

Entrepreneurship Education of Women: A Panacea for Sustainable Family Lifestyle

¹Umeh Adaku Sandra & ²Alozie E. N.

Home Economics/HMT Department

Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike

Abstract

This paper was conducted to determine the entrepreneurship education of women; A panacea for sustainable family lifestyle. Two research questions guided the study. A structured questionnaire was developed and used for data collection. The questionnaire was used for collecting data from 200 respondents of the housing estate in Umuahia North Local Government Area. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean to answer the research questions. The study discovered the meanings of entrepreneurship education held be women in Umuahia Local Government Area. It also found 12 problems hindering women from acquiring entrepreneurship education. The study recommended among others that all family constraints, societal stereotypes hindering women from obtaining entrepreneurship education should be removed out rightly.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Education, Sustainable, Family, Lifestyle.*

Corresponding Author: Umeh Adaku Sandra

Background to the Study

The country today is facing an increasing rate of unemployment due to the economic recession and the number of those graduating from various institutions of higher learning, and are on the increase. These graduates looking for employment opportunities are largely on the increase day by day. Most of them are females because of male drop out of school in the area. The inability to find the job by these young people usually create a sense of vulnerability, uselessness and gullibility and this in turn heightens the attraction to illegal activities. Moreover, the state of unemployment depersonalizes the unemployed socially. It gives rise to alcoholism, drug abuse, banditry, violence against women, child abuse, delinquency and prostitution. The unemployment of these young people has also led to extreme poverty in many families where these families can barely boast of one decent meal per day (Maduabum, 2007). But if the women in these families are empowered with entrepreneurship education, they will be able to engage in businesses that will help to maintain the family.

Poverty creates frustration, loss of hope, value for life, loss of meaning for life and purpose of living. She also stressed that poverty creates disillusionment about morality. Also, poverty makes people compromise on moral values, mostly women who are more gullible than the men in the society. The condition is left with no better idea than to empower the women with requisite entrepreneurial skills needed for them to make positive change, a better living and contribute their own quota towards sustainable family development. Now, that it is quite clear that the government cannot provide job for all graduates, there is need to equip learners especially women with basic entrepreneurship skills. This would help them to be self-employed, self-sufficient and independent, instead of waiting for employment from government, rather they will become employers of labour, thereby reducing the problems of unemployment and poverty in the society.

Naturally, human beings have needs which they must meet on daily basis, in order to survive. In order to meet these needs, families develop some sort of lifestyles. Lifestyle is one's way of life as typified by one's activities, attitudes and possessions. Lifestyle is a habit, attitude, tastes, moral standards and economic level that constitute the mode of living of the family or an individual (Kembe and Ifejika, 2013). Meanwhile, Okoye (2014) stated that lifestyles are the different ways people live their lives, which include those things they do, with whom they do the things as well as where, how and what they use to do their things. In the same vein, Stebbin (2009) opined that lifestyle refers to a characteristic bundle of behaviours that make sense to others and oneself in a given time and place, involving social relation, consumption, entertainment and dress code. It has been observed that lifestyle manifest in the families daily life which involves what the family does and how the individual members does those things. Family members develop lifestyles in order to meet these needs. Since women are members of the family, there is need to empower them through entrepreneurial education so that they will develop a positive lifestyle that will sustain the family.

Entrepreneurship according to Okoro and Ofishe (2011) is a process of running a business of one's own. They also added that an entrepreneur has the ability to see and assess business opportunities even where other resources, human input, physical assets, intelligence and

creativity to achieve goals are scarce. Iheonunekwu (2003), stated that entrepreneurship refers to the attitude, skills and actions of an individual in starting a new business. The Irish Business and Entrepreneurship Survey (2003) defined Entrepreneurship as an owner and or principal manager responsible for the expansion and strategic development of a business. Moreso, Mark (2003), stated that an entrepreneur is anyone who owns, operates and takes the risk of a business. He further asserted that, she is a person who takes on the responsibility of providing services or values upon identifying a market opportunity. An entrepreneur is a key factor in fostering economic growth and development.

