

Empowering Nigerian Women for Entrepreneurship Education Equality against Poverty: Counseling Implications

Dr. Rosemary Ochanya Ogbodo-Adoga
National Open University of Nigeria
Abuja Model Study Centre
kubwa Express Abuja, Nigeria.

Abstract

This paper reveals literature on women generally and Nigerian women in particular in terms of poverty and gap between men. Nigerian women should be self-concept and confidence in whatever they are doing. The post Beijing (1995) experienced not that women should be represented but should be active contributors to every economy sector. In line with the topic, the paper discussed extensively on empowering Nigerian women for Entrepreneurship Education Equality against poverty. The Concept of the Empowerment of women from Ogundipe-Leslie (1994) in the foreword of re-creating ourselves explains the empowerment for black women was highlighted and captured. It examines the objectives and explores the Concept of Entrepreneurship Education, it also examines the method use for delivery Entrepreneurial Education and Education is a back-born of human development. Education on Entrepreneurship saves and could improves the lives of women and girl-child to be self-reliant, to be active and contribute meaningfully to their family and society at large. The paper importantly shows the roles of Counseling, it was concluded and recommendations were made.

Keywords: Empowering, Nigerian women, Entrepreneurship, education, Poverty, Counseling.

Introduction:

The past three decades have witnessed a growing awareness of the gender gap in, social, political, economic equity and a broader access to fundamental human rights, improvement in nutrition, basic health and education. Denga (2008) observed that an overarching view of women as subordinate to men in the above areas has seriously been challenged by the movement bridge the gender gap. Denga (2008) highlighted on the new movement for women empowerment in Africa generally and in Nigeria in particular has increasing gathered momentum. The women folk obviously feel that it is time to gain their rightful position in a society that has for a long time relegated them to the background. In our traditional African societies, a woman was not expected to be an equal to a man.

Etta, (2007) has stated that women today have become, as educated, in some families even more than they have been commanders of spacecraft over the men. The Late Margaret Thatcher has sketched out the image of an iron lady in Leadership. She commanded the British Forces in the Faulkland Islands over Argentina and some years ago, Mrs. Elen Johnson, Sir leaf contested elections with and beat a world famous Geaorge Weah. Because of the historical and traditional gender inequalities in most societies, the numbers of women professionals in some areas may not be anywhere near equal to those of men. But women are competing in every human activity and quite often now.

Feminism however, according to Denga (2008) really took a center stage in the world from Beijing, 1995 and exploded in Africa in the Dusk of the twentieth century. This first decade of the 21st century has been characterized by even greater awareness of women's rights. Many African Countries have even set quotas at every level of Government for women participation, perhaps the most successful in this regard are the Rwanda and Mozambique examples. In Nigeria, we are struggling with no more than ten percent at best of women participation in governance and economic. It was as a result of this feminists' issues that some world feminists in history like Mary Wall stone craft in England Criticized the unequal treatment of women in her book titled "Vindication of the Rights of women" (1829), and pleaded for better education and job opportunities for women.

Other such early feminists include: Elizabeth Florenza, Rosemary Rusther and Susan Anthony. Elizabeth Stanton was one outstanding woman who led the National American Women Association to seek for the elimination of discriminatory clauses against women in the American Constitution, Hassan (1960)

However, despite the emphasis now placed in the world on the need to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against women, there is still discrimination and suppression of women in many ways in the society such that for millions of women in the world are suffering and far from the reality of Human Rights Treaties. In most cases, the laws made only appear as a policy document on paper while the imbalances between men and women continue to exist. It was indeed on this that the former first lady of the United States of America, Hilary Clinton on December 10th 1997 stated on a 'Human Rights Day' that "The World Continues to treat women as less than complete Citizens' Denga, (2008).

Mrs. Hilary Clinton stated in Denga (2008), that 70% of the world's poor are women, 2/3 of the world's 130 million children unable to attend school are girls. She further brought to the world's notice that women suffer greatly from domestic and sexual violence which remain one of the most under exported and wide spread Human Rights violations in the world.

