

Audience Perception of Mass Media Role in Entrepreneurial Education in South-East Nigeria

¹ Acholonu Regina, ² Okoye Godwin C., ³ Ugwuanyi Felix

¹Associate Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Evangel University, Akaeze, Nigeria.

²Lecturer I, Department of Mass Communication, Caritas University, Enugu, Nigeria.

³ Lecturer I, Department of Mass Communication, Caritas University, Enugu, Nigeria.

Email - ¹ regyacholonu2009@yahoo.com, ² emmachiwoke@yahoo.com

Abstract: This study examined the Audience Perception of Mass Media Role in Entrepreneurial Education in South East Nigeria. In conducting this research, the researchers adopted the survey research method. The population of study was 23,762,555 people. A sample size of 385 was drawn from the population and the purposive sampling technique was used to administer copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. After the analysis, major findings revealed that a higher percentage of respondents, (53.2%) often expose themselves to entrepreneurial education programmes on the mass media. It was also evident that majority of the respondents, 147 (38.2%) perceived the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education to a little extent. Most of the respondents, 149 (38.7%) preferred Television to any other medium used in entrepreneurial education in South Eastern Nigeria. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that, among others, proper communication strategies should be put in place by the policy makers in South East Nigeria to ensure that the entrepreneurial messages are well communicated to the audience(s) or readers for effective result.

Key Words: Mass Media, Entrepreneurial Education, Audience Perception.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Entrepreneurship is the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit (Business Dictionary, 2017). It is a relentless search for new ideas by the entrepreneur in order to ensure continuous assessment of already existing methods of doing business so as to promote more effective and efficient business venture.

The goal of entrepreneurial advancement is to persuade a man for entrepreneurial vocation and to make him equipped for seeing and exploiting effectively open doors for business undertakings (Prama, 2003). The assumption that entrepreneurship is a learned skill (Henry, Hill, & Leitch, 2005; Mitra & Matlay, 2004; Zimmerer & Scarborough, 1998) suggests that education can fuel the passion for creating and implementing new business ideas (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004), and also impact individuals' confidence in achieving their objectives. Thus, Arasti, Falavarjani and Imanipour (2012) explain that entrepreneurial education aims to raise awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option and to increase understanding of the process of the establishment and management of new business ventures. It deals with those attitudes and skills that are necessary for the individual to respond to its environment in the process of conserving, starting and managing a business enterprise (Emeraton, 2008). In order word, entrepreneurial education aims at developing the requisite entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, competencies, and disposition that will predispose the individual to be a driving force in managing a business (Agu, 2006). From the foregoing, entrepreneurial education is therefore, paramount to individuals hoping to start a business since business establishment is a process of identifying and harnessing potential opportunities. It is in this regard that it is looked at as a veritable tool for employment creation by way of promoting enterprise especially the micro-enterprise. Studies have shown that entrepreneurial education and training impact on the attitude of entrepreneurs pursuing their dreams of establishing new businesses. A review of the study conducted by Harris, Gibson, and Taylor's (2008) shows that completing a Small Business Institute course positively impacted entrepreneurial attitudes with respect to innovation, achievement, personal control and self-esteem.

The mass media are important vehicles through which information about entrepreneurial activities can be obtained and exchanged. As agent of change, the media can be used to promote and encourage entrepreneurial education for enhanced entrepreneurial advancement which is very important for sustainable growth and development of any society. According to Hang and Weezel (2005,p.17) "the message and knowledge conveyed by media are crucial in building the role model, the social-attitudes to the entrepreneurial activity and even the systems to foster or to hinder the entrepreneurship. Therefore, using media to encourage entrepreneurship can be very instructive". The media play an important role in influencing the entrepreneurship phenomenon, by creating a discourse that transmits values and

images ascribed to entrepreneurship, by providing a carrier promoting entrepreneurial practices, and by encouraging an entrepreneurial spirit in the society (Hang and Weezel, 2005).

