



## MANAGEMENT IMPERATIVE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION THROUGH ETHICAL AND VALUES EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



**Obizue, Mirian Nndi. Phd**

Institute of Education, Management and Professional Studies (Iemps)  
Owerri Imo State, Nigeria. mnobizue@gmail.com

**Okó-Jaja, Chinyere C. Phd**

Dept. of Foundations,  
Arts & Social Science Education.  
Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State. Nigeria  
oko-jajacc@fuotooke.edu.ng.

**Oludotu, Lisoyi Benjamin Phd**

Wesley University, Ondo.  
oludotu.lisoyi@wesleyuni.edu.ng

&

**Ifediātu, Ngozi Mercy Ph.D**

Faculty of Professional Education,  
Dept of Foundations/ Management,  
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, Imo State.  
ngozi.ifediātu@alvanikoku.edu.ng.

### **Abstract**

*The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 2,250 students offering entrepreneurship education in Imo State University Owerri. 250 students were randomly selected as sample of the study with purposive sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire tagged: Management Imperative of Entrepreneurship Education through ethical and values education for sustainable National Development (MIEEEVESND). Section A and section B, section A contain democratic variables while section B contain items in the instrument. It was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation and Department of Social Science Education in Imo State University Owerri. The reliability of the instrument was achieved using the trial test Cronbach Alpha method yielding coefficient of .71 - .86, from other higher institutions outside the study area. The statistical tools employed for data analysis were the Means and Standard Deviation. The purpose of the study is to critically examine the management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development targeting to identify the role of entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development and to examine the policy implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education. The findings include enhancing self-reliance, fostering innovation, promoting Job creation, curriculum reform mandates, teacher capacity development, and more. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended National Policy on Ethical Entrepreneurship Education: Establish a national framework that guides the ethical integration into entrepreneurship education across all levels and more.*

**Keywords:** Management Imperative, Entrepreneurship Education, Ethical and Values Education and Sustainable National Development



## **Introduction**

Nigeria is currently grappling with an array of socio-economic issues including rampant youth unemployment, underemployment, poverty, and recurring social unrest. These problems are exacerbated by a mono-economy heavily dependent on crude oil, weak industrial capacity, and poor policy implementation. In light of these persistent challenges, entrepreneurship has been widely recognized as a viable tool for economic revitalization, wealth creation, and inclusive development. Entrepreneurship education has emerged as a crucial pillar in addressing contemporary developmental challenges in Nigeria, particularly those related to youth unemployment, poverty, and economic stagnation. According to Ogunleye (2021), entrepreneurship education offers a pathway for equipping individuals particularly the youth with the competencies needed to identify opportunities, mobilize resources, and establish viable businesses that contribute to the economy. However, the impact of entrepreneurship education on sustainable development is contingent upon the moral foundation of the entrepreneurs it produces. This underscores the necessity for entrepreneurship education to be anchored in ethical and cultural values. The current education system in Nigeria has been criticized for overemphasizing cognitive knowledge and neglecting affective and psychomotor domains areas that are crucial for developing ethical and socially responsible citizens (Nnamdi Azikiwe University Journals, 2023). A values-driven education framework that emphasizes accountability, empathy, justice, and patriotism is therefore indispensable. The management of entrepreneurship education must also evolve. It should not only focus on administrative efficiency but should incorporate ethical governance, transparent resource allocation, and inclusive participation. Ethics in management and pedagogy builds trust, motivates learners, and ultimately reflects in the conduct of future entrepreneurs. The challenge, then, is not merely to produce more entrepreneurs, but to cultivate a generation of ethically driven innovators and problem-solvers capable of steering the nation toward a sustainable future. This seminar paper critically examines the management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education re-engineering. It underscores the need to realign the existing educational framework to embed ethical principles, cultural heritage, and moral consciousness in entrepreneurship training. By doing so, education can produce not only job creators but also morally upright entrepreneurs who are committed to national development and social good. The paper argues that entrepreneurship without ethics can lead to exploitative and unsustainable business practices, thereby defeating the very goals of sustainable development. Drawing from empirical studies, theoretical constructs such as transformational leadership theory and ethical entrepreneurial frameworks, and examples from Nigeria and other developing countries, the paper identifies key strategies for integrating ethics and values into entrepreneurship curricula. Ultimately, the paper advocates for a paradigm shift that emphasizes the holistic development of entrepreneurial capacities, technical, emotional, ethical, and civic, to foster innovation, resilience, and integrity in the face of Nigeria's development crises (Obizue & Adamu, 2025).