In Nigeria, according to Acholonu (2005) has indicated that it is not only that the 1991 census shows that women make up 49.6% of the nation's total population, they are also responsible for the direct production of the labour force and the largest producers of the nation's food supply. It is obvious that this female status and her numerical is not strength in the population is not reflected in the political life and decision making processes of the nation. Women in Nigeria are up till date, inadequately represented in the Senate as well as in National and State legislatures. And at the Local Government Councils, they are either grossly under represented or completely absent.

Ekpo, (2003), stated on women's disadvantages are evident in a wide range of areas. According to her, in sub-Saharan Africa, 75 percent of people ages 15 to 24 with HIV/AIDS are female. Despite rising school enrollments and literacy among girls in many developing countries disparities remain between women and men in the work force. For instance women hold less than 20 percent of seats in National Parliaments in most of the world and their share of the non-form work force is only an estimated 38 percent worldwide.

Ekpo (2003) went on to say about death related to pregnancy and childbirth show no signs of decreasing in poor countries where women's reproductive health needs often receive insufficient attention and funding especially in Nigeria. It is against this background that this paper would focus on topic "empowering Nigerian Women for Entrepreneurship Education Equality against Poverty; counseling implications.

Empowerment and Education of Equality to Improve Nigerian Women Capabilities:

The empowerment of women results in self-awareness while spurring them on to self-reliance resulting to numerous contributions to their society. Molaru Ogundipe-Leslie (1994) in the Foreword of *Re-Creating Ourselves* explains the empowerment for black women as:

"Social recognition and dignity just as, most of all, it means space to speak, act, and live with joy and responsibility. We wish to have power to remove from our path anything, person or structure which threatens to limit our potential for all human growth as the other half of Life's gendered reality; power to collapse all screens which threaten to obscure our women's eye from the beauties of the world".

The empowerment of women here enunciated is a recognition of their ability to work and contribute to their society economically and socially, intellectual empowerment achieved through education enables women to revise and re-write their stereotypical images and encourages them to speak their own truths, express their own views and exercise their potentials. Their economic roles are obvious in agriculture, weaving, pottery, trading and in diverse forms of crafts. However, in the present time, most of their contributions may not be poverty economic for the following reasons: first, their routine role in reproduction and production overlaps; second, the capitalist system of government gives more visibility to men than women in the government set up; the education of women is a fairly new concept in Nigeria because of the traditional bias that sees women as dependant and incapable of taking such challenges as competing with men in formal economic pursuit. But their social contributions, correctly viewed as labourers of love, yet paradoxically unquantified, despite the fact that the life of the nation hinges on them, are obvious.

They are in such areas as careing, sustence (i.e in terms of their roles as counsellors, movers and helpers), support and enculturation of the younger members of the society to ensure a smooth running of the society. Through these, they maintain the society at an equilibrium and at peace and harmony, which encompasses even the poor. Women equally make greater contributions to their society through education.

Education has enhanced the visibility of Nigerian women since th 1960s when the resistance against the education of girls began to be on the wane. However, with education came the burden of double jobs because women now compete along with men in the white-collar and factory jobs without relinquishing the burden of meeting the basic family needs like food, water, firewood, clothes, healthcare and the general management of the home. Most women have migrated to urban centres in search of these jobs for the sustenance of their children. In this way some of them assume the role as the heads of households. Most times, they lack the qualification or are discriminated against; hence they hardly get the goods jobs; thereby becoming the worse hit by urban poverty. In the service jobs that are related to their reproductive respon sibilities, women are unrivalled; though men still control most managerial positions like in the banks, corporations, schools etc. But the undaunted Nigerian woman continues to stretch herself to achieve more visibility so that she has almost taken over the teaching profession in Primary and in Secondary schools especially in the Southern part of Nigeria. Women act as the backbones and shock-absorbers by sustaining the working force particularly in thre times of crisis like in the Structural Adjustment Programmes by bearing the concerns of the urban poor.

Women Equality and empowerment framework (WEEF) refers to a set of ideas, concepts, principles rules and levels before which women can get access and empowered economically to avoid or reduce suffering lack and want in the mist of plenty.