Meanwhile, education is defined as a process of teaching, training and learning especially in schools or colleges to improve knowledge and develop in skills (Hornby, 2010). Education is an important tool for empowering the individual with abilities and capacities necessary for full participation in family, human and National development. Education is one of the most important means of empowering human beings with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development of a nation. According to Amanchukwu (2003), education is a dynamic instrument of change geared towards national development, it is important to everyone but most significantly to women because an educated woman is a trained and empowered nation. In a similar vein, Enaibe and Imonivwerha (2007) noted that women's education is the process of sensitizing the women on the need to possess basic skills, knowledge, ability and attitude to make her fit positively, comfortably and productively into the society. So the provision of sound, general and entrepreneurial education for the women will go a long way to improve their families lifestyles for sustainable living. While sustainable living is a lifestyle that families adopt that attempts to reduce an individual's or society's use of the Earth's natural and personal resources. Creating a sustainable lifestyle takes a lifelong commitment to learning, experimenting, exploring, and commuting to increasingly sustainable practices. Women can achieve this lifestyle when they are empowered through entrepreneurship education and skills acquisition.

Entrepreneurship education is an education aimed at training individuals on how to acquire the skills and knowledge that will enable them to apply available resources to start a business and run it successfully. While entrepreneurship education according to Osuala (2009) is a specialized training given to students to enable them acquire the skills, ideas and the managerial abilities and capacities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay. Therefore, entrepreneurship education is teaching students how to start and run their own businesses and become self-employed. It is not a project or a mission rather; it is first and foremost a mindset, a lifestyle, a process of creative destruction with an eye on profit, a value adding chain and wealth – creating process (Osisioma, 2009). Entrepreneurship education as used in this paper means the programme of instruction designed to equip women with the requisite knowledge, skills, attributes and abilities to identify business investment opportunities in order to make profits. So sustaining an entrepreneurial economy depends on nurturing successive generations of entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship education. However, an Entrepreneur is the person who wisely combines available capital with skills and takes a risk to run a business enterprise for the purpose of making profit. Entrepreneurs are characterized by innovative behavior and ability to translate their ideas into wealth – creating

ventures in the operation of their businesses. So in order to acquire these skills necessary for entrepreneurs to thrive competitively; some form of entrepreneurship education is required. However, a woman is an adult female, Oduaran (1994), states that women are powerful agents of change and development. Women are the hub of the families in every society. They are mothers and builders of the home. They are the first teachers of the children. Women mostly help to transmit the acceptable norms and values of the society to the younger generations and as such, they stand a better chance to be recognized as entrepreneurs and so a woman entrepreneur is one who regardless of her low estate in the society, boldly takes up the responsibility of creating and managing a venture with a bid to making profit. Women entrepreneurs are women or group of women who initiate, organize and operate any business enterprise (Karuppasamy and Varghese, 2011), while Okafor and Mordi (2010), stated that women entrepreneur are women that participate in total entrepreneurial activities by taking the risks involved in combining resources together. According to United Nations (2003), education of women helps to reduce the poverty base of the countries with social investments made in health and a faster economic growth of the country.

Also, in line with the statement, Hicks (2013), explained that when women are educated, they contribute immensely to the labour force of the country thereby increasing their personal income and national income. The personal income will improve the health and growth of the families as they will be able to channel those material resources needed for the up keep of their respective families. When it comes to the scarcity of needs and wants, women are the most vulnerable and so their full integration into entrepreneurial education cannot be overemphasized when women are integrated into entrepreneurship education, it will make them to become aware of the need for change and this will encourage them to develop the right skills and the attitude towards felt needs of the family and how to go about initiating or solving these needs. Women particularly in the home front have played very important roles in ensuring the survival of the families and their immediate communities. Also Mark (2013), puts it that empowerment of women through education will enhance national development and they will be more politically active and better informed about their legal rights and how to exercise them. This shows that there is need for entrepreneurial education. This paper empirically examined the entrepreneurship education of women; A panacea for sustainable family lifestyle in Umuahia North Local Government Area, Abia State.

Purpose of the Study:

The main purpose of this study was to determine the entrepreneurship education of women; a panacea for sustainable family life. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the different concepts of entrepreneurship education held by women;
2. Identify the problems hindering women from acquiring entrepreneurship education.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the concepts of entrepreneurship education held by women in Umuahia L.G.A?