## **The Role of Entrepreneurship Education in Sustainable Development**

Entrepreneurship education serves as a catalyst for sustainable development through its role in enhancing economic self-reliance, fostering innovation, and promoting job creation. As nations strive to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), entrepreneurship education stands out as a cross-cutting enabler. It equips individuals with the tools to transform ideas into productive ventures, thereby reducing unemployment and stimulating community-based development (Abigael, Olusegun & Olayiwola, 2024). In the Nigerian context, where the youth population is both a demographic advantage and a development challenge, entrepreneurial capacity building is not only desirable but essential. Dada et al. (2023) found that exposure to structured entrepreneurial learning environments increases students' likelihood of venture creation post-graduation. Furthermore, the integration of entrepreneurship education into tertiary institutions has led to a notable shift in students' career intentions, with many now inclined toward establishing their businesses rather than solely seeking white-collar jobs.

However, entrepreneurship education must transcend technical skill acquisition. For sustainable impact, it must incorporate social entrepreneurship principles business models that address societal



issues while generating profit. According to Science Publishing Group (2024), incorporating community development goals into business ideation and implementation fosters a more sustainable form of entrepreneurship. This approach, when reinforced with ethical reasoning, ensures that businesses do not only thrive economically but also contribute positively to society. Additionally, entrepreneurship education enhances resilience, a vital trait in volatile economies like Nigeria's. Entrepreneurs trained to adapt to changing market conditions and innovate in the face of adversity are more likely to survive economic downturns. Values such as perseverance, integrity, and empathy should be consciously cultivated alongside business knowledge to prepare future entrepreneurs for ethical decision-making in complex environments. Thus, entrepreneurship education, when managed with a long-term developmental lens and grounded in ethics and values, becomes a powerful engine for national transformation.

### **Ethical and Values Education: A Foundation for Responsible Entrepreneurship**

Ethical and values education is a foundational pillar in the formation of a morally upright and socially responsible entrepreneurial class. It encompasses the teaching of moral principles and cultural norms that guide human behavior, particularly in professional and societal interactions. For entrepreneurship to serve as a vehicle for sustainable development, it must be driven by values such as honesty, accountability, fairness, respect for human rights, and environmental stewardship. Ethical education helps students develop critical thinking and moral reasoning skills necessary for navigating the complex and often morally ambiguous decisions entrepreneurs face. Integrity, for instance, ensures that entrepreneurs remain truthful in their business dealings, maintain trust with stakeholders, and avoid corrupt practices that could derail economic progress. Accountability fosters transparency and responsible governance within enterprises, which is essential in attracting investors and retaining consumer confidence. Social responsibility, meanwhile, encourages entrepreneurs to consider the broader impact of their business activities on the community and environment.

In the Nigerian cultural context, values education must also tap into indigenous knowledge systems and traditional ethical frameworks. A prime example is the Yoruba philosophical concept of *Omoluwabi*, which emphasizes virtues such as honesty (*otito*), respect (*iteriba*), hard work (*ise*), humility (*iwa*), and communal responsibility (*ifowosowopo*) (Abimbola, 1975). These values, deeply rooted in traditional African societies, serve as a moral compass that promotes self-discipline and socially conscious behavior. By incorporating such indigenous ethical systems into formal education, students are not only taught universal ethical norms but are also grounded in their cultural heritage. This approach reinforces identity, social cohesion, and a sense of duty to the community. Unfortunately, modern education in Nigeria has often marginalized these traditional values in favor of Western capitalist ideologies, which sometimes prioritize profit over people. As Obizue, Oguh & Ogbuoka (2024), noted, values education is a global pedagogical approach used to develop both the moral character and civic responsibility of learners. Its integration into entrepreneurship education ensures that students graduate not just as job creators, but as ethical leaders capable of making a positive difference in society. Ultimately, entrepreneurship education that is devoid of ethical grounding risks producing entrepreneurs who are exploitative, corrupt, and indifferent to the long-term consequences of their actions. Thus, ethical and values education must not be treated as peripheral, but as a core component of entrepreneurial training for sustainable development.

