



Engaging young adults in fostering entrepreneurial mind-set using the community education approach: Case study of chorkor community, Ghana

Isaac Kofi Biney

To cite this article: Isaac Kofi Biney (2023): Engaging young adults in fostering entrepreneurial mind-set using the community education approach: Case study of chorkor community, Ghana, Community Development, DOI: [10.1080/15575330.2023.2164902](https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2023.2164902)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2023.2164902>



Published online: 14 Jan 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 26



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Engaging young adults in fostering entrepreneurial mind-set using the community education approach: Case study of chorkor community, Ghana

Isaac Kofi Biney 

Department of Adult Education and Human Resource Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana

ABSTRACT

This paper draws on McGivney's study of adult education for marginal groups, including unemployed young adults. The young unemployed adults in Ghana are growing in numbers; hence engaging them using the community education to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets is a means of addressing the unemployment problem. The formation of learning groups helps foster self-help and enhances the contributions of diverse synergies to community development and transformation. This qualitative case-study used young adults between the ages of 18 to 35 at Chorker, Accra, as the unit of analysis. Judgmental sampling techniques were adopted to sample fourteen (14) participants to participate in the study. They consist of 8 participants for in-depth interview and 6 participants comprising three (3) male and three (3) female formed focus group discussions. Data was analyzed using descriptive narrative and interpretivist approaches. The results indicate that the participants were empowered as they engaged in group learning to acquire skills in trades.

The study recommends that young adults are motivated to engage in community education to foster entrepreneurial mind-set, innovate and exploit opportunities to make their communities more vibrant and sustainable.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 22 January 2022
Accepted 24 December 2022

KEYWORDS

Young adults;
entrepreneurial mind-set;
community education; self-
help; Ghana

1. Introduction

Young adult engagement in groups learning and community development is one way to counter the rise in youth unemployment rates. Youth unemployment is on the ascendency in communities in the developing countries, including Ghana. Indeed, Ofori-Atta (2021) indicated that about 16 million people are trained to join the workforce yearly across Africa, with 83% of them unable to find jobs. As a result of this, the unemployment rate keeps increasing every year. Dadzie et al. (2020) project that the proportion of the African population composed of youth will grow steadily until 2035. In Ghana, the proportion of youth continues to grow; opportunities are also emerging for harnessing this demographic dividend to boost socio-economic growth (Dadzie et al., 2020). The Government of Ghana is making efforts to create decent job environments, yet requires

the support of private sector players in creating job opportunities to address youth unemployment. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) of Ghana estimated 400,000 new entrants to the labor market annually. Thus, unemployment remains the greatest challenge in Ghana (Nunoo, 2021). The unemployment difficulties facing young adults are manifesting in increased vigilantism, hooliganism, armed robbery and wanton destruction of fertile lands and forest vegetation cover through “galamsey” which means “gathering of rich mineral resources illegally, particularly gold for sale” in communities (Biney, 2019b).

While unemployment is a challenge among all groups, its impact is acute among young people between the ages of 15 and 35 who make up about a third (33.5%) of Ghana’s population (Baah-Boateng, 2018) and 56% of them live in urban areas (Dadzie et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills can be learned and developed through the community education (Lackeus, 2015). Hence, the Government of Ghana can aid in fostering the entrepreneurial mind-sets of young people and increase the job opportunities for young adults. The aim of this paper is to explain how the community education can be used to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets among young adults. The purpose is to interrogate young adults at Chorkor community who are using the community education to engage in group learning and foster entrepreneurial mind-sets.

Community education in this context constitutes a process of engaging individuals in group learning with the aim of developing the entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, and values needed to identify and address the community needs and foster the “can-do” spirit to persist in learning to recognize opportunities to create ventures. Education precedes development (Bidwell & McConnell, 1990); hence encouraging young adults at Chorkor in Ghana to learn via groups is one step in aiding young adults to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets and create ventures.

As young adults learn, they become empowered to identify opportunities in their communities, and tap into them. Amedzro (2005) argues that community education focuses on alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable community development. Community education is effective in addressing the community-wide problems (Brookfield et al., 2003). Thus, using the community education, young adults can learn through groups (Brookfield, 2004; Imel, 1997; McGivney, 2000); and foster entrepreneurial mind-sets via self-help and create startups in their communities (Biney, 2019b). But what is self-help?

Self-help is a key concept in community development. The central idea is that by working together, people can improve their quality of life (Christenson, in Green, 2011). Ghana has a strong self-help spirit and voluntarism is seen as a norm (Badu-Nyarko, 1997). Selfless services were common in the Ghanaian communities; however, self-help promotion among people will be successful if self-help groups establish links with local associations and organizations. Savings clubs, called “Susu” (revolving fund) and “Nnboa” (working together), which are the community savings banks or the community foundations (Lachapelle, 2020) are examples of self-help groups in Ghana.

