

# Indispensability of Entrepreneurship Education on Crime Reduction amongst Youths in Nigeria

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## Abstract

## Original Research Article

Crime among youths is a growing concern in Nigeria so many factors are responsible for crime such as unemployment, poverty and lack of marketable skills. This paper however, maintains that entrepreneurship education offers the pathway for mitigating youth crime in Nigeria, by exposing the youths to skills opportunities and the necessary mindset for self-reliance. Drawing on literature that are relevant combined with local observations, the paper suggests that policy and practical interventions be integrated at all levels of education. Such policies will go a long way in reducing crime and boost economy in Mubi metropolis this is because there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and crime reduction among the youths.

**Keywords:** Indispensability, Entrepreneurship Education, Youth, Crime Reduction.

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## Introduction

Despite effort by the government to stem the tide of crime waves in Nigeria, crime incidents in Nigeria have increasingly caught public attention for example, the cases of the Shila Boys teenage gangs snatching phones, kidnapping and abduction tied to youths in Nigeria shows that many youths are caught in the webs of criminal activities. The root causes of such hydra headed monster are complex, however, unemployment, lack of meaningful skills, poverty and absence of opportunities are repeatedly identified. The major challenge now is how do we break the cycle? My central argument is that entrepreneurship education is the indispensable remedy for reducing crime among the youths in Nigeria.

## Literature Review

### Entrepreneurship Education and Unemployment/Self-Reliance

In order to support this opinion, I review key literature in the following related areas Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria from some studies have shown that youths gain skills to that enables them gain employment and become self-reliant thereby reducing dependency on white-collar jobs the paper equally observed that with proper curriculum design, entrepreneurship education can combat poverty and unemployment.

### Crime, Youth Idleness and Poverty

Michael, Inyang and Ojeka argue that empowering

youths with entrepreneurship mindset and skills reduces the appeal of criminal activity. Reports has it locally that youth's group like the Shila Boys are engaged in property theft and phone snatching. This pattern is associated with idle time and lack of opportunity.

### **Entrepreneurship Education as a Strategy for Crime Reduction among youths**

A recent study from the Northeast showed that in context of conflict and high unemployment, entrepreneurship education interventions contributed to job creation, resetting of mind-set, and reduced dependence on violent activities and anti-social activities. The literature that was reviewed above shows a clearer link that entrepreneurship education builds, reduces economic desperations and provides alternatives to crime among the youths.

It is painstakingly clear from both literature and from local observations, I assert the following mechanisms by which entrepreneurship education can help reduce crime among youths in Mubi metropolis:

- 1. Skill Acquisition and Employability** By teaching business skills like how to start a business and manage a small enterprises, financial literacy and job recognition, youths are able to find and create legit streams of income rather than turning to crime for survival.
- 2. Shift in Mind-set** Entrepreneurship education have the capacity to foster self-confidence, risk taking innovation and ownership. When other good options are exposed to the youths, their psychological drive towards anti-social activities will be weakened.
- 3. Reduced Idle Time and Social Exclusion.** When education programs engage the youths in a meaningful work, mentorship, incubation or apprenticeship, it fills idle moments and social vacuum that might otherwise be exploited by criminal gangs.

### **Challenges and Counter Arguments**

While the prospect is significant, there abounds

challenges to address, these challenges include but not limited to:

Resource and Infrastructure constraints:

Lack of adequate funding, training facilities, business incubation spaces in areas like Mubi may hamper quality entrepreneurship education

### **Quality and Relevance of Curriculum**

If education is too theoretical, lacks market linkage, or ignores local realities, youths may not benefit.

### **Crime as multi-dimensional**

Crime is not only economic, sometimes driven by social, psychological, political, or substance abuse factors beyond mere employment, entrepreneurship. So, entrepreneurship education alone cannot totally eradicate crime but to reduce.

### **Conclusion**

Crime among youth in Nigeria is a serious social challenge with roots in economic marginalization, lack of opportunity and social inclusion. Entrepreneurship education, if properly structured and supported, holds strong prospects as a tool to break this cycle. Other supporting measures are needed, but it still remains indispensable. For Nigeria to improve safety, welfare, and growth, stakeholders must give entrepreneurship education serious attention. The future of many youths hangs in the balance: providing them with tools for legal, productive livelihoods is a moral, social and economic imperative.