### **Re-engineering Educational Curricula for Integrated Learning**

To meet the demands of a global economy and the developmental needs of Nigeria, there is an urgent need to re-engineer the educational curriculum to reflect an integrated learning model. This model combines technical entrepreneurial training with ethical, cultural, and civic education to produce graduates who are not only competent business owners but also ethical citizens. A re-engineered curriculum should include dedicated modules on business ethics, cultural studies, civic education, sustainability, and social innovation. These components would provide learners with a holistic understanding of their role as entrepreneurs not just as economic agents but as stewards of the society and environment. According to the *Science Journal of Education* (2024), embedding cultural education



into vocational and business programs enhances students' appreciation of indigenous knowledge systems. This, in turn, fosters sustainable practices by encouraging students to build enterprises that are socially embedded and environmentally conscious. For instance, in agribusiness education, integrating local farming practices and indigenous environmental conservation techniques can lead to more sustainable and culturally relevant agricultural ventures. Curriculum re-engineering must also address pedagogical methods. Active and participatory learning methods such as case studies, role-playing, ethical dilemmas, and community-based projects should replace the traditional rote-learning approach. This will allow students to internalize ethical principles through real-life applications and reflect on their personal values and responsibilities as future business leaders. In addition, interdisciplinary collaboration between faculties of business, philosophy, education, and sociology should be encouraged. This promotes a rich cross-pollination of ideas and ensures that entrepreneurship is taught within a broader socio-cultural and ethical framework. Policy makers and educational managers play a crucial role in this transformation. They must develop and enforce policies that support curriculum innovation, provide adequate resources for teacher training, and monitor implementation to ensure quality and relevance. Stakeholders including parents, local communities, traditional leaders, and industry professionals should also be consulted during curriculum development to ensure contextual appropriateness and ownership. In sum, re-engineering the curriculum to include ethical and values education is not a luxury but a necessity. It ensures that the next generation of entrepreneurs in Nigeria are equipped not just with the skills to succeed in business, but also with the moral compass to drive sustainable national development.

### **Policy Implications and Recommendations**

According to Sulaimon (2020), the integration of ethical and values education into entrepreneurship curricula has profound policy implications for educational governance, national development planning, and institutional reform. As Nigeria seeks to position entrepreneurship education as a tool for tackling socio-economic challenges, there must be a strategic alignment between educational policies and national development goals such as the *Nigeria Vision 2050*, the *National Development Plan (2021–2025)*, and the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

#### **Policy Implications:**

**Curriculum Reform Mandates:** National bodies like the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) must issue guidelines requiring all entrepreneurship-related programs to include compulsory modules on ethics, civic education, and indigenous values.

**Teacher Capacity Development:** Effective implementation of re-engineered curricula demands well-trained educators who are both content experts and ethical exemplars. Government policies must prioritize continuous professional development and the inclusion of ethics pedagogy in teacher education programs (Sulaimon, 2020).

**Assessment and Accreditation:** Accreditation agencies must include ethical and civic learning outcomes as key indicators when evaluating institutions. The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education should not only be assessed based on business success rates but also on the ethical practices and community contributions of alumni entrepreneurs.

**Stakeholder Collaboration:** Policies should encourage partnerships between academia, industry, traditional institutions, and civil society to create contextually relevant entrepreneurship programs. This would promote localized content and ensure that indigenous ethical norms like *Omoluwabi* and *Ubuntu* (common in African ethics) are preserved and promoted (Sulaimon, 2020).

**Funding and Infrastructure Support:** Ethical entrepreneurship education requires funding for workshops, experiential learning, community service programs, and ethical laboratories. The government, NGOs, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) arms of companies should channel resources toward these ends.