2. Background

Chorkor is a depressed suburb of Accra, and a coastal community. It is a community inhabited by the indigenous Gas, deprived of social amenities, including sanitation and

lacking in jobs for young adults. The only opportunity to young adults is the commercialization of motorcycle as a means of living, popularly called “Okada” business, although dangerous due to narrow roads, frequent accidents and high fatality rates. There is general lack of opportunities for young adults to exploit in their community. This paper argues that the community members, including young adults’ inability to employ the community education approach in developing communities serve as a barrier to improvement of communities. Young adults, in particular, need to learn in their communities to effect change from within. Such a change must lead to the material improvement of the citizens. It is engaged citizens, not satisfied customers, who build communities (Epstein et al., 2006). Community education seeks to build the community from the-inside-out, and has the potential of making people entrepreneurial. It is this kind of education that this study sought to qualitatively explore and understand the phenomenon. The study sought to identify the benefits of young adults learning in groups to foster an entrepreneurial mind-set. It establishes that young adults can employ group learning to create startups and make their communities sustainable. The study further identifies steps to address challenges involved in building an entrepreneurial mind-set by adopting community education. This approach seems promising in fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets in young adults.

3. Statement of the problem

Community education has potential of empowering young adults as they learn through groups. After all, there is a link between community education and community development (Bidwell & McConnell, 1990). The goal of community education is community development (Biney, 2021b; Ross, 2017). Learning in groups is one of the methods of learning in adult education (Brookfield, 2004; Imel, 1997), and helps in fostering self-help spirit amongst citizens to address needs in communities due to diverse synergies brought to bear by the people. Many young adults at Chorkor community are unemployed, and seem lost, whether they have potential of becoming productive in their community or otherwise. Meanwhile entrepreneurship, a 21st-century useful skill (Debyser, 2013; OECD, 2014) is not exploited by young adults at Chorkor. When young adults go into entrepreneurship, they can identify unrecognized needs in their community and create job opportunities for themselves. The paucity of employment opportunities in the public sector in Ghana makes entrepreneurship a key area young adult must exploit for job opportunities. However, succeeding in learning requires that young adults adopt sustained discussions and dialogical methods described as inclusionary and participatory (Brookfield, 2004). This is because such learning methods have an empowering effect on the participants engaged in group learning to make exploits in their ventures.

I argue that through group learning and application of the community education, young adults could develop the “*can-do*” spirit to innovate with entrepreneurial mind-sets. Young adults at Chorkor can become entrepreneurial change agents with support from within, and beyond their communities. There are challenges fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets in developing countries where financial resources seem scarce; yet when young adults learn to persist in their entrepreneurial drive through group learning, the benefits derived could be tremendous. The main objective of this study is to ascertain from young adults in Chorkor community the best way to employ the community

education to overcome challenges in fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets to create start-ups. On the basis of the major issue raised, the specific objectives of the study are to:

- (1) Identify benefits young adults could derive learning in groups in fostering an entrepreneurial mind-set;
- (2) Determine challenges young adults faced learning in groups to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets; and
- (3) Identify strategies young adults could adapt to build entrepreneurial mind-sets in trades.

4. Theoretical framework

This study is framed by McGivney's (2000) study of outreach adult education for marginalized groups, including unemployed men. McGivney's (2000) observed that factors which underpinned success of learning by young adults include the ways of working with learners, relationships, and methods, the response to the community issues and support for the community groups. Connolly (2011) expanded McGivney's study and developed Figure 1, facets of community education.

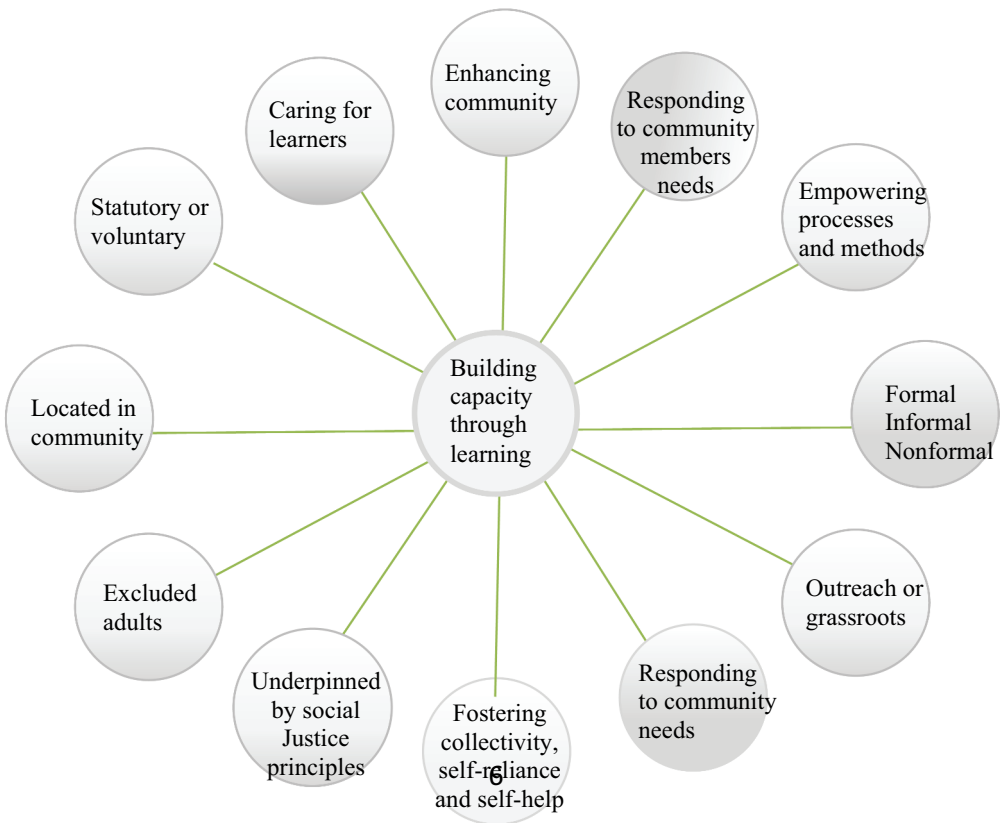


Figure 1. Facets of the community education and the breadth of scope. Source: Connolly (2011)

