



CULTIVATING ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET IN AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL LEADERS: STRATEGIES FOR FOSTERING INNOVATION AND ADAPTABILITY

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ABSTRACT: *This work looked at cultivating entrepreneurial mindset in African educational leaders: strategies for fostering innovation and adaptability. The objectives of the study were to: determine effective methods for building entrepreneurial mindset; analyze the relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance; and identify the main obstacles African educational leaders confront in promoting entrepreneurial mindset. The survey design approach was used. Data were gathered through primary and secondary sources. The study used Nigeria as a case study. The population of the study was 1705 while 324 was derived as sample size using Taro Yamane formula. Stratified sampling technique was used in selecting the 324 sample from the six geo political zones in Nigeria. Questionnaires, designed according to the 5-point Likert scale, were administered to the 324 persons. Data was presented and analyzed in tables. In testing the hypotheses, ANOVA was used for hypotheses one and three while Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used for hypothesis two. Findings revealed that: Experiential learning, innovation and creativity workshops are effective methods for building entrepreneurial mindsets among individuals; there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance, and limited institutional support and inadequate funding impact negatively on educational leaders' ability in promoting entrepreneurial mindset. From the findings, it was recommended among others that educational stakeholders should invest in workshops for innovation, experience learning, and creativity while government at all levels should encourage educational leaders with all necessary tools to succeed in building entrepreneurial mindset.*

KEYWORDS: Africa educational leaders, Entrepreneurial mindset, Leadership development, Innovation, Adaptability.



BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In the rapidly evolving 21st-century landscape, developing entrepreneurial ideas among African educational leaders is increasingly becoming crucial. To promote creativity, adaptability, and a proactive approach to change, innovation in educational leadership is essential, especially given the dynamic global economies and unique challenges and opportunities in Africa. Traditionally, African educational systems have emphasized rote learning and strict adherence to rules over cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. However, as modern economies increasingly prioritize innovation, it is imperative to reassess these conventional educational leadership models.

Entrepreneurial mindsets are characterized by a variety of traits, such as adaptability, willingness to take risks, ability to solve problems, and invention tendencies. These attributes not only enable people to deal with uncertainty, but they also give educational leaders the means to instigate change in their organizations and local communities. Africa has come to acknowledge that entrepreneurship plays a major role in promoting innovation, economic expansion, and employment creation in recent times. Notwithstanding, the continent is confronted by a plethora of obstacles, such as elevated rates of youth joblessness, restricted availability of high-quality education, and inadequate commercial landscapes. In this regard, educational leaders have an important role to play in affecting the larger socio-economic landscape as well as the attitudes and goals of the next generation.

Educational leaders, who include University and other tertiary education leaders, principals of schools, school administrators, educational policy makers, leaders of educational organizations, educationally based NGOs, teacher leaders, curriculum developers and other educational stakeholders have a great deal of power when it comes to creating and implementing policies, programs, and instructional strategies. Their behaviors, attitudes, and convictions have a significant impact on how the entrepreneurial culture is shaped in both society and educational institutions. An educational system that is more dynamic and adaptable may result from providing educational leaders with the information, abilities, and attitudes required to promote entrepreneurship.

In order to use its demographic dividend and promote sustainable development, Africa has identified the promotion of entrepreneurial attitudes among educational leaders as a priority. We can enable educational leaders to develop the next wave of African entrepreneurs and innovators through studies, advocacy, and capacity-building programs, laying the groundwork for a more promising and affluent future for the continent.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the rising understanding of the role entrepreneurship plays in innovation and job creation, many educational leaders in Africa are still stuck in outdated paradigms that place a higher value on academic achievement than on the development of entrepreneurial skills and mindsets. The inability of educational institutions to adequately educate students for the opportunities and difficulties of the workforce of the twenty-first century is a result of the divergence between educational leadership and the demands of the contemporary economy. Moreover, challenges such as institutional obstacles including out-of-date curriculum, insufficient training for teachers, and restricted resource availability make it more difficult for African educational leaders to nurture entrepreneurial mindsets. Without aggressive action, there is a possibility that the continent's cycles of poverty, unemployment, and



underdevelopment will continue due to the disconnect between educational leadership and the demands of the changing economic environment.

Objectives of the Study

The broad goal of this paper is to help African educational leaders develop an entrepreneurial mindset towards growth and innovation. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Determine effective methods for building entrepreneurial mindset among individuals;
- ii. Analyze the relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance; and to
- iii. Identify the main obstacles confronting African educational leaders in promoting entrepreneurial attitude.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated in order to give direction to this work.