The United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) had identified five levels at high which women or gender equality could be analyzed according to Idyorough, (2005), these include:

- (i) Welfare
- (ii) Access
- (iii) Conscientization
- (iv) Participation and
- (v) Control, these five objectives on gender issues at these levels with favourable results that it is deemed equality has been attained as a strategy for resolving problems affecting women in the world and in Nigeria in particular.

Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving equality, development, peace and economic power. Denga, (2008) opined that investing in formal and non-formal education training for girls and women has proven to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth. The platform recommends action to:

Ensure equal access to education, Governments are to commit themselves by the year and beyond to universal access to basic education as currently implemented according to the National Policy on Education (2014).

Meanwhile, one of the world's concerns is the reduction of poverty and acceleration in economic growth and development. Advancement in information technology has reduced the entire world to a village status thereby intensifying competition in all industries. This competitive and ever-changing environment has posed serious survival challenges to all individuals and nations of the world as it has come with it both opportunities and threats. One of the basic requirements for survival in this kind of contestable environment is to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit that can enable individual woman and nations to identify and exploit these opportunities as well as positively approach the threat for their persistent improvement. Tyolumun et al (2008). Joseph Schumpeter (1949), once argued that entrepreneurship was the engine of National development.

In Nigeria, the awareness on the importance of entrepreneurship is recent and still very low among governments, individuals in most cases frustrated from flourishing by Socio-cultural and structural forces. According to Tyolumun et al (2003), stated that this situation explains why several government schemes like National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Small and Medium Enterprises Scheme (SMES) and Micro Finance Scheme designed to enhance entrepreneurship has not actually yielded expected result.

Meanwhile, Entrepreneurship Education seeks to provide the reader with knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. It also strives to educate them about the benefits of entrepreneurship. This is a distinctive area of Education as it focuses on realization of opportunity. Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia. Htm (2007). From the above statement, the author would encourage Nigerian women to be more creative and hardworking to take their place in Entrepreneurship Education to add more value and contribute to their family and the larger society. The objectives include:

- (i) To offer functional education for the women that will make them self-employed and self-reliant.
- (ii) To reduce the high poverty level among women.
- (iii) To generate employment for the women.
- (iv) To provide the graduates women more opportunity for training and support that will enable them, stand out in the business world to start a career in small and medium sized businesses.
- (v) To create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy.
- (vi) To provide women graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative with new ideas in identifying new business opportunities in Nigeria and in other part of the world.
- (vii) To inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the women which would enable them to persist in any business venture they embark in the competitive world and in Nigeria particularly.
- (viii) To inculcate the appropriate skills and the total development of sound mind, mental, physical and social abilities and competence to equip them to live well among their family and to the society development at large.

The Concept of Entrepreneurship

The concept of Entrepreneurship has been variously defined by different scholars. Cartillon, an Irish man was reported by Chinonye (2004), as the first person to adopt the word 'Entrepreneur' in the business environment in the eighteenth century. According to him an Entrepreneur is a person who buys goods and services at known price with an intention of disposing them in the near future at an unknown price bearing the inherent risk. Gibson (2001), defined Entrepreneurship private initiative to transform a business concept into a new venture or to, grow and diversify an existing venture or enterprises with high great potential.

According to Hisricc, Peters et al (2008), Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, and social risks and receiving rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence. Henry (2003), opined Entrepreneurship as the engine driving the economy of nations, creating new industries, young entrepreneur, employment and wealth. Anyamene, (2009), viewed that Entrepreneurship involves a process aimed at creating wealth for the purpose of growth and development of the environment.

However, Ely, (2004), recognizes the very positive impact that Entrepreneurship can have on employment levels as well as the competitive advantages that small firms can introduce to the market place and advocated for entrepreneurship development programme. An Entrepreneur is not just as a sole proprietor but one that can in significant way absorb the unemployed labour, demanding a high productivity and services from his business in a competitive market make profit from.