In a study conducted by Radu and Redien-Collot in 2008 on the media images of entrepreneurship in France. It was revealed that positive images of entrepreneurship on the mass media can promote entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour. Apart from impacting core entrepreneurial attitude, training and education of the individuals, the mass media can also expand their networks and resources which can increase their entrepreneurial opportunities.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The ability to promote entrepreneurial education through the mass media is key to stimulating increases in job creation and economic development. In a study titled “Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring: Impact of Media on Entrepreneurial Intentions and Action”, conducted by Levies, Hart and Karim in 2010. It was revealed that the media can promote entrepreneurial attitudes, aspirations and activities. The media can also foster greater entrepreneurial activity by promoting and supporting individuals’ enterprise development. However, in recent times, the mass media have not been meaningfully engaged in entrepreneurial education. This is particularly important given their roles in promoting a more enterprising attitude and culture in the society. This view was supported by the number of unemployed Nigerians which rose by 3.3 million to 20.9 million in the third quarter of 2018 and 21.8 million in second quarter of 2020 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). In the light of this, there is an urgent need for high level of entrepreneurial education through the mass media for sustainable growth and development of the Nigerian economy.

3. Objectives of the Study:

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- (1) Find out the frequency at which residents in South East Nigeria were exposed to entrepreneurial education on the media.
- (2) Determine the extent to which residents of the South East Nigeria perceive the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education.
- (3) Ascertain the most preferred media for entrepreneurial education among the residents of South East Nigeria.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Theory is used in research to provide theoretical backing to major variables and findings of a study. In this regard, the following theories relevant to the study were applied:

4.1 The Social Learning Theory

This theory was proposed by Miller and Dollard in 1941 in their work titled “Social learning and Imitation”. They were of the view that imitative learning occurred when observers were motivated to learn, when the cues or elements of the behaviours to be learned were present, when observers performed the given behaviours, and when observers were positively reinforced for imitating those behaviours. In the same vein, Albert Bandura in 1965 developed the Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that people learn through observing others behaviour, attitudes and outcomes of those behaviours. “Most human behaviour is learned observationally through modelling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed.

The social learning and social cognitive theories relate to the present work in the sense that people could learn by imitating what they see, hear or read in the mass media. This no doubt could go a long way to prompt them to take action, such as developing relevant skills or reinforce a desire to continue along already existing entrepreneurial activities and processes.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Entrepreneurship remains a very important propeller of innovation and economic development. As such, promoting entrepreneurial education is imperative to the economic growth strategies of any local or national government that is serious about the economic turnaround of its citizens. It is generally believed that for any economy to be sustainable, it must emerge from indigenous entrepreneurial ventures. This has become more pertinent especially at present when the country is battling with serious economic crisis in the global market.

According to Desai (2009) “During the last three decades, the concept of entrepreneurship has assumed prime importance both in research and in action for accelerating economic growth in the developing countries.” Self-employment is currently on the increase globally; right perception on this new trend will invariably lead to poverty reduction and reduced joblessness among university graduates (Fatoki, 2014). This means that entrepreneurship education prepares the individual to be properly equipped to acquire saleable skills which could be used to manage his own business or that of other persons (Oduwaiye, 2009). Also, Kimon (2013) sees entrepreneurship as the act of setting out on one’s own and starting a business instead of working for someone else in his business. The United States Bureau of International Information Programmes (2011), equally lend credence to the importance of entrepreneurship to the

development of any society when it observes that “entrepreneurial businesses are primarily engines of job creation and poverty reduction.” It is seen as a vehicle for employment generation since it promotes small businesses.

6. TYPES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

Career Development (2020) identified the following nine types of entrepreneurship which include;

- **Small business entrepreneurship**

A majority of businesses are small businesses. People interested in small business entrepreneurship are most likely to make a profit that supports their family and a modest lifestyle. They aren't seeking large-scale profits or venture capital funding. Small business entrepreneurship is often when a person owns and runs their own business. They typically hire local employees and family members. Local grocery stores, hairdressers, small boutiques, consultants and plumbers are a part of this category of entrepreneurship.

- **Large company entrepreneurship**

Large company entrepreneurship is when a company has a finite amount of life cycles. This type of entrepreneurship is for an advanced professional who knows how to sustain innovation. They are often a part of a large team of C-level executives. Large companies often create new services and products based on consumer preferences to meet market demand. Small business entrepreneurship can turn into large company entrepreneurship when the company rapidly grows. This can also happen when a large company acquires them. Companies such as Microsoft, Google and Disney are examples of this kind of entrepreneurship.