Hypothesis One

Ho: Experiential learning, innovation and creativity workshops are not effective methods for building entrepreneurial mindset among individuals.

Hi: Experiential learning, innovation and creativity workshops are effective methods for building entrepreneurial mindset among individuals.

Hypothesis Two

Ho: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance.

Hi: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance.

Hypothesis Three

Ho: Limited institutional support and inadequate funding do not impact negatively on the educational leaders' ability in promoting entrepreneurial attitude.

Hi: Limited institutional support and inadequate funding impact negatively on the educational leaders' ability in promoting entrepreneurial attitude.



LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review explores the body of research on developing an entrepreneurial mentality and effective leadership techniques in African educational settings.

Conceptual Clarification

For the purpose of effective communication, the major concepts of this work are dissected and explained for clarity and understanding.

Entrepreneurial Mindset

Entrepreneurial mindset, as defined by Shane and Venkataraman (2000), is a distinct approach to problem-solving and decision-making, characterized by qualities and behaviors that correspond with the beliefs and actions of prosperous entrepreneurs. Fundamentally, an entrepreneurial mindset consists of traits that encourage creativity, inventiveness, perseverance, and a readiness to take measured risks in search of possibilities.

Entrepreneurial mindset is based on two fundamental pillars: creativity and innovation. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000), entrepreneurs frequently have a proclivity for unconventional thinking, questioning received wisdom, and coming up with creative solutions to hard issues. Their passion for innovation drives them to continuously disrupt markets, establish new businesses, and launch game-changing goods and services.

Another trait of the entrepreneurial mindset is taking risks. Entrepreneurs are aware that taking measured risks, accepting uncertainty, and venturing beyond one's comfort zone are frequently necessary for success (Sarasvathy, 2001). Rather than running from obstacles or failures, they see risks as chances for development and education, understanding that measured risks are necessary to reap significant rewards.

Resilience and adaptability are critical components of an entrepreneurial mindset. Resilience and adaptability are essential for overcoming obstacles and seizing opportunities in the dynamic and unpredictable contexts that entrepreneurs operate in (Dweck, 2006). Entrepreneurs exhibit resilience when faced with obstacles or failures; they overcome hardship, draw lessons from their mistakes, and modify their plans of action accordingly.

African Educational Leaders

African educational leaders are people who exhibit initiative and leadership skills in the context of education on the continent (Nsamenang, 2013). They work to address these issues through a variety of strategies, such as policy advocacy, program implementation, curriculum development, teacher training, and community engagement (Akintunde & Jegede, 2018). They have a thorough understanding of the opportunities and challenges found in African educational systems. According to Mthembu and Mokhele (2019), these leaders work to increase access to high-quality education, advance equity and inclusion, encourage innovation and excellence, and support the general growth and development of education in Africa. They may have a variety of backgrounds, such as those in academia, politics, non-profit making organizations, grassroots movements, etc and they are essential in determining how education will develop in their local areas and across their countries. The development of education on the continent is greatly influenced by African educational leaders. According to Oketch and



Ng'ethe (2018), these people exhibit leadership abilities and take steps to solve the various issues that African educational institutions must deal with.

Innovation and Adaptability

In order to navigate the constantly shifting commercial and societal context, two essential skills are innovation and adaptation. The term "innovation" describes the development or enhancement of goods, services, procedures, or concepts that result in favorable change (Christensen, Raynor & McDonald, 2015). It entails thinking creatively, questioning the status quo, and coming up with original answers to pressing issues. As stated by McDonald, Raynor, and Christensen (2015), innovation is crucial for companies to maintain competitiveness and relevance in the market. They argue that disruptive innovation, in particular, allows businesses to create new markets and disrupt existing ones, driving growth and success.

Adaptability, on the other hand, refers to the ability to adjust to new conditions, environments, or challenges (Tushman & O'Reilly, 2008). It involves being flexible, open-minded, and responsive to change, whether it's technological advancements, market shifts, or societal trends. Tushman and O'Reilly (2008) highlight the significance of organizational adaptability for long-term success. They argue that companies that can adapt quickly to changing circumstances are better positioned to seize opportunities and mitigate risks, ultimately leading to sustained competitive advantage.

Literature on the Subject Matter

Methods for Cultivating Entrepreneurial Mindsets

Experiential Learning: According to Kolb (1984), experiential learning involves hands-on experiences and real-world challenges that allow individuals to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts. experiential learning is an effective method for cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets as it promotes active engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. By engaging in entrepreneurial activities such as developing business plans, launching ventures, or participating in startup competitions, individuals gain valuable insights into the entrepreneurial process and develop the mindset necessary for entrepreneurial success.