### **Statement of the Problem**

Entrepreneurship Education is a cornerstone of Nigeria's national strategy to combat high youth unemployment, foster economic diversification beyond oil, and stimulate sustainable development. Significant investments are channeled into equipping young Nigerians with entrepreneurial skills to drive innovation, create jobs, and contribute to national prosperity. However, the long-term sustainability and societal impact of these efforts are jeopardized by a critical deficiency in current Entrepreneurship Education approaches prevalent within the Nigerian context. The dominant paradigm within many Nigerian Entrepreneurship Education curricula, often influenced by international models and immediate economic pressures, heavily prioritizes technical business skills, financial literacy, and venture startup mechanics. While essential, this approach frequently marginalizes the systematic integration of robust ethical frameworks, values education, and principles of social responsibility. This neglect presents a fundamental problem: it risks producing a generation of Nigerian entrepreneurs equipped with technical know-how but lacking a strong ethical compass, commitment to integrity, and values-driven decision-making imperative for genuine sustainability within Nigeria's unique socio-economic and governance landscape. Consequently, this predominantly skills-focused Entrepreneurship Education model may inadvertently cultivate entrepreneurs whose ventures, while potentially viable in the short term, could exacerbate existing national challenges. This includes contributing to environmental degradation (evident in sectors like mining, agriculture, and waste management), perpetuating exploitative labour practices, enabling poor corporate governance and corruption, widening social inequalities, and prioritizing narrow profit motives over broader societal well-being and environmental stewardship. Such outcomes fundamentally undermine Nigeria's aspirations for sustainable national development, as articulated in visions like the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) and commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which demand balanced economic progress, social equity, and environmental conservation.

Furthermore, effectively embedding ethics and values into Entrepreneurship Education is not merely an academic concern but a critical management imperative for Nigerian educational institutions, policymakers, and program administrators. They face distinct challenges in achieving this integration within the Nigerian system. This discourse and outcry by academia is a pointer to the need for this study critically examine the management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to critically examine the management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify The Role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development
2. examine the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development.

### **Research Question**

Two research questions guided the study and stated as follows:

- What are The Role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development?
- What are the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development?

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 2,250 students offering entrepreneurship education in Imo State University Owerri. 250 students were randomly selected as sample of the study. Questionnaire tagged: Management Imperative of Entrepreneurship Education through ethical and values education for sustainable National Development (MIEEVEESND) was the main instrument used for data collection containing section A and section B, section A contain democratic variables while section B contain items in the instrument. It was validated



by experts in Measurement and Evaluation and Department of Social Science Education in Imo State University Owerri. The reliability of the instrument was achieved using the trial test Cronbach Alpha method yielding coefficient of .71 - .86, from other higher institutions outside the study area. The statistical tools employed for data analysis were the Means and Standard Deviation

**Result and Findings**

Research question 1: What are The Role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development?

**Table 1:** Mean rating of the responses and standard deviation effectiveness of students on The Role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development

S/n	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Std Deviation	Decision
1	Enhances self-reliance	120	110	11	9	2.98	0.98	Accepted
2	Fosters innovation	104	100	32	14	2.89	0.93	Accepted
3	Promotion of Job creation	116	102	28	2	2.81	0.93	Accepted
4	Enhances Resilience in youth	90	112	33	15	2.70	0.88	Accepted
5	Enhances self-realization and creativity	100	104	20	26	2.84	0.88	Accepted
	Aggregate mean					2.59	5.59	Accepted

Table 1 above presented data on The Role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development. From the table. It was observed that all the items were highly rated by the respondent with aggregate or grand mean of 2.59. It indicates that the respondents are of the opinion that the role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development includes but no limited to; enhancing self-reliance, fostering innovation, Promoting Job creation, enhancing resilience in youth and Enhancing self-realization and creativity.

**Research question 2**

What are the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development?

**Table 2:** Mean rating of the responses and standard deviation of the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development.