Meanwhile, Davis (1983) as cited in Igbo, (2005) sees Entrepreneurship as the creation and running of one's own business. Timmons in (1987) also cited in Igbo (2005) viewed Entrepreneur as the creation, building and distribution of something of value from practically nothing to individuals, groups, organizations and society. He summed up by stating that it involves planning and organizing small business ventures through the mobilization of people and resources to meet people's needs and wants. Unido (1999), defined Entrepreneurship as the process of using initiative to transform business concept to new venture, diversity existing to high growing venture potentials.

Schumpeter (1995), sees Entrepreneurship as a process of change where innovation is the most vital function of the Entrepreneur. It is the basic requirement for economic development in a free enterprise or mixed economy where innovation is the basis of development.

Entrepreneurship and Education of Nigerian Women for Poverty Reduction

The past years ago, there has been an upsurge in Educational expansion in Nigeria from Primary to Tertiary levels and one of the attendant effects of the educational proliferation is the dramatic growth in students population which has brought about the issue of unemployment in Nigeria, Denga (1993). According to Mmaduakonam, (2011) stated that the goal of education in contemporary times is to produce skilled manpower for the nation to grow economically. Unfortunately, the common scene observed present on the Nigerian streets are youths after completing Secondary Schools roaming the streets looking for jobs without success. Particularly young ladies has turned out to be streets runner aimlessly without job. Here in Nigeria many University graduates are unemployed and cannot develop themselves or start a business because of lack of knowledge and skills, this make our streets and environment to be crowded. This predicament has made unemployment in Nigeria approach an alarming proportion s rightly notedby Aronu, (2008), Anyamenc (2007) who says that there are cases of stealing, kidnapping, restiveness, prostitution, political thurggery, drug abuse/ addictict, rape, 419 among others which are all resultant effects of this negative trend in the Nigerian society. Parents, community leaders, educationists, fresh graduates, undergraduates and the society have had series of stress, tension and even fright as a result of this menace, Nwafor, (2008). The businessmen and women, pastors, Imam (religious leaders), politicians, civil servant workers cannot rest because of the youth menace in our great country Nigeria.

However, Akpomi, (2009) pointed out that for any country to foster genuine development, its education system must be considered as a basis and essential ingredient. Education is undisputed considered as the bedrock of any meaningful development be it economic, social or political. This is why the National Policy on Education emphasized the need for functional education to be relevant and practical.

Adejimola and Olufunmilayo (2009), stated that about 80% of Nigerian graduates find it difficult to get employment every year, and 30% of women are not left out. According to Sule (2004), is of the opinion that education is a sure pathway to the liberation of the mind and the improvement of socio-economic status of people. This shows that education and training help individual to be empowered and escape poverty by providing them the skills and knowledge to raise their output, income and wealth. Hence, various government and international agencies are making serious efforts in both developed and developing nations to optimally develop the education sector.

To address the issues of poverty, unemployment and suffering among Nigerian women squarely, it requires the involvement of the system using inquiry discovery application in teaching girl-child who would in turn perceive issues as challenges and opportunities that could be turned into goods and services of commercial important that has values.

Meanwhile, the National Universities Commission (NUC) adopts teaching and directed all Universities in Nigeria to establish centers for Entrepreneurship programmes. This approach involved developing the capacity of staff and students in outreach activities with Enterprises, training entrepreneurs and conducting resources and consultancies by small business development centers in Universities, Amuseghan and Olajubu (2007).

Method use for Delivery Entrepreneurial Education

The most effective approach to teaching entrepreneurship according to Gibb(2006), states that the traditional teaching methods such as lectures, literature reviews, using reading materials, discussions, tutorials, examination and so on do not activate entrepreneurship. The building entrepreneur needs not only knowledge, but also new ways of thinking, new kinds of skills and new modes of behaviour. Kirby (2004), opined that the traditional lecture format with all its predictability may not be the most effective method as it ignores the essence of the entrepreneurial process.