### **Recommendation**

To make entrepreneurship education truly effective in reducing youth crime in Nigeria, the following are recommended:

Integrate Entrepreneurship Education into all levels of education

Establish Youth Entrepreneurial Training and Incubation Centers

Public-Private Partnerships

Support Structure (Financing and Mentorship, Market Access)

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Community Feedback Holistic Approach

The term “entrepreneur” originates from the French word *entreprendre*, meaning “to undertake.” Historically, entrepreneurs were seen as intermediaries who organized resources and bore business risks for profit (Cantillon, 18th Century). Over time, the concept evolved to reflect innovators and risk-takers who drive economic growth and societal transformation (Adooh & Ononogbo, 2021).

Entrepreneurship today represents more than business creation it encapsulates innovation, opportunity recognition, problem-solving, and strategic thinking, particularly under uncertainty.

Nigeria, despite being endowed with vast human and natural resources, continues to grapple with rising insecurity, youth unemployment, and poverty. Crimes such as kidnapping, robbery, cybercrime, and political violence are prevalent across its six geopolitical zones. As Emmanuel & Emily (2019) noted, the inability of the state to effectively manage these challenges has led to widespread fear and disillusionment among citizens.

Entrepreneurship education has emerged as a viable tool for addressing youth unemployment and associated crimes. By equipping young people with relevant skills, entrepreneurial mindsets, and self-employment opportunities, it provides an alternative pathway away from criminal activity. This work explores how strengthening entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, can contribute to crime reduction amongst youths. The approach for the work enabled a comprehensive understanding of the link between entrepreneurship education and crime reduction.

## Literature Review

### Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education refers to the structured development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that foster entrepreneurial thinking. According to Manish & Sunil (2015), it shapes learners’ abilities to identify opportunities, innovate, and manage risk. It extends beyond vocational

training and seeks to cultivate a mindset conducive to economic self-reliance and innovation Entrepreneurship and National Development

Entrepreneurship plays a critical role in job creation, wealth generation, and social stability (Schumpeter, 1934; Garba, 2010). Countries that prioritize entrepreneurial ecosystems experience lower youth unemployment and reduced crime rates. In Nigeria, however, despite initiatives such as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), youth crime remains prevalent due to fragmented policy implementation and inadequate entrepreneurship education.

### Crime and Youth Unemployment in Nigeria

High youth unemployment is directly linked to rising crime rates. Lawal (2017) and Nwaoke (2017) argue that economic hardship, particularly among idle graduates and school-leavers, pushes many into criminal activity. Although skill acquisition programs exist, they often lack depth, mentorship, and sustainability. Hence, the emphasis must shift toward holistic entrepreneurship education.

### Evolution of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Recognizing its potential, the Federal Government mandated entrepreneurship education as a compulsory course in tertiary institutions in 2007 (Boroffice, 2008). Further steps included developing national curriculum guidelines through NERDC and integrating trade subjects into the senior secondary curriculum (NERDC, 2013). Despite these efforts, the full benefits remain unrealized due to implementation challenges, funding gaps, and lack of quality assurance.

Dobni (2014) posits that innovation and entrepreneurship flourish in educational systems that promote creativity and experiential learning. Asodike (2016) adds that entrepreneurship education should not only provide technical skills but also instill resilience, independence, and a problem-solving mindset. These competencies are critical in steering youths away from crime and toward

productive engagement.

## Results and Discussion

Entrepreneurship and skills acquisition can only open the door but what can keep you inside the room is entrepreneurship education, so the work reveals that Nigeria's current efforts to address youth crime are insufficient due to the overemphasis on skill acquisition without embedding entrepreneurship education in a structured and strategic manner.

Entrepreneurship education reduces youth crime by providing meaningful engagement and economic alternatives.

Policy implementation gaps exist in the integration of entrepreneurship into the national curriculum. Infrastructure, mentorship, and funding are key barriers to the success of entrepreneurship education. Localized entrepreneurial centers tailored to community needs are largely absent or under-resourced.

The study affirms that meaningful entrepreneurship education equips youths with the tools to become job creators rather than job seekers, thereby reducing crime and promoting national development.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

Entrepreneurship education is pivotal in addressing youth unemployment and associated crimes in Nigeria, while various policies and programs exist, their impact remains limited without quality, structured entrepreneurship education, and institutional support, where youth crime is rampant, entrepreneurship education can serve as both a preventive and corrective tool. Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

**Increased Funding:** Allocate more resources for entrepreneurship education across all levels of education

**Curriculum Reform:** Embed entrepreneurship education as a core subject in all levels of education

**Establishment of Entrepreneurial Centers:** Develop and support community-based innovation hubs in region like Mubi

**Capacity Building:** Train educators in experiential and practical entrepreneurship delivery methods

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implement systems to assess the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programs in reducing crime.

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