Community education focuses on building the community, the capacity of the individuals, organizations and institutions, and the entire community (Connolly, 2011). To Freire (cited in Shaw & Crowther, 2017), the community education is a *liberatory* approach to educational engagement with the deprived communities. It involves building a community as a process of working on relationships between members of the community to enhance their lived experiences. The processes work with people's lived experiences and connect issues, ideas, and understanding to action. These processes foster practical skills, which help people overcome alienation, and increase their capacity for employment and participation (Connolly, 2011).

McGivney's (2000) work expanded by Connolly (2011) is appropriate for the study. Thus, when young adults learn and build their micro-enterprises, they are in a better position to participate in Chorkor community's wellbeing and development. Hence, facilitators working with young adults must respect their views, and empathize with young adults in their difficulties as young adults learn within the community. Mutual respect between facilitators and young adults is crucial in learning and development and must be encouraged. When such principles in learning are encouraged, participation of young adults in learning endeavors will increase.

Finally, the community education is linked with the community action; meaning that when the community members at Chorkor act together, they can engender change in their community, and become a role model to other marginalized communities. Freire (1972) argues that education for liberation is the result of "conscientization," understood to have the power to transform reality. Critical awareness must be created among young adults at Chorkor to ascertain their strengths, opportunities, gaps and challenges in their community, and utilize entrepreneurial programs provided by media and develop entrepreneurial mind-set as they learn in groups. In so doing, they can act together to become entrepreneurial in their own community.

Connolly (2011) tried and captured the facets of the community education in [Figure 1](#). Connolly ensured that anything community education revolves around the centrality of the learners- a key component of the community education, not just in terms of the processes and methods, but also in terms of meaning and experience. Master craftsmen are experienced people and know the essence of skills today. When master craftsmen demonstrate love in aiding young adults acquire practical skills, young adults would desire to learn using group learning approaches. These myriad facets captured by Connolly demonstrate the breath of community education, and these dimensions are reflected in examples of the study.

5. Benefits of group learning in fostering entrepreneurial mind-set

English and Mayo (2012) assert that "working together is key in community development because it allows for results than working as isolated units" (p. 138). There are links between communities and entrepreneurs (Lyons et al., 2012); and since people want to belong and be respected, young adults desire for a group. I argue that through group learning young adults can acquire employable skills to be useful in communities. There are benefits to be derived from learning in groups because no one is a repository of all wisdom. It takes two or more heads to succeed in ventures. This means that there are diverse synergies, ideas and knowledge brought to bear when young adults learn in

groups. The need for other people seems basic to the community members continued existence; hence Imel (1997) argues that community education can be promoted among people through the power of group learning. It means that when young adults learn in groups, they can better understand their needs, and improve their capacities for their own good. Wilson (1999) observed that interaction among group members makes it possible for more in-depth thought when they share their thinking.

Similarly, learning in groups provides more information and stimulates creativity (Biney, 2022). Experiences people bring to group activities improve group learning, and make the group as a whole possess more information and ideas to become creative in solving problems which usually would have been difficult to be solved by one person (Biney, 2019a). Brookfield et al. (2003) argue that groups usually make better decision than individuals working alone, and have more approaches of solving specific problems. However, it is not always the case that groups make better decisions, as social psychologist Janis (1971) identifies this as groupthink- when group members agree to decisions primarily in order to avoid conflict.

6. Challenges in group learning in fostering entrepreneurial mind-set

Although learning through groups can produce positive results problems can occur when young adults congregate. The youthful exuberance of some young adults, coupled with group pressure brought on some group members who failed in honoring payment of a group-loan contracted by the group, could lead to conflict among group members (Biney, 2019b). Most people do not like conflict, and would do everything possible to avoid it (Brookfield et al., 2003), yet conflicts are not necessarily bad. Sometimes, lessons could be learned from conflict when skillfully managed and resolved.

Some individuals who tend to dominate the group may by their actions shift the focus of the group (Brookfield et al., 2003). The intention of the group is learning to acquire skills to foster an entrepreneurial mind-set, but the group members who dominate the groups may have different agendas. That could make the group deviate from their focus and purpose of learning.