2. What are the problems hindering women from acquiring entrepreneurship education in Umuahia North L.G.A?

Methods

Design and area of the Study: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design (DSRD). The area of the study was Umuahia North Local Government Area. There are only four Housing Estates in the city viz; Ehimiri, Agbama, Low Cost and World Bank Housing Estate. Ehimiri and World Bank Housing Estate were chosen because the two estates are properly planned and laid out for ease accessibility unlike Agbama that is not easy to access. Umuahia North is located along the rail road that lies between Port-Harcourt and Umuahia South and Enugu State to its North, Ebonyi to its west and Imo to the East.

Population for the Study

The total population of the households in the city was 32, 693 and that of female is 73, 504 (National Population Census, 2006).

Sample for the Study

Samples of 200 households were purposively selected from the housing estates. 100 households were randomly selected to represent a housing estate.

Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A, dealt with the demographic data of the respondents while section B dealt with the purpose of the study. It had a 4-point Likert scale of; Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4, Agreed (A) = 3, Disagreed (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1. Three experts in Home Economics Department validated the instrument. Cronbach Alpha method was used in determining the internal consistency of the instrument and it yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.92.

Method of Data Collection

Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the women. Efforts were made to ensure that the items were filled correctly without omitting any of the needed information. The questionnaires were retrieved immediately after each filling. All the questionnaires were returned showing 100% return rate.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analyze using mean. Mean rating from 2.50 and above were considered as agreed while mean rating of 2.49 and below were considered as disagreed.

Findings of the Study

Personal data of respondents; Result showed that the respondents were literate; 30 had M.Sc, M.Ed, 20 had Ph.D, 100 had NCE, B.Sc while 50 had School Certificate. The result showed that 150 respondents were public servants while 50 were traders and housewives.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education Held by Women in Umuahia North L.G.A

Table 1: Mean Responses on the concepts of Entrepreneurship education by women

S/N	Concepts of Entrepreneurship education	X	Decision
1.	Entrepreneurship education is education for empowering women	3.51	Agreed
2.	Entrepreneurship education refers to the education for acquiring attitudes, skills and actions required by an individual in starting a new business	3.55	Agreed
3.	Entrepreneurship education is empowering women to develop and expand their business	3.48	Agreed
4.	It is an education process of creating something new with values by devoting the necessary time, resources and effort.	3.14	Agreed
5.	It means education for creativity, innovativeness, quick decision making and risk taking	3.76	Agreed
6.	Entrepreneurship education is the practice of beginning and developing new ventures with the structure of an existing large organization	3.54	Agreed
7.	It is that aspect of education geared towards producing individuals with novel and innovative approach resources	3.00	Agreed
8.	It means the education process given to identify and set a business venture, source and organize, the required resources and take both risks and rewards associated with the venture	3.54	Agreed

Table 1 shows that the respondents agreed with the items listed as concepts of entrepreneurship education because the mean scores were above the cut-off point 2.50. So, they were all accepted as concepts of entrepreneurship education.

Table 2: Means responses on the problems hindering women from acquiring entrepreneurship education

S/N	Problems hindering women from acquiring entrepreneurship education	X	Decision
1.	Family constraints	3.76	Agreed
2.	Societal Gender Stereotypes	3.51	Agreed
3.	Cultural Barriers	3.48	Agreed
4.	Lack of role models for women	3.55	Agreed
5.	Inadequate information	3.54	Agreed
6.	Lack of infrastructure/facilities	3.66	Agreed
7.	Inability to access finance	3.58	Agreed
8.	No inheritance by tradition for women	3.34	Agreed
9.	Inadequate qualified lecturers	3.16	Agreed
10.	Method of teaching entrepreneurship may demotivate women's interest	3.52	Agreed
11.	Inadequate time for practical/demonstration may also hinder interest in the course	3.53	Agreed
12.	Lack of confidence by the women	3.53	Agreed

Table 2 reveals that the respondents agreed with the 12 items as problems hindering women's entrepreneurship education.

Findings

The following findings were made:

1. 8 meaning of entrepreneurship education held by women in Umuahia North L.G.A
2. 12 problems hindering women from acquiring entrepreneurship education.