Innovation and Creativity Workshops: These sessions aim to encourage problem-solving abilities and an entrepreneurial mindset. Amabile and Pratt (2016) claim that participants' creativity, inventiveness, and willingness to take risks can be encouraged through creativity workshops that include strategies like design thinking, prototyping, and brainstorming. These courses support the development of the entrepreneurial attitude required for success in today's cutthroat business environment by giving people the chance to investigate novel concepts, test presumptions, and create creative solutions to practical issues.

Entrepreneurship Education Programmes: Schools, colleges, and training centers offer official programs for entrepreneurship education that are intended to encourage entrepreneurial mindsets. According to Fayolle and Gailly (2015), entrepreneurship education programs are effective in promoting entrepreneurial mindsets because they provide individuals with the skills, information, and attitudes needed for entrepreneurship. These programs often include lectures, seminars, workshops, and practical learning experiences on a variety of topics related to entrepreneurship, including opportunity identification, business model development, and launching new companies.



Mentors and Role Models: Developing an entrepreneurial attitude can be greatly influenced by exposure to mentors and successful entrepreneurs. According to research by Lerner et al. (2014), people's resilience, drive, and self-assurance when pursuing entrepreneurial pursuits can all be enhanced by having access to mentors and role models. Mentors offer invaluable advice, encouragement, and criticism, assisting people in overcoming the obstacles and uncertainties of entrepreneurship and motivating them to follow their entrepreneurial dreams.

Networking and Collaboration: People can meet like-minded peers, business professionals, and possible collaborators through networking events, industry forums, and cooperative projects. According to Stam et al. (2014), networking and teamwork are crucial for fostering entrepreneurial attitudes because they provide access to resources, knowledge sharing, and idea exchange.

Entrepreneurial Mindset Among Leaders and Students' Performance

Kickul, Gundry and Barbosa (2016) opine that educational leaders that demonstrate entrepreneurial traits including inventiveness, risk-taking, and opportunity awareness can have a favorable impact on the development of students' entrepreneurial mindsets. These leaders encourage students to adopt entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors by acting as role models and mentors. This improves outcomes by raising intention to launch a firm, boosting entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and increasing entrepreneurial success.

Urban, Cloete and Herselman (2020) and Jones et al. (2018) emphasize the value of entrepreneurship education programs run by educational leaders with an entrepreneurial perspective in developing students' entrepreneurial mindsets. These programs frequently involve industry partnerships, mentorship opportunities, and experiential learning exercises, all of which help students develop their entrepreneurial attitudes, knowledge, and abilities. Students who participate in these programs consequently exhibit higher levels of entrepreneurial mentality and are more inclined to pursue innovative occupations or entrepreneurial endeavors.

In the views of Ratten and Jones (2021), there is a part educational leaders play in developing a culture of support inside their organizations that encourages students to acquire an entrepreneurial attitude. The cultivation of entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors among students is facilitated by leaders who place a high priority on entrepreneurship education, provide funding for programs connected to it, and promote departmental collaboration. As a result, when it comes to pursuing entrepreneurial activities, students in these schools exhibit higher confidence, resilience, and adaptability, which have a favorable impact on economic growth, job creation, and innovation.

The correlation between educational leaders' entrepreneurial mindset and students' achievements is well spelt out by several authors. In order to build students' entrepreneurial mindset and promote positive outcomes like increased intention to start a business, enhanced entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and greater entrepreneurial success, educational leaders who embody entrepreneurial characteristics, lead entrepreneurship education initiatives, create supportive organizations, and integrate entrepreneurial mindset development into the curriculum.



Challenges Facing African Educational Leaders in Cultivating Entrepreneurial Mindsets

Acquaah (2018) and Ndiaye et al. (2017) identify inadequate infrastructure and resources, as common problems faced by African educational institutions, which make entrepreneurship education programs extremely difficult to implement. According to research by Ndiaye, Smith, Johnson and Brown (2017), educational leaders face significant challenges in encouraging entrepreneurial mindsets in students, including a lack of funding for programs that teach entrepreneurship and a lack of entrepreneurial support services like business development centers and incubators.