7. Strategies young adults could adopt in fostering entrepreneurial mind-set

Since adult educators help adults to learn, they are first and foremost facilitators of learning (Bowl, 2014), and must relate with young adults in such a way that they motivate them, and give them hope to learn and improve their lives (Biney, 2019a, 2021a). I argue that adult educators must leverage motivation to drive young adults to create opportunities for themselves. In any event, adult educators are an educating force, and a source of education for the community (United Nations, 1986). Hence, as adult educators build genuine relationships with young adults, they can cushion them to learn. As facilitators, adult educators must ensure that young adults use dialogue, conversation, discussion and storytelling methods to learn. Community education then becomes relevant to individual needs, and offers the possibility of change by addressing problems in the communities. Young adults can learn to develop business plans to solicit financial support from non-bank financial institutions, including Micro-Finance and Small Loan Center (MASLOC), and Venture Capital Trust Fund (VCTF) to

provide loan facilities to budding entrepreneurs to create jobs. Entrepreneurship emphasizes on individual's ability to turn ideas into action (Debyser, 2013), and must be encouraged.

8. Method

8.1. Study sample

I adopted a qualitative case study design. Fourteen (14) participants participated in the study. They comprised 8 participants for an in-depth interview and 6 participants- three (3) male and three (3) female for focus group discussions (FGD). They formed the design's unit of analysis of the study. All the 14 participants have created trades for themselves. I conducted the FGDs, to first, access the "voice" of female participants regarding fostering of entrepreneurial mind-sets, and second, solicit contrary views, if any, to triangulate responses from an in-depth interview. The participants were members of learning groups formed at Chorkor to build entrepreneurial mind-sets to grow ventures and make Chorkor sustainable.

8.2. Research design

I used a case study research design, and the intention was to ascertain how young adults could foster entrepreneurial mind-sets using the community education, especially adopting group learning at Chorkor community in Ghana. A field survey research design was used to comprehend and collect in-depth and rich information from the participants. I sought to gain new insights and meaning on the best way young adults could learn in their communities and become empowered with entrepreneurial mind-sets and create startups for themselves.

8.3. Sample and sampling techniques

Purposive sampling procedures were adopted to select cases with a specific purpose in mind (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study was conducted at Chorkor community where unemployment among young adults seems insurmountable. The eight sampled participants and three male and three female participants each participated in an in-depth interview and FGDs respectively. The participants were accessible to the researcher through face-to-face interview observing all the COVID-19 protocols. Descriptive case studies approaches were used because the participants were offered the opportunity to tell their *own experiences* building entrepreneurial mind-sets in their trades. I adopted a qualitative approach at every stage throughout the study. The study was not meant to generalize the findings to populations but to gather meaning and pull subtle nuances from the participants' on how they fostered entrepreneurial mind-sets in their trades.

8.4. Data collection techniques

As a field study, I brought the three adult learning groups created at Chorkor community together and explained the purpose of the study to them. The names of the accessible young adults engaged in varied trades were compiled and serially labeled on the pieces of paper, put into a container and reshuffled and 14 participants were selected.

Between fifty minutes to one hour were spent interviewing each of the 8 participants by the researcher and a research assistant. I moderated the interactive FGDs and recorded them. The participants' ages ranged between 18 and 35. Two hours were spent conducting FGDs for the 6 participants. The diverse views expressed by the participants enriched the study. The interviews and FGDs conducted were informal, dialogical and conversational. I listened to the participants and noted their nonverbal cues, and monitored the progress of conversations, participated, and encouraged participants to elaborate on responses made. The conversational nature of the interview allowed me to summarize what transpired during the interview and FGDs. As a researcher, at the end of the interview and FGDs, I asked the participants if the notes I took accurately reflected their position.

9. Research instruments

9.1. In-depth interview guide

A nine item interview guide was developed to collect data from participants is presented in the [Table 1](#) below.

The open-ended type questions posed made it possible for the researcher to probe further to identify and describe patterns from the participants' perspectives. The questions enabled the participants' to freely express themselves on the extent they have fostered entrepreneurial mind-sets. It allowed me to explain the patterns and themes that emerged from the study and made the researcher and participants to co-construct the narrative.

Interview participants were young adults learning through groups. They have varied trades comprising media work, dress-making, boutique operation, artworks/painting, hair dressing/fashion design, dress-making, catering and barbering.

Table 1. In-depth Interview Guide.

S/N	Research Questions	Interview Guide Questions
1	Identify benefits young adults could derive learning in groups in fostering entrepreneurial mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What benefits have you derived from trades and skills acquired through group learning? • Are the benefits worth the time and resources invested in entrepreneurship? • Would you recommend group learning to your friends • If yes, what specific benefits did you get from group learning?
2	Determine challenges young adults faced learning in groups to foster entrepreneurial mind-set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the specific challenges you faced learning in groups? • If you are asked to rank the challenges, which one would come first and which would be last?
3	Identify strategies young adults could adapt to build entrepreneurial mindsets in trades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you do in the short term to medium term to make your startup appealing to clientele? • Can you establish your trade in another community in the long term? • What support would you need to grow your enterprise and who to provide that support?

9.2. Focus group discussion

Focus group discussions sessions were conducted for six participants, three male and three female, selected for in-depth interview. The six participants engaged in FGDs ages' range between 20 and 35. The FGDs lasted for two hours. I served as a moderator and recorder and my research assistant served as a time keeper. The results of the study were presented under the themes: (1) benefits of learning in groups as young adults; (2) challenges faced in group learning as young adults, and (3) strategies young adults adapt to build entrepreneurial mind-sets. The interactive FGDs enabled me to secure rich information that emanated from the participants own voices.