The conventional methods have to be complemented with Entrepreneurial approaches which essential includes learning by doing and providing opportunities for students to actively participate in the learning situation. The teaching process should focus active learning problem based learning and discovery teaching Akpomi, (2007).The Entrepreneurship Education should give room for research development that will seek for the best pedagogical, methodological and theoretical approaches to teaching and learning Entrepreneurship in different settings. In achieving the objective of empowering Nigerian women for Entrepreneurship Education Equality against poverty in Nigeria would requires the support and expansion of the school Guidance and Counselling programme. The Entrepreneurial Guidance and counselling that would enable women.

Counseling Implications

Counseling services is geared towards helping Nigerian women, girl-child to understand self and to take appropriate steps in taking educational, Entrepreneurship, social and psychological life-long decisions to overcome poverty. It is important to help the Nigerian women and the girl-child and around the world to gain adequate knowledge and understanding about the Entrepreneurial skills, attitude and values that they must cultivate in order to live comfortably in a constant competitive changing society.

Egbochukwu, (2008), was of the Guidance and Counseling services which are based on a developmental hierarchy are stated below:

- (i) Opportunities to develop relationship skills, ethical standards and a sense of responsibility.
- (ii) Opportunity to acquire skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to the needs interests and abilities.
- (iii) Information that would enable one to make decisions about life and career opportunities. It is on the premise of the above challenges that counseling services is highly needed and necessary for the girl-child educational advancement in Nigeria and the world at large.

Meanwhile, the author would add that the Counseling is to make Nigerian women understand themselves, their environment and the world of world, how to find her rightful place in Entrepreneurship and the right skills to adopt in order to perform and meet up the demand and her optimum. Through this Counseling relationship, these women would understand better, the factors contributed to make a career and self-employed such as interests, intelligence abilities, values aptitudes, aspirations, self-concept personality disposition and so on to be considered in order to determine how effectively and efficiently they can go forward in the Entrepreneurial skills Ogbodo (2016).

The Counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) needs to mount campaigns that can draw the attention of Government to the necessity of establishing functional Counseling Centre's in all the schools and Entrepreneurial centers to encourage women for creativity. Enlightenment programmes for women inform of seminar, workshop or advocacy sensitization, conference and mobilization and invite guests from different Entrepreneurship and businessmen and women to speak to them from different perspective. This is to create awareness and position in the business world. Counselors can motivate these women and monitor their activities to build their self-concept and self-confidence on whatever they are to do in business world to be focused, for example we have local furniture making, trading, fashion and design, wood-work, food and nutrition, local weaving etc that Nigerian women can pick interest in any of them based on their environment and the needs.

Conclusion

From this paper discussion the significance of Entrepreneurship Education can never be over-emphasized in Nigeria. This is because Government establishments, Ministries, Parastatals and agencies have become highly saturated with little or no room for employment, even the private sectors also has the same problem. This situation has necessitated the Entrepreneurship Education to encourage self-employment.

Entrepreneurship is a solution to the world of unemployment. Government should not emphasis on certificate qualification but introduce more viable programme that would foster Entrepreneurship skills among women and girl-child to close the existed gap. This will solve a lot of problem of poverty and suffering among the women and girl-child, it will drive crimes from the streets thereby making Nigeria safe to live and properties to be saved against joblessness and prostitution on the streets. Engaging in Entrepreneurship would the women, girl-child and even the youths busy and overcome idle hand or idleness, the devil's workshop.

Recommendations

To develop and engage the Nigerian women in Entrepreneurship, the Government should be able to do the following:

- (i) Establishment of Counseling centres both the schools and not school setting to take care and encourage the women on creativity.
- (ii) The Government to establish more Entrepreneurial skills acquisition centres at the Federal, States and Local levels.

- (iii) Entrepreneurship Education should be made compulsory in all Nigeria schools from primary to Tertiary; the essence is for the graduates women and girl-child to become owners of small business and employers of labour.
- (iv) Government should re-visit adequate funding of National Directorate of Employment (NDE), NAPEP and Micro-Finance Banks to enable women handle their businesses successful.
- (v) The Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity should create financial support programme for all unemployed women and the girl-child in Nigeria.
- (vi) Government to train more professional Guidance Counselors to handle all these women by encouraging and monitoring all their activities to put them in their right position.
- (vii) Government to give scholarship to girl-child education and Government to address the problems of gender gap in education and
- (viii) The National Directorate of Employment should organize periodic workshop, and seminar on Entrepreneurial skills for Nigerian women and girl-child free of charge and that Government should empower them in terms of capital and legal framework to be able to do that.
- (ix) Finally, it is important to decentralize all efforts meant for Entrepreneurial Education for Nigerian women in such a way that Local Government Area would be empowered to carry out such responsibilities.