- **Scalable start-up entrepreneurship**

This kind of entrepreneurship is when entrepreneurs believe that their company can change the world. They often receive funding from venture capitalists and hire specialized employees. Scalable startups look for things that are missing in the market and create solutions for them. Many of these types of businesses start in Silicon Valley and are technology-focused. They seek rapid expansion and big profit returns. Examples of scalable startups are Facebook, Instagram and Uber.

- **Social entrepreneurship**

An entrepreneur who wants to solve social problems with their products and services is in this category of entrepreneurship. Their main goal is to make the world a better place. They don't work to make big profits or wealth. Instead, these kinds of entrepreneurs tend to start nonprofits or companies that dedicate themselves to working toward social good.

- **Innovative entrepreneurship**

Innovative entrepreneurs are people who are constantly coming up with new ideas and inventions. They take these ideas and turn them into business ventures. They often aim to change the way people live for the better. Innovators tend to be very motivated and passionate people. They look for ways to make their products and services stand out from other things on the market. People like Steve Jobs and Bill Gates are examples of innovative entrepreneurs.

- **Hustler entrepreneurship**

People who are willing to work hard and put in constant effort are considered hustler entrepreneurs. They often start small and work toward growing a bigger business with hard work rather than capital. Their aspirations are what motivates them, and they are willing to do what it takes to achieve their goals. They do not give up easily and are willing to experience challenges to get what they want. For example, someone who is a hustler is willing to cold call many people in order to make one sale.

- **Imitator entrepreneurship**

Imitators are entrepreneurs who use others' business ideas as inspiration but work to improve them. They look to make certain products and services better and more profitable. An imitator is a combination between an innovator and a hustler. They are willing to think of new ideas and work hard, yet they start by copying others. People who are imitators have a lot of self-confidence and determination. They can learn from others' mistakes when making their own business.

- **Researcher entrepreneurship**

Researchers take their time when starting their own business. They want to do as much research as possible before offering a product or service. They believe that with the right preparation and information, they have a higher

chance of being successful. A researcher makes sure they understand every aspect of their business and have an in-depth understanding of what they are doing. They tend to rely on facts, data and logic rather than their intuition. Detailed business plans are important to them and minimize their chances of failure.

- **Buyer entrepreneurship**

A buyer is a type of entrepreneur who uses their wealth to fuel their business ventures. Their specialty is to use their fortunes to buy businesses that they think will be successful. They identify promising businesses and look to acquire them. Then, they make any management or structural changes they feel are necessary. Their goal is to grow the businesses they acquire and expand their profits. This kind of entrepreneurship is less risky because they are purchasing already well-established companies.

The role of entrepreneurship towards the economic and social development of any nation include: identification of business opportunities; selection of opportunities; decision on form of enterprise; allocation and distribution of resources; coordination of other factors of production such as land, labour, and capital; planning and controlling organisational programmes and activities; mobilisation and utilisation of locally produced raw materials; risk bearing; creating of employment opportunities; marketing activities for customer satisfaction; Promote balanced regional development, reduces concentration on economic power; and innovation to meet with needs of local market (Danko, 2005; Kumar, 2011; Ogundele, Kayode, Oduleke, & Alade, 2013).

Some Government efforts towards Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria :

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a driving force in economic development, as such governments initiate entrepreneurial programmes to raise and support nascent entrepreneurs (Blackburn, 2016). In Nigeria for instance, government sponsored initiatives targeted at supporting entrepreneurial development include institutions such as the Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS), Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB), Industrial Attachment or Student Industrial Working Experience Scheme (SIWES), Agricultural training programmes etc. However, these laudable initiatives of the government are not without challenges, as the unemployment rate among Nigerians remains high. The responsibilities of these various entrepreneurship programmes do not start and end with the instructions only, preparation of entrepreneurs for successful and productive participation in the whole process has been a major issue and the media should play a major role here. In the light of the above, Okello-Obura and Matovu (2011), aver that the growth of any enterprise among other things; depends on the entrepreneurial spirit, the qualifications of its owner, quality provision of information, knowledge, skills as well as advice on the various aspects of the business.

The Mass Media and Entrepreneurial Education

The mass media have been described as the combination of content, comprising scientific and artistic ensemble of music, film, TV, radio, publishing, advertisement, and electronic games, (Locksley, 2009). Also, Lane (2007) sees the mass media as any medium used to transmit mass information. He went further to classify mass media forms into eight industries which include; Television, Radio, Newspapers, Magazines, Movies, Recordings, Books and Internet.