9.3. Data analysis

Recorded interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. Field notes and diaries were regularly reviewed. The responses from the valid qualitative in-depth interviews and FGDs were analyzed using a computer program called NUD.IST. The narrative analysis can have an emancipatory purpose and how narrators develop interpretations (Chase, 2005). Humans are storytelling animals, and Etherington (2013) observed that stories can serve as window onto knowable reality, and analyzed using concepts. The stories are shaped through dialogue as well as providing a reflexive layer with regard to the positioning of the researcher (Etherington, 2013). In this study, the young adults were allowed to share experiences they have had, especially, in fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets in their trades. As young adults shared their experiences, and based on the interesting nature of the narrative of the experiences, I kept encouraging young adults to express themselves further by providing instances of challenges encountered. From the dialogue that ensued, I deduced that young adults became empowered to learn from the mistakes they made in their entrepreneurial journey. I, therefore, aided them to reconstruct the narratives.

Indeed, the emphasis, in this context is on the co-construction of meaning between me and participants. The findings gathered were used as anecdotal evidence to triangulate responses collected from the interview guide. I took a cue from qualitative researchers, including Wohlfart (2020), and Creswell and Poth (2018) in analyzing the qualitative data gathered from the study. The first step was to read the raw data thoroughly to identify initial themes that emerged.

The second step involved the building of a thematic framework made up of themes and sub-themes after identifying general patterns at the first stage. I used a data analysis grid- the process of illustrating how data was organized for easy retrieval (Chilisa & Preece, 2005), and identified three themes on fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets using community education, which include "benefits of learning in groups as young adults;" "challenges faced learning in groups as young adults," and "strategies young adults could adapt to build enterprising mind-sets." The three themes represented benefits, challenges involved, and strategies young adults could put in place to become entrepreneurial in their own communities. Since in qualitative research, the analysis starts as soon as the researcher starts collecting the data (Chilisa & Preece, 2005), I built the structure of the study right from the start, fine-tuning the questions, revising and editing fieldnote and diaries. I used a data analysis grid, thus, a useful way of organizing qualitative data in order

to facilitate report writing (Chilisa & Preece, 2005), to come up with the data coding emerging themes. The grid shows the themes, the interviewees who revealed information to which the themes could be traced, and the frequency of the themes. I was able to take each theme separately during the write up stage and re-read those interviews that have information on the theme under consideration.

At the next stage, the themes that were identified were indexed by assigning the same numbers to themes with similar interpretations that allowed for proper categorization of thematic charts to synthesize the data. This step is followed by a descriptive analysis of the themes where elements were refined by inspecting each column of the thematic chart across all cases to identify the content and dimensions of each case. This ensured a better refinement of the various categories that were identified.

The next stage searched for patterns and links between sets of phenomena and between different individual views expressed. This stage involved associative analysis. The final stage involved a discussion of the findings of the study in the context of existing literature. I undertook in-depth scrutiny of the data to arrive at final themes and sub-themes. All quotations are presented verbatim to present a true reflection of the experiences shared by the participants.

9.4. Credibility and dependability of results

The trustworthiness of the result is the extent to which a study can be replicated in another context in qualitative research (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). In this study, the participants were engaged to ensure the credibility of the study. Enough contextual information about the fieldwork site and participants were provided in the study to ensure transferability. As observed by Armstrong et al. (1997), assessing inter-rater reliability in qualitative research though complex is an important method for ensuring rigor. As a qualitative researcher, I ensured that two (2) data collection tools, thus in-depth interview guides and focus group discussions guides were employed in the study. A research assistant was involved in data collection and analysis to enable researcher triangulation and seek inter-rater agreement. The research assistant support largely aided in the reduction of bias involved in the analysis, and also enhanced consistency and reliability of the results. This is because, in the finalization of the analysis of the data, I realized that the research assistant assigned exactly the same rating to each object. That is to say, the qualitative data provides precision and unique insight. Unique codes and themes were built into the data collected. In terms of dependability and conformity of this study, the research methods used were explained, and the objectives for the research were also explained and discussed with the participants of the study.

9.5. Ethical considerations

Before embarking on this study, clearance was sought from the University of Ghana authorities. The participants were informed in writing concerning the study's objectives, the time and meeting place, and their expectations during the interview. The participants were assured of strict confidentiality of the information and their right to opt-out of the interview without any repercussions since their participation was purely voluntary.

Participants were also made aware that the interviews would be tape-recorded, and the data would be kept for a period of 6 months after the study and destroyed afterward.

10. Results

This section is divided into three sections based on themes derived from the data. The results are presented in narrative and descriptive styles of experiences and meanings negotiated between the researcher and the participants.

10.1. *Benefits of learning in groups as young adults*

On benefits of learning in groups by young adults to foster entrepreneurial mind-set, four questions were posed, comprising benefits derived from trades, time invested in the learning, and recommendation of group learning to friends. Varied responses were made by participants. Indeed, the participants, all (14 of 14 [100%]) generally agreed that they earned money and gained experiences from one another in their trades as they learn in groups. For instance, the barber indicated that he makes GH¢400.00, equivalent of USD65.18 every week from his trade. The hairdresser/trader similarly said that she also makes GH¢600.00, equivalent of USD97.78 every week from her trade. This is the apt way the media man expressed it:

Though I make some money from my trade but it is not much. I'm engaged in this trade because I have established some networks with my clientele to my benefit. Passion developed for media work propels me to learn in this trade.

