.46	3.66	0.37	3.70	0.53	Agreed
Lack of entrepreneurial curriculum	3.58	0.88	2.92	0.51	2.86	0.44	Agreed
Lack of infrastructures and equipments	2.80	0.73	2.70	0.64	3.40	0.90	Agreed
Lack of entrepreneurial culture	1.88	1.06	1.47	1.11	2.00	1.01	Disagreed
Lack of awareness of entrepreneurship education among students	2.80	0.42	2.71	0.60	3.76	0.61	Agreed
Lack of skilled personnel	3.60	0.64	3.42	0.42	3.20	0.54	Agreed
WM	3.08	0.69	2.64	0.61	3.15	0.67	Agreed

From table 2, all the items except the third item have mean score above 2.50, the cut-off point. This indicates the lack of entrepreneurial curriculum, lack of infrastructures and equipments, lack of awareness among students and lack of skilled personnel are the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. Lack of entrepreneurial culture is not a major challenge facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training,

RQ 2. What strategies can be adopted for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria for global competitiveness, wealth creation and employment?

From table 3, the mean scores for all the items exceeded 2.50 the cut-off point. This indicates an overwhelming agreement by all the respondents that all the items above are the strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in higher education for global competitiveness and wealth creation. Respondents are of the opinion that establishing entrepreneurship education programme

centers in institutions, building innovation centers in institutions, designing entrepreneurial curriculum in line with market demand and local needs, inviting alumni to participate in the establishment of entrepreneurship education center in institutions and seeking NGOs and Community active participation via donation of equipment and funding, raising students awareness of entrepreneurship education and inviting skilled and successful Nigerian entrepreneurs in Diaspora to participate in entrepreneurship training programme. In addition the respondents said that entrepreneurship training in ICT soft ware, fruit juice production, air freshener production, printing and publishing, fashion designing and textile, photography can help to ensure effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions are strategies for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria for global competitiveness, employment and wealth creation. The respondents agreed that with entrepreneurship education and training programme centers integrated in higher education studies, the institutions can be motivated to produce graduates who will be employers of labour.

Table 3: Strategies for effective implementation of EET in higher education institutions

Items	Academic Staff		Senior Staff		Students		Remark
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Establishing entrepreneurship programme centers in institutions offering courses in local internship	3.28	0.51	3.66	0.94	3.58	0.47	Agreed
Building innovation centers in institutions	3.51	0.70	2.80	0.44	2.76	0.35	Agreed
Designing curriculum in line with local need can help make students employable and create wealth	2.90	1.00	3.08	0.73	3.40	0.82	Agreed
Designing entrepreneurial curriculum in line with market demand can help make students employable and create wealth	3.70	0.45	3.48	0.59	3.32	0.74	Agreed
Inviting alumni of various institutions to participate in establishing entrepreneurship programme centers	3.40	0.71	3.53	0.60	3.39	0.65	Agreed
Seeking NGOs active involvement in entrepreneurship education programme via donation of equipment	2.82	0.60	3.50	0.90	3.34	0.59	Agreed
Institutions soliciting for Tertiary Education Trust Fund assistance can help enhance effective funding of entrepreneurship education	3.62	0.42	3.60	0.60	3.28	0.35	Agreed
Inviting skilled and successful Nigerian entrepreneurs in Diaspora to participate in entrepreneurship training programme	3.74	0.43	3.52	0.36	3.42	0.80	Agreed
Raising students' awareness of entrepreneurship education can enhance effective implantation of the programme	3.70	0.65	3.80	0.40	3.48	0.50	Agreed
Through seeking community participation in funding adequate infrastructures can be put in place for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education programme	3.60	0.90	3.46	0.57	3.60	0.82	Agreed
Entrepreneurship education in ICT soft ware can help students acquire skills for wealth creation	3.70	0.57	3.58	0.49	3.62	0.33	Agreed
Entrepreneurship training in printing and publishing can help students acquire entrepreneurial skills to become successful entrepreneurs	2.80	0.55	2.94	1.00	3.08	0.57	Agreed
Entrepreneurship training in fashion designing and textile production can help students acquire skills for self employment	2.90	0.46	3.27	0.80	3.18	0.70	Agreed
Entrepreneurship training in fruit juice production can help students acquire entrepreneurial skills to become successful entrepreneurs	3.25	0.91	3.15	0.83	2.88	1.02	
Entrepreneurship training in air freshner production can help students acquire entrepreneurial skills to become successful entrepreneurs	3.33	0.74	3.00	0.44	2.78	0.80	Agreed
With entrepreneurship education and training integrated in higher education studies the institutions can be motivated to produce graduates who will be employers of labour	3.63	0.80	3.40	0.23	3.54	0.62	Agreed
Entrepreneurship training in photography in higher education studies can help students acquire for self employment	3.18	0.60	2.80	0.51	2.90	0.60	Agreed

Table 4: ANOVA summary table of major challenges to effective implementation of EET

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	DF	F-cal	F-crit
Between groups	114.21	78.24	144	0.0182	3.00
Within groups	41247.38	1237.64			
Total	4136.59	1315.88			

From table 4, the f-calculated value of 0.0182 is less than the f-critical value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom 144. Hypothesis one is therefore retained. Implying that academic staff, non academic staff and students did not differ significantly in their views on the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in higher education in Nigeria.