Media formats such as newspapers, TV and radio are important avenues to transmit cultural values and ideas; structure people's perception of entrepreneurship and foster entrepreneurship spirit (Hang and Weezel, 2005, p.14). As far back as 1880, the mass media had shown very deep partnership involvement in human-related development (Napoli, 2008). Thus, Management Study Guide (2008-2012) observes that;

Creating an entrepreneurial spirit amongst the youth can be done with the help of media and communication. Holding awareness programmes orientation camps, group discussions, specific campaigns, promoting youth entrepreneurship events at all possible platforms as well as instituting young achievers awards and competitions are some of effective ways of building the youth entrepreneurship culture. Youth meetings, seminars, conferences, festivals, fairs as well as using print media in the form of brochures, banners, coverage in magazines and interviewing successful entrepreneurs and young starters in the media and many more such PR exercises are sure to build the awareness and enthusiasm amongst the youth as well as change the perception of entrepreneurship in the family, society as well as at the individual level.

The potential impact of the mass media includes but not limited to helping to identify societal needs and interests. This helps policy makers to design appropriate need assessment plan which will enable them come up with the right approach and strategy for effective entrepreneurial intervention.

Over the years, the mass media have proved to be the most trusted agent of change. They have played very crucial role in building vibrant economy, and sensitizing group action for effective development. Through the media's

information and awareness dissemination capability, the media have demonstrated excellent efficiency in mobilizing and empowering people at various levels of human endeavour.

The public perception of entrepreneurship can have a strong influence on people’s desire to become entrepreneurs based on the level of emphasis which the media placed on it. Therefore, it is believed that the characteristics and entrepreneurial skills of the people can be developed through entrepreneurship education which is championed by the mass media.

There is no doubt that the mass media have promoted entrepreneurial education in some countries over the years. In a Study conducted by the Expert Group in 2007, titled “promoting entrepreneurship on TV and in other audio-visual media.” Which investigated the Possibilities that TV and other audio-visual media offer for improving the image of entrepreneurship in Europe. It was established that these media have the advantage of reaching a large audience. These media programmes have the capacity to disseminate in a direct and clear way what being an entrepreneur could appear like. The study revealed that when the image of entrepreneurship was portrayed positively on the television and other audio-visuals, it encouraged a lot of entrepreneurial activities in the United Kingdom.

In another study by Jonathan Levie, Mark Hart and Mohammed Karim in 2011, where they compared the views of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom UK on the effect of media portrayals of entrepreneurs on start-up behaviour and its antecedents. In carrying out this study, the researchers generated an integrated model of media effects on entrepreneurial behaviour and its antecedents, drawn from the studies of Shapero and Sokol, Ajzen, Krueger, Radu and Redien-Collot, and Reynolds et al in 2009. Thirty thousand individuals within the age bracket of 16-80 in the UK were surveyed in line with the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) protocols. Then in 2010, a re-surveyed random samples of 200 individuals from respondents who were, in 2009, in each of five stages of increasing engagement from no entrepreneurial intention or activity, to intention without action, to active start-up attempts, to running a new business, to running an established business, to a re-sample of 1,000 individuals to test aspects of the model were carried out. The study revealed that the effect of the mass media was greater on antecedents of entrepreneurial activity such as perceived desirability, perceived feasibility and social norms than on activity itself. Also, television programmes portraying entrepreneurs appear to make younger and male non-entrepreneurs want to start their own business, and make young and female non-entrepreneurs think more positively about entrepreneurs generally.

The research on Perceived representation of entrepreneurship in the mass media and entrepreneurial intention as well as entrepreneurial skills learned through the media by Laguía and Moriano in 2019 showed that Television programmes and other formats can be helpful in entrepreneurship education as pedagogical materials. Relying on the theory of planned behaviour, the researchers arrived at the above finding based on the data collated from 320 sampled Spanish used for the study.