On whether the benefits derived from trades was worth the time invested, the participants, all (14 of 14 [100%]) said yes. In the FGDs, participants said that they cherished the trades they possessed because they are able to take care of their children. The participants, especially the females, said that the success of their children is their success too. This is how the seamstress/dressmaker expressed it:

I have three children, two boys and a girl, and I can assure you that my children would not become a liability to my extended family, or the Ghanaian society. So long as I continue to work hard, my family, and the children in particular, would all be happy.

This perspective demonstrates that if you learn a skill or trade, it pays in the long run because it offers financial independence to the individual. On recommending group learning to friends, the participants, all (14 of 14 [100%]) responded in the affirmative. They added that entrepreneurial mind-sets fostered in their trades have made them become recognized and respected in Chorkor. When asked, in addition to group learning which other sources they learn from, all (14 of 14 [100%]) participants indicated that they learn non-formally and informally. Non-formally, whatever participants learned is organized and highly enriching and builds an individual skills and capacities, however, informal learning has no formal curriculum and no credits earned, and the facilitator could be a friend who is experienced to guide the learning endeavor (Bowl, 2014). Learning non-formally and informally involves more hands-on practice, and from radio, television, friends, Youtube, social media, and online exploration in particular. The dressmaker put it this way:

I learn more about my trade, dressmaking, from friends and personal observation. I go to my friends and collect samples of the latest models in town to guide me in practice, and model it.

This perspective indicates that much of the skills in most trades call for building good relationships and learning from friends. This demonstrates that learning in groups' aid in gathering experiences from friends, is an advantage in fostering an entrepreneurial mind-set in trades.

10.2. Challenges faced in group learning as young adults

On challenges faced by young adults learning trades nearly all (13 of 14 [93%]) participants said that lack of funds for skills acquisition, bad master-apprentice relationships, and lack of interest in trades due to frustration affected participation in trades and skills training. Yet a participant said that he was lucky because his master-apprentice made time for him and taught him the skills he needed in catering. This result could be an exceptional case in skills training in Ghana where apprentices are usually made to run errands by their masters. Not surprising, participants in the FGDs stressed that too many errands and lack of samples of models to work with were major difficulties they faced in skills training. A participant serving as a shop attendant added that sometimes frustration set in and affected her participation in group learning. She expressed her difficulties in this way:

Bad temperament and low salary were my challenges when I started working at the fashion boutique shop. I pay not only my house rent but that of my parents, making it difficult to focus attention on group learning. I used to quarrel with my customers who patronize my services at the shop, but came to the realization to mend my ways to keep my customers

It is evident that too much stress and frustration on participants affected their participation in group learning, as eloquently articulated by the shop attendant, whose initial intention was to learn the skills of management, since she intends to set up her own fashion boutique soon.

10.3. Strategies young adults adapt to build entrepreneurial mind-sets

On strategies to build entrepreneurial mind-sets three questions were posed to participants, including short term and medium-term plans to grow their trades, establishing their trades in another community in the long term, and support they need to promote their trades and who should provide those services. Whilst the seamstress and hairdresser indicated that depending on the good master-apprentice relationship, they can attract many trainees to learn from them and increase their savings culture in the short to medium term, the caterer was of the view that in the short to medium term, he would have expanded his catering business and establishes a restaurant to serve clientele. This is another apt way the shop attendant expressed it;

My mother has given me a piece of land in a prime area, and I'm currently saving the little money I get from my services. I want to create and operate my own fashion boutique soon. When I succeed in creating one, I will build my managerial skills up to manage my shop well such that I can attract many customers. In the medium to long term, I would add two more shops to create jobs for young adults.

Considering the perspectives, the participants generally (14 of 14 [100%]) said that in the long term they would have established subsidiaries of their trades in some communities, and employed more hands in business. The participants said they need support to succeed in their trades and skills. Nearly all (13 of 14 [93%]) participants added that the Government of Ghana should fund the quasi-financial institutions to support them financially and technically, to grow their trades. One can surmise that with some funding and some degree of community education, young adults would learn to create opportunities for themselves.

11. Discussion

Never in the history of Ghana is fostering of entrepreneurial mind-set becomes that crucial than today. The Government of Ghana, in particular, is calling on young adults to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets to be useful in the spaces that they occupy. This is as a result of mass extensive unemployment facing young adults and the need to develop innovative and creative leaders in our communities using the community education approach. This approach will, to a large extent, empower young adults become entrepreneurial in intentions and actions to initiate ventures, projects and programs that can transform the communities in Ghana to become sustainable. This thinking informed the study on using the community education approach in fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets among young adults at Chorkor community via group learning. This study employed both interview and focus group discussions to collect data from 14 participants. The results of this study are discussed on the basis of; (1) benefits of young adults learning in groups to foster an entrepreneurial mind-set; (2) challenges young adults faced learning via groups to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets; and finally, (3) strategies young adults adapted in building an entrepreneurial mind-set using the community education approach. The results indicate that young adults with trades earned money from their trades to cater for themselves and their families. The young adults gained experiences from one another in their trades as they learn non-formally and informally to develop entrepreneurial mind-sets.