Discussion of Finding

The study revealed that the concepts of entrepreneurship education held by women include creativity, innovativeness, quick decision making, and risk taking. It also includes entrepreneurship attitudes, skills and actions of an individual in starting a new business. This is in agreement with Obasi (2010) who stated that entrepreneurship education is that aspect of education that is designed specifically to prepare individuals for the world of work in specific areas. This is also in line with Osuala (2009) who opined that entrepreneurship education is a specialized training given to students to enable them acquire the skills, ideas and the managerial abilities and capacities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay. This infers that when women are given entrepreneurship education they will become creative, innovative, self-employed and they will also become employers of labour. It also infers that women will help in meeting the financial challenges of the family and this will also help in achieving the sustainable development goals 5: Gender equality. This goal states that empowering women and girls has a multiplier effect and helps to drive up economic growth and development across the board (SDG). UNDP, 2016. The finding also infers that poverty will be reduced and health of family members and their lifestyle will be greatly enhanced in the society. The finding also implies that women will have an increased role in household decisions and be more influential as community leaders and also serve as role models for other women aspiring to become entrepreneurs. Also in support of this findings, entrepreneurs develop risks taking mindset, self-confidence, creativity, leadership, aggressiveness and organizational skills.

The study also revealed that the problems hindering women's entrepreneurship education includes family constraints, lack facilities, infrastructure, inability to access financial help, lack of role models and inadequate information makes it difficult to acquire entrepreneurship education. This is in agreement with Enaibe (2012), that our cultural beliefs and practices have made it difficult for some women to stick out their necks in the midst of men. The findings are also in agreement with the United Nations (UN, 2012) reports which alleged that women suffer various level of gender inequality, deprivation and discrimination. This is also in line with Aja-Okore (2013), who observed that women have been denied the pride of place in development with regard to formal education as their education is still a marginal issue conditioned upon the satisfaction of needs considered more important in the family's scale of preference. Also, in agreement with the findings are the words of Adeola (1993), that marriage customs of many communities in Nigeria have reduced the chances of women/girls from having access to Western education. This is also in line with Obi (2016), who opined that barriers to women actualizing their entrepreneurship potentials are varied and multifaceted. She further narrated that entrepreneurial activities of women are still hampered by constraints that often tend to be gender-specific, such as socio-cultural conventions, legal and institutional frameworks restricted access to finance among others.

This is also inline with Ndubuisi (2004), who noted that there is need to strengthen women's legal status and rights by addressing issues of female land ownership and titles, formulating national laws of inheritance and succession to guarantee women their rights to inheritance and ownership of landed property and expanding opportunities for women's voice, inclusion and participation. This implies that they are faced with lots of hindrances in the area, hence, they need help. This infers that if these problems are removed women will willingly acquire entrepreneurship education. It also infers that when women acquire this entrepreneurship education, they will be able to finance the education of their children, improve the health of their family members. It also infers that when women are given entrepreneurial education, they will become source of employment and potential growth of the economy. It also infers that they will become economically independent. When women have entrepreneurship education, it will help to improve their standard of living and develop the family sustainably. Moreso, they will help to transmit the acceptable norms and values of the society to the younger generation. Empowering women through entrepreneurship is away of meeting the sustainable development goals (SDGs) which states that achieving the SDGs requires the partnership of government, private sector, civil society and citizens (UNDP, 2016). It also infers that women who are empowered through entrepreneurship education have greater personal and financial autonomy. Also, poverty is reduced amongst them and they will have more influence as community leaders, as well as serve as role model for other aspiring women entrepreneurs. Therefore, entrepreneurship education of women have impact on employment, economies and creation.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship education is an education aimed at training individual on how to acquire the skills and knowledge that will enable them to apply available resources to start a business and run it successfully. Entrepreneurs are characterized by innovative behaviours and ability to translate their ideas into wealth creating ventures in the operation of their business. So in order to acquire these skills necessary for entrepreneurs to thrive competitively, some form of entrepreneurship education is required. Since entrepreneurship education is an important tool in empowering women with abilities and capacities necessary for full participation in family, human national development. It is therefore necessary to remove all obstacles and impediments to women entrepreneurship education and this will help to sustain the family lifestyle because of acceptable norms and values of the society will be transmitted by women entrepreneurs to the younger generation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. All the family constraints hindering women from obtaining entrepreneurship education should be removed out rightly.
2. There should be adequate provisions of facilities and infrastructures for women entrepreneurs.
3. Women should have access to funds to enable them thrive in the business.
4. Entrepreneurship lecturers should adopt teaching methods that can impart the needed skills and knowledge to the students.

5. All the three tiers of government should encourage women entrepreneurs making resources available for them.
6. Parents should encourage the young girls who are future women to embark on entrepreneurship education.
7. Women should be focused and have the mind set to change things for better.

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