7. METHODOLOGY:

To evaluate the audience perception of mass media role in entrepreneurial education in South- East Nigeria, the researchers adopted the survey research design. The population consists of all the residents of the five South-East states of Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi, Abia and Imo states which was 23,762,555 people. This figure was obtained by using a projection of 10 years after the 2006 National population head count using an annual growth rate of 3.2% as recommended by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The sample size of 385 was drawn from the population using the online sample size calculator advanced by Wimmer and Dominick (<http://www.rogerwimmer.com/mmr9e/samplesizecalculator.htm>). The purposive sampling technique was used to administer questionnaire to the respondents.

8. ANALYSIS:

Table 1: The frequency at which residents in South East Nigeria were exposed to entrepreneurial education on the media

| Response | Frequency | % |
|----------------|------------|------------|
| Always | 173 | 49.3 |
| Often | 205 | 53.2 |
| Rarely | 5 | 1.3 |
| can't remember | 2 | 0.5 |
| Total | 385 | 100 |

In the above research question, the researchers sought to find out the frequency at which residents in South East Nigeria were exposed to entrepreneurial education on the media. The intention was to establish the proportion of South East residents who are exposed to entrepreneurial education on the media. The result indicates that out of the 385 respondents, 49.3% are always exposed to entrepreneurial education on the media, while 53.2% are often exposed to entrepreneurial education on the media, 1.3% rarely exposed themselves to entrepreneurial education on the media and

0.5% can't remember whether they expose themselves to entrepreneurial education on the media. It indicates that majority of the respondents often expose themselves to entrepreneurial education on the media.

Table 2: Determine the extent to which residents of the South East Nigeria perceive the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education.

| Responses | Frequency | % |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Very Large Extent | 100 | 25.9 |
| Large Extent | 124 | 32.2 |
| I do not know | 10 | 2.5 |
| Little Extent | 147 | 38.2 |
| Very Little Extent | 4 | 1.0 |
| Total | 385 | 100 |

As shown in Table 2 above, 25.9% said they perceive the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education to a very large extent, 32.2% said they perceive the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education to a large extent, 2.5% of the respondents said they do not know, 38.2% said they perceive the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education to a little extent while 1.0% said they perceive the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education to a very little extent. The implication of this is that most residents of the South Eastern Nigeria believe that the mass media cannot do much in facilitating entrepreneurial education in Nigeria.

Table 3: To ascertain the most preferred media for entrepreneurial education among the residents of South East Nigeria.

| Response | Frequency | % |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| Newspaper | 55 | 14.3 |
| Radio | 124 | 32.2 |
| Television | 149 | 38.7 |
| Online / Social Media | 17 | 4.4 |
| Billboards / Flyers | 10 | 2.6 |
| Magazine | 30 | 7.8 |
| Others | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 385 | 100 |

The above table shows the respondents' preferred media for entrepreneurial education. The information above indicates that 14.3% representing 55 respondents prefer newspaper, 124 respondents representing 32.2% prefer radio, 149 respondents representing 38.7% prefer Television, 17 respondents representing 4.4% prefer Online/Social Media, 10 respondents representing 2.6% respondents prefer Billboards/Flyers and a total number of 30 respondents representing 7.8% prefer Magazine while 0 respondents have no option. This indicates that the most preferred media for entrepreneurial education in the South East Nigeria is the Television.

9. FINDINGS:

Form the data collated and analysed, it is clear that there is a higher percentage of respondents, (53.2%) who often expose themselves to entrepreneurial education programmes on the media. It is also evident that majority of the respondents, 147 (38.2%) perceived the mass media as facilitating entrepreneurial education to a little extent. This is in agreement with Levies, Hart and Karim finding in 2010 which revealed that the media can promote entrepreneurial attitudes, aspirations and activities. But in the present study, most residents of the South Eastern Nigeria believed that the mass media cannot do much in facilitating entrepreneurial education in Nigeria. Also, most of the respondents, 149 (38.7%) prefer the Television to any other medium used in entrepreneurial education in South Eastern Nigeria.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings from the study, the researchers therefore recommend that proper communication strategies should be put in place by the policy makers in South East Nigeria to ensure that the entrepreneurial messages are well communicated to the audience(s) or readers for effective result. Also, more efforts should be channeled towards using the Television for the dissemination of entrepreneurial messages since one of the findings of this study has shown that it is the most preferred medium for entrepreneurial education in the South East. Entrepreneurial messages for the residents of the South Eastern Nigeria should be designed using their local languages. This will go a long way in carrying them along for effective participation.

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