The results resonate with Faltin (2013) observation that anybody has the potential to become innovative and self-reliant when he/she is exposed to entrepreneurial learning. Hence, exposing young adults to group learning at Chorkor, a deprived community, is appropriate. Imel (1997) asserts that adult learning has a long tradition of group learning in communities. That was what some young adults at Chorkor did by forming groups to learn, share experiences in their trades to enable them foster entrepreneurial mind-sets in their respective trades. As the media man in the study eloquently said, *passion* he developed for media work propelled him to learn in his trade. This point is important, because Boyadjieva and Ilieva-Trichkova (2021) assert that living in societies of constant change and uncertainties requires everyone to become a lifelong learner to learn constantly and with passion. After all, with passion, one can learn throughout his/her lifespan to build his/her entrepreneurial mind-set and impact on trades and their communities (Biney, 2021a).

The participants generally indicated that they made some money from their trades. This demonstrates that when young adults learn to infuse entrepreneurial mind-sets into their respective trades, they can earn more money and create more startups to offer job

opportunities to people in their communities. After all, entrepreneurship is not a calling for selected few with creative work and economic self-realization being goals that anyone can pursue (Faltin, 2013). Entrepreneurship is a skill that is learned [and developed] (Scarborough, 2012). Yet, entrepreneurship goes beyond job creation and profit to include social entrepreneurship- the initiative thinkers, who build community support to address unmet social needs (Light, 2008; Talmage & Gassert, 2020). Entrepreneurial mind-set, therefore, must be used to engender community development. In a developing country like Ghana, we need social innovators in leadership positions to improve conditions in our schools, public works, health facilities and infrastructure development. More encouragement and support need to be provided to young adults to upskill to become entrepreneurial in thinking and action.

In the midst of difficulties such as the inability to access funds to aid learning, transportation and feeding themselves, many apprentices lost hope and abandoned learning under such circumstances. McGivney's (2000) and Connolly (2011) assert adult educators [master craftsmen] creation of a democratic and cordial relationship with young adults encourage and motivate them to learn, but the reverse rather serves as deterrent to adult learners committing themselves to learning endeavors to turn their lives around and impact positively on their communities. Indeed, establishing enabling environments for adult learning is good but not enough to attract potential young adults to commit to learning in groups. More should be done within the learning environment itself to help people in communities to engage in lifelong learning, and improve their communities. This means that young adults in communities are encouraged and supported more to succeed in their entrepreneurial mind-set, and the community education can provide these skills when practiced in disadvantaged communities.

12. Implications for community development

The results of the study have implications for community development. Community development can only catch fire when the community members *learn* to appreciate their needs and assets they possess to address their needs in their communities. As facilitators of adult learning, adult educators have a lot to do to revitalize the development in communities, especially, in the developing economies. Thus, when young adults are motivated and cushioned using the community education to learn in their communities, they can engender holistic development in their communities (Amedzro, 2005). The community becomes buoyant and sustainable, because young adults stay in their communities, engaged in productive ventures and not invest time in wanton destruction of the environment, but utilize the opportunities available to them and make their communities sustainable.

Community education is largely initiated by the community members (Connolly, 2011), and it must aid the local people to improve their lives. Hence, the community education must be promoted in disadvantaged communities by adult educators to help the community members, especially young adults, to turn their lives around. This is because the community education engenders *social justice*, and creates opportunities for people who hitherto thought they could not do much for themselves. Community education, therefore, gives hope to the hopeless and aid people to reorganize themselves once again with some glimmer of hope and assurance in life.

As young adults are supported by adult educators using dialogical, conversational and storytelling methods to facilitate learning to develop simple business plans based on the ability to spot opportunities and the willingness to capitalize on them (Scarborough, 2012), they can create startups and make themselves useful. They can also position themselves to mobilize financial support by utilizing self-help strategies. The quasi-financial institutions can promote group-lending amongst young adults to grow their ventures. The young adults can develop entrepreneurial mind-sets and acumen to recognize unrecognized needs in their communities to create startups, and innovate with entrepreneurial mind-sets. With entrepreneurial mind-sets, young adults can develop *passion*, as the media man indicated in the study, and learn to endure, persevere and persist in their learning endeavors (Biney, 2021a) to succeed in their entrepreneurial drive in their communities.

13. Conclusion

This study explored the community education approach to fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets amongst young adults at Chorkor in Ghana. The issue of youth unemployment is critical one globally, but more crucial in the developing countries, and requires urgent intervention. It emerged that the participants earned some money from trades they possessed, and catered for their families. The participants also encouraged their friends to participate in group learning since it holds promise of empowering them to become entrepreneurial. This demonstrates that when motivation is leveraged amongst young adults, they can learn to become useful to themselves and their communities.

On challenges learning trades from master craftsmen, the participants admitted that lack of funds to learn skills; bad apprentice-master craftsman relationships and frustration borne out of unwarranted errands came up forcefully and require some attention. On strategies to attract many young adults to learn through groups, it was revealed that increased interaction in group learning has the power to empower young adults to become more entrepreneurial. The young adults became empowered when dialogical, conversational and storytelling approaches were adopted by adult educators to facilitate their learning.