References

- Acholonu, F. (2005), Women and development in Nigeria, Enugu Fourth Dimension.
- Akpomi, M.I. (2009) Entrepreneurship Education for all Students in higher education institutions in Nigeria. A mean to sustainable development. *Development Journal of Sustainable development in Africa II* (I)162-173.
- Amuseghan, S.A. and Tayo Olajubutu .O (2009), Spinning off an Entrepreneurship culture among Nigeria University students: Prospects and Challenges. *African Journal of Business Management*, 3.(3) 80-88
- Anyamene A.N. (2009). The Roles of a teacher as a Counsellor. A paper presented on teachers forum, Nnamdi Azikwe University high School.
- Araromi, M. (2007). The University Basic Education and attainment Goals in O.A Oyeoleji, B.J Ogunkola; and Olatoye, R.A School based Assessment in Nigeria (VII-XIV). National Association of Evaluators and Reseachers.
- Amuseghan, S.A. and Tayo Olajubutu .O (2009), Spinning off an Entrepreneurship culture among Nigeria University students: Prospects and Challenges. *African Journal of Business Management*, 3.(3) 80-88
- Bijing Conference 1995, China
- Chinonye, I.V (2004). Entrepreneurship; A conceptual approach concept publications. Nigeria 128-27
- Den ga, D.I (1983) Education at a glance: from cradle to tomb Calabar: Rapid Educatinal publishers.
- Denga, d.i (2008) Education for the new Millenuim; Foundation and pedagogy; Rapid Educational publishers ltd Calabar, Nigeria.
- Drucker, P. (2005) Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Practices and Principles. New York; Harper and Row.
- Egbochukwu. E.O (2010), Assessment of the quality of Guidanc and Couselling services to students adjustment in Secondary School in Edo State. Nigeria. www.google.com August 23-2011
- Ely U.K. (2004) Entrepreneurship Education; A shining opportunity for collaboration. *The balance sheet*, 66 (2) 15018.
- Etta, B.E (2007), Women Empowerment; my unique experience, Calabar, Nig. Ukobek communication Federal reblic of Nigeria (2014) National Policy on Education.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2014) National Policy on Education, Abuja
- Gibson, C.E (2001), Experimental learning: Experience as the source of learning and Development, New Jersey; Prentice hall.
- Hassan, H.R (1960) Nigerian womenhood, Kaduna, Nigeria, Tel publications.
- Henry, F.I (2003) Entrepreneurship Development in third world. A realistic Approach New your MC Graw Hill Inc.
- Hisrich, R.O Peters M.P and Shepherd, D.A (2008) Entrepreneurship. New York; Mc Graw Hill.
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/entrepreneurship> Education 18:18,30 Nov.2007
- Idyorough, A.E (2005) Gender Concepts and Issues in Nigeria, Aboki publishers Makurdi.
- Igbo, F.(2005). Modern Institutional Techniques and their application in technical vocation educational programmes of polytechnics and monotechnics ETK capacity building workshop Auchu. November 2005.
- Ogbodo, A.R.O (2015), Basic career information and Entrepreeurship Trade Education; gracehand publishers, Abuja, Nigeria.
- Ogundipe, L.M (1994). Recreating ourselves. Trenton Africa world Press inc.
- Nuido (1999) Report www.unido.org
- Schumpeter, J. (1975) Theory of Economic Development Cambridge: Howard University press.
- Tyolumun, Z.I and Umogbai M.E (2008) Entrepreneurship Education in Denga (200-8) Education for the New Millennium Foundation and Pedagogy rapid Educational publishers Ltd Calabar, Nigeria.