Table 5: ANOVA summary table on strategies for effective implementation of EET

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	DF	F-cal	F-crit
Between groups	185.30	66.28	144	0.0112	3.00
Within groups	33216.46	2630.81			
Total	33401.76	2697.09			

From table 5, the f-calculated value is less than the f-critical value at 0.05 level of significance and 144 degree of freedom Hypothesis two is therefore acceptable. Implying that academic staff, non academic staff and students did not differ significantly in their views on the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in higher education in Nigeria. They have similar views.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings resulting from this study on the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in institutions of higher learning for global competitiveness and wealth creation are funding, lack of entrepreneurial curriculum, lack of infrastructures and equipment, lack of awareness of entrepreneurship education among students and lack of skilled personnel. Inadequate funding of higher education has been a big challenge to effective management of higher education in Nigeria. Nigerian government has not been able to meet up with the 26% budgetary allocation to education recommended by UNESCO. Effective Implementation of entrepreneurship education is capital intensive, requiring lots of infrastructural facilities and equipments which are grossly inadequate in public institutions of higher learning in the country. The fact that majority of the higher education institutions in Nigeria are dotted with decayed infrastructure and near empty laboratories is not an understatement. Supporting this finding, Asiyai (2012) noted that adequate funding is critical to the adequacy and effective management of entrepreneurship education and training programme, including procurement of experts for entrepreneurial training, provision of quality infrastructure and equipments, staff training in entrepreneurship and sponsoring students to field trip for their entrepreneurial growth.

For research question two, the findings indicated that establishing entrepreneurship programme centers in institutions, designing entrepreneurial curriculum in line with market demand, building innovation centers in institutions, inviting alumni to participate in the establishment of entrepreneurship center in institutions, seeking NGOs and community active participation via donation of equipment and funding, entrepreneurship education in ICT soft ware, entrepreneurship education and training in fashion designing and textile production, entrepreneurship training in photography and air freshener production are strategies for effective implementation of EET in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria for global competitiveness, employment and wealth creation. When students are empowered with entrepreneurship education and training in ICT soft ware in micro soft word, micro soft access, excel spread sheet, programming, Corel draw, etc they can be able to use internet income generating activities, repair digital files, use data analysis packages, navigate search engines, install digital security systems, perform several graphics activities like photo paint, photo shops and create animations for television stations and use GSM net works for internet connectivity. Other internet businesses such as internet advertisement, internet tourist/traveling agencies and start off computer training centers for computer literacy programmes. In this way, they can generate

income for their sustainability as well as become employers of labour and thus attain self-reliant. This finding lend credence with Adeniye-Kle (2004) who found that the application of ICT tools by entrepreneurs have been considered a fundamental engine for enhancing economic development stressing that entrepreneurs run a good number of ICT business which create new jobs and wealth.

The findings for hypothesis one indicated that there is no significant difference among academic staff, senior staff and students in their views on the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning for global competitiveness, employment and wealth creation. Similarly, the findings for hypothesis two showed that there is no significant difference among academic staff, senior staff and students in their views on the strategies to be adopted to ensure effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in institutions of higher learning for global competitiveness, employment and wealth creation.

## CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, the major challenges facing effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education in Nigeria are funding, lack of entrepreneurial curriculum, acute shortage of facilities and equipment, lack of infrastructure and lack of skilled personnel. The strategies effective implementation of entrepreneurship education and training in higher education are establishing entrepreneurship programme centers in institutions, designing entrepreneurial curriculum in line with market demand, inviting alumni to participate in the establishment of entrepreneurship center in institutions, entrepreneurship education in ICT soft ware, entrepreneurship education and training in fashion designing and textile production, entrepreneurship training in photography and air freshener production

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Nigerian government should as a matter of priority provide adequate funding of education in line with the recommended UNESCO 26% of GDP so that institutions of higher learning can be able to create enabling environment for entrepreneurship education and training of students.
2. Government should invest heavily in higher education so that they will have the resulting research and educated workforce to increase their global competitiveness.

3. Government should consider sending professionals abroad for further training in entrepreneurship so that they would come back home to train students
4. . Institutions of higher learning in Nigeria should integrate courses in entrepreneurship in their programme offering in all units both at undergraduate and post-graduate levels.
5. Institutions should begin to create entrepreneurial drive in students via organizing conference, seminars and workshops on entrepreneurship during which Professors and other experts are invited to give talks to students.
6. Government should dialogue with Nigerians in Diaspora who are successful entrepreneurs to get them back home so that their skills can be tapped and thus facilitate effective implementation of entrepreneurship education.
7. Higher education curriculum should be redesigned in line with the skills required for global competitiveness.

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