In terms of limitation, this qualitative study used a small sample size of participants from only one specific geographical location, hence, the results cannot be generalized to a larger population. Future research may use a combined study of qualitative findings with quantitative data to be conducted on the community engagement strategies to promote entrepreneurship amongst young adults to inform evidence-based government policy and funding for youth entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, the governments in developing countries and higher education institutions must partner to develop holistic and integrated policies to motivate young adults to learn in groups to become entrepreneurial. The young adults should be cushioned financially to adopt lifelong learning mind-sets to become more empowered and entrepreneurial. As young adults become entrepreneurial, they can create startups and potential job opportunities for many people, and also become creative leaders to solve problems and transform their communities to become more sustainable.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

The authors have no funding to report

ORCID

Isaac Kofi Biney  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3994-5939>

References

- Amedzro, A. D. K. (2005). *Theory and practice of community education*. Ghana Universities Press.
- Armstrong, G. A., Marteau, J., Weinman, T., & Marteau, T. The place of inter-rater reliability in qualitative research: An empirical study. (1997). *Sociology*, 31(3), 1–6. 597(10). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038597031003015>
- Baah-Boateng, W. (2018). Jobless growth is Ghana's biggest youth challenges. A *Blog Post* Retrieved 23 August 2019 from: <http://acetforafrica.org/highlights/jobless-growth-is-ghanas-biggest-youth-challenge/>
- Badu-Nyarko, S. K. (1997). Volunteers in adult education: Lessons for Ghana. *Adult Education and Development*, 48, 297–311.
- Bidwell, L., & McConnell, C. (1990). *Community education and community development*. Dundee College of Education.
- Biney, I. K. (2019a). Unearthing entrepreneurial opportunities among youth vendors and hawkers: Challenges and strategies. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 8(2), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-018-0099-y>
- Biney, I. K. (2019b). Exploring the power of the media in promoting lifelong learning and popular mobilization drive against 'galamsey' in Ghana. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 59(3), 435–467.
- Biney, I. K. (2021a). Continuing education and employment creation: Investment in entrepreneurship matters. *Community Development*, 52(3), 323–341. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2021.1874453>
- Biney, I. K. (2021b). Looking for educational needs in the community: The roles of adult educators matter. In M. V. Alfred, P. A. Robinson, & E. A. Roumell (Eds.), *Advancing the global agenda for human rights, vulnerable populations, and environmental sustainability: adult education as strategic partner* (pp. 189–206). Information Age Publishing.
- Biney, I. K. (2022). Revitalizing self-help spirit in the communities: Are there roles for adult educators to play? *Community Development*, 53(3), 326–344. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2021.2019071>
- Bowl, M. (2014). *Adult education in changing times: Policies, philosophies and professionalism*. NIACE.
- Boyadjieva, P., & Ilieva-Trichkova, P. (2021). *Adult education as empowerment: Re-imagining lifelong learning through the capability approach, recognition theory and common goods perspective*. Palgrave Studies in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning.
- Brookfield, S. D. (2004). Discussion. In M. W. Galbraith (Ed.), *Adult learning methods: A guide for effective instruction* (3rd ed., pp. 209–226). Krieger publishing Company.
- Brookfield, M., Jeff, T., Larkins, R., Pye, C., & Smith, M. K. (2003). *Community learning* (2nd ed.). YMCA George Williams College.
- Chase, S. E. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 651–679). SAGE.
- Chilisa, B., & Preece, J. (2005). *Research methods for adult educators in Africa*. Pearson Education.
- Connolly, B. (2011). Community based adult education. In K. Rubenson (Ed.), *Adult Learning and Education* (pp. 133–139). Elsevier/Academic Press.

- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Dadzie, C. E., Fumey, D., & Namara, S. (2020). *Youth employment programs in Ghana: Options for effective policy making and implementation*. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Debyser, A. (2013). *Promoting entrepreneurship through education. Briefing*. European Union.
- English, L. M., & Mayo, P. (2012). *Learning with adults: A critical pedagogical introduction*. Sense Publishers.
- Epstein, P. D., Coates, P. M., Wray, L. D., & Swain, D. (2006). *Results that matter: Improving communities by engaging citizens, measuring performance, and getting things done*. Jossey-Bass.
- Etherington, K. (2013). *Narrative approaches to case studies*. Kingsley Publishers.
- Faltin, G. (2013). *Brains versus capital: Entrepreneurship for everyone: Lean, smart, simple*. Entrepreneurship Foundation.
- Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Penguin.
- Green, G. P. (2011). The self-help approach to community development. In J. W. Robinson Jr. & G. P. Green (Eds.), *Introduction to Community Development: Theory, Practice and Service-Learning* (pp. 71–100). SAGE Publications.
- Imel, S. (1997). Adult learning in groups. *Review of Educational Research*, 52(3), 421–445.
- Janis, I. L. (1971). Groupthink. *Psychology Today*, 5, 43–46.
- Lachapelle, P. (2020). Assessing the potential of community foundation leadership through a new conceptual lens. *Community Development*, 51(2), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2020.1750445>
- Lackeus, M. (