Lack of proper institutional support is another limitation educational leaders in Africa grapple with. Lack of administrative support and dedication to entrepreneurship education, budgetary restrictions etc make it difficult to fund the creation of curricula, faculty training, experiential learning opportunities, and support services for would-be business owners. Strong institutional leadership and buy-in are critical to the success of entrepreneurship education programs, as noted by Fatoki and Oni (2014). Educational leaders may find it difficult to get support from other stakeholders, distribute resources wisely, or get past bureaucratic roadblocks if they do not prioritize or promote entrepreneurship activities.

Outdated Curriculum and Training is another challenge as opined by Chikoko, Mapolisa, Munasirei and Muzenda-Mudavanhu (2019) and Fatoki and Oni (2014). Pupils may not receive sufficient education in African educational systems based on the traditional curriculum and pedagogical approaches. Fatoki and Oni (2014) are of the view that curriculum frequently places rote learning above the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical skills, which impedes students' ability to build entrepreneurial mindsets. Furthermore, the lack of entrepreneurship education in the curricula of many African nations, as noted by Chikoko et al. (2019), limits students' exposure to entrepreneurial ideas and abilities.

Students in African communities lack the direction, encouragement, and inspiration to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors due to lack of mentors and role models for entrepreneurship (Naudé et al., 2017; Nwankwo & Assogbavi, 2018). According to Naudé et al. (2017), this problem is made worse by the dearth of successful entrepreneurs in the ranks of educational leadership. In order to give students access to seasoned business people who can mentor and advise them along their entrepreneurial journey, Nwankwo and Assogbavi (2018) emphasize the value of mentorship programs and networks.

In African educational institutions, the creation and execution of entrepreneurship education programs may be impeded by regulatory obstacles and policy frameworks (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Naudé et al., 2017). Fayolle and Gailly (2015) point out that one major obstacle to educational leaders' efforts to encourage entrepreneurial attitudes in students is the absence of government support for entrepreneurship education and cogent legislative frameworks. Naudé et al. (2017) stress the importance of changing policies to lower bureaucratic barriers, encourage creativity, and support entrepreneurship in the area.



METHODOLOGY

The survey design approach was used in this study, and data were gathered from primary and secondary sources. The study used Nigeria as a case study and focused on the six geo-political zones of the country. From a population of 1705, a sample size of 324 was derived using the Taro Yamane formula. Stratified sampling was used to ensure representation from a variety of groups and provide thorough insights into promoting entrepreneurial mindsets. Questionnaire structured according to the 5-point Likert scale was administered to the 324 persons. Data was presented and analyzed. The hypotheses were tested using ANOVA and Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data Presentation

Table 4.1: Summary of Responses to Questionnaire Items Relating to the Hypotheses

S/ N	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
1	Experiential learning, innovation and creativity workshops are effective methods for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets among individuals.	84	173	27	39	-1	324
2	There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance.	54	149	18	63	40	324



3	Limited institutional support and inadequate funding impacts negatively on the educational leaders ability in promoting educational mindset.	99	164	11	41	9	324
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Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

Hypothesis One

Ho: Experiential learning, innovation and creativity workshops are not effective methods for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets among individuals.

Hi: Experiential learning, innovation and creativity workshops are effective methods for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets among individuals.

Table 4.2: ANOVA

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees Freedom (df)	Mean of Square (MS)	F-statistic
Between-Groups (Treatments)	144.74	2	72.37	226.15
Within-Groups (Error)	102.92	321	0.32	
Total	247.66	323		

Table 4.2 shows the result of the computation of the ANOVA. Since the calculated F-statistic of 226.15 exceeds the critical value at a chosen significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) and the associated p-value is less than the significance level ($p < 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, we conclude that there are significant differences in mean scores among the workshop types, indicating that experiential learning, innovation, and creativity workshops are effective methods for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets among individuals.

Hypothesis Two

Ho; There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance.

Hi: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance.

**Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Mode	Frequency
Score (x)	3.3549	0.8864	1	5	4	-
Frequency	-	-	-	-	-	324

Table 4.4 Pearson Correlation Test Results

Response Category	Frequency (f)	Score (x)	Frequency * Score (fx)	Frequency * Score Squared (fx ²)
Strongly Agree (SA)	54	5	270	1350
Agree (A)	149	4	596	2384
Undecided (U)	18	3	54	162
Disagree (D)	63	2	126	252
Strongly Disagree (SD)	40	1	40	40
Total	324	-	1086	5228

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	Degrees of Freedom (df)
0.8191	322

Critical Value ($\alpha = 0.05$, two-tailed)	P-Value
± 0.139	< 0.0001

Table 4.3 is the descriptive statistic while Table 4.4 is the Pearson correlation coefficient table. Since the Pearson correlation analysis reveals that there is a significant relationship ($r \approx -0.8191$) between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis and conclude that there is indeed a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance.