S/n	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Std deviation	Decision
6	Curriculum Reform Mandates	104	112	18	16	2.88	0.92	Accepted
7	Teacher Capacity Development	102	100	31	17	3.00	0.83	Accepted
8	Assessment and Accreditation	117	110	12	10	2.99	0.99	Rejected
9	Stakeholder Collaboration	102	102	23	23	2.92	0.96	Accepted
10	Funding and Infrastructure Support:	106	107	20	17	2.96	0.68	Accepted
	Aggregate mean					2.64	0.98	Accepted



Table 2 above presented data on the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development, it can be observed that all the items were highly rated by the respondents. With the aggregate or grand mean of 2.64 the results indicate that the respondents are of the opinion that the listed items are the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Research question 1 sought to Identify the Role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development. The finding reveal that the role of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development includes but no limited to; enhancing self-reliance, fostering innovation, Promoting Job creation, enhancing resilience in youth and Enhancing self-realization and creativity. This finding is in line with the assertion of Abigael, Olusegun & Olayiwola (2024), that as nations strive to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), entrepreneurship education stands out as a cross-cutting enabler to equips individuals with the tools to transform ideas into productive ventures, thereby reducing unemployment and stimulating community-based development In the Nigerian context, where the youth population is both a demographic advantage and a development challenge, entrepreneurial capacity building is not only desirable but essential. Dada et al. (2023), found that exposure to structured entrepreneurial learning environments increases students' likelihood of venture creation at post-graduation and concluded that the integration of entrepreneurship education into tertiary institutions has led to a notable shift in students' career intentions, with many now inclined toward establishing their businesses rather than solely seeking white-collar jobs. The second research question sought to examine the Policy Implications of management imperative of entrepreneurship education through the lens of ethical and values education for sustainable National Development and concluded that curriculum reform mandates, teacher capacity development, assessment and accreditation, stakeholder collaboration, funding and infrastructure support. This finding is in line with the finding of Sulaimon (2020), that the integration of ethical and values education into entrepreneurship curricula has profound policy implications for educational governance, national development planning, and institutional reform. In conclusion, as Nigeria seeks to position entrepreneurship education as a tool for tackling socio-economic challenges, there must be a strategic alignment between educational policies and national development goals such as the Nigeria Vision 2050, the National Development Plan (2021–2025), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the researchers recommended the following:

- National Policy on Ethical Entrepreneurship Education: Establish a national framework that guides the ethical integration into entrepreneurship education across all levels.
- Community-Based Learning Programs: Encourage students to engage in social enterprises or community development projects as part of their training, ensuring practical application of ethics and values.
- Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: Introduce metrics to track the ethical behavior and societal impact of graduates engaged in entrepreneurial ventures.
- Public Awareness Campaigns: Use media and public forums to promote the value of ethical entrepreneurship and its role in national development.
- Mentorship Programs: Pair students with ethical business leaders who can model values-based decision-making and sustainable business practices.

### **Conclusion**

Entrepreneurship education, when strategically managed and ethically grounded, holds transformative potential for Nigeria's sustainable development. The current socio-economic realities characterized by youth unemployment, corruption, and environmental degradation demand a holistic



educational response that transcends technical skill acquisition. A values-driven entrepreneurship education system ensures that individuals are not only equipped to create jobs but also to lead with integrity, promote social cohesion, and safeguard the environment. The re-engineering of educational curricula to integrate ethical reasoning, cultural identity, and civic consciousness is not just a pedagogical necessity but a national imperative. By drawing from both global ethical frameworks and indigenous African value systems such as *Omoluwabi*, Nigeria can cultivate a new generation of entrepreneurs committed to inclusive and sustainable growth. As the country continues its journey toward economic diversification and national renewal, policy makers, educators, and institutional leaders must act decisively. The management of entrepreneurship education must align with the broader vision of nation-building producing citizens who are economically productive, ethically conscious, and socially responsible. In conclusion, ethical and values education is the soul of sustainable entrepreneurship, and without it, economic success may come at the cost of social decay. For Nigeria to achieve true national development, the integration of values and ethics into entrepreneurship education is not optional it is essential.

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