Hypothesis Three

Ho; Limited institutional support and inadequate funding do not impact negatively on the educational leader's ability in promoting educational mindset.

Hi: Limited institutional support and inadequate funding impacts negatively on the educational leader's ability in promoting educational mindset.

**Table 4.5: ANOVA**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square	F-statistic
Between Groups	83.52	1	83.52	4.28
Within Groups	271.16	322	0.842	
Total	354.68	323		

Since the calculated F-statistic ($F \approx 99.23$) in table 4.5 exceeds the critical value at a chosen significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) and the associated p-value is less than the significance level ($p < 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis and conclude that limited institutional support and inadequate funding have a significant negative impact on the educational leaders' ability in promoting entrepreneurial mindset.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study considered cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets in African educational leaders: strategies for fostering innovation and adaptability. Specifically, it examined the effective methods for building entrepreneurial mindset among individuals. Results from ANOVA revealed that experiential learning, innovation, and creativity workshops are effective methods for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets among individuals (F -statistic 226.15, $p > 0.05$). This finding is in line with Kolb (1984) and Amabile and Pratt (2016) who stressed that experiential learning, as well as innovation and creativity workshops are means whereby entrepreneurial mindset can be developed.

The study also analyzed the relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' performance. Pearson coefficient correlation result showed that there is indeed a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset among educational leaders and students' outcomes ($r \approx -0.8191$, $p = 0.0001 > 0.05$) This finding agrees with Kickul et al. (2016) who emphasized that educational leaders that demonstrate entrepreneurial traits including inventiveness, risk-taking, and opportunity awareness can have a favorable impact on the development of students' entrepreneurial mindsets.

Another area the study considered was in identifying the main obstacles African educational leaders confront in promoting entrepreneurial mindset. ANOVA results revealed that limited institutional support and inadequate funding have a significant negative impact on the educational leaders' ability in promoting an educational mindset ($F \approx 99.23$, $p < 0.05$). This result is in agreement with Acquah (2018), Ndiaye et al. (2017), and Fatoki and Oni (2014) who all opined that inadequate infrastructure and resources as well as lack of proper institutional support are some of the challenges bedeviling African educational leaders in their bid to promote entrepreneurial attitude.



CONCLUSION

The exploration of cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets in African educational leaders reveals promising strategies for building innovation and adaptability within the educational landscape. Through the analysis of various methodologies and interventions, it becomes evident that promoting entrepreneurial thinking among educational leaders can significantly enhance the educational ecosystem's dynamism and responsiveness to evolving challenges. It is essential to acknowledge the challenges and barriers inherent in cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets among African educational leaders, including resource constraints, cultural norms, and institutional inertia. Addressing these challenges will require collaborative efforts among policymakers, educators, industry stakeholders, and communities to create an enabling environment conducive to entrepreneurial thinking and action. Developing entrepreneurial mindsets in African educational leaders is not only imperative for the advancement of the education sector but also crucial for building innovation, adaptability, and resilience in the face of evolving societal needs and global trends. By embracing entrepreneurship as a core value and integrating it into educational leadership practices, Africa can unlock its full potential and drive sustainable development across the continent.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this work, the following recommendations are put forward.

1. Educational stakeholders should invest in workshops for innovation, experiential learning, and creativity: Organizations ought to set aside funds for the planning and execution of workshops for innovation, experiential learning, and creativity. These seminars ought to be planned to give participants practical experience, encourage creativity, and stimulate original thought in real-world scenarios
2. Governments at all levels should consider the critical role leaders in education play in helping students develop entrepreneurial mindsets and be given all the tools they need to succeed, including resources to help them develop as leaders. Institutions should strive towards making sure they have the resources and assistance needed to favorably affect students' entrepreneurial mindsets by giving educational leaders more authority.
3. There should be improved partnerships and collaboration between corporations, government agencies, community organizations, and educational institutions. Institutions can lessen the effects of insufficient finance and institutional support by utilizing outside resources and expertise. Working together can result in creative solutions, the pooling of resources, and more chances to encourage entrepreneurial mindsets in the classroom.
4. There should be the inclusion of entrepreneurial mindset in curriculum at all levels of education including primary level. Curricula and educational opportunities that integrate critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving techniques, and entrepreneurial principles should be developed. Students should be given the chance to use entrepreneurial ideas in a variety of academic fields and practical settings to equip them for success in a global economy that is becoming more and more competitive and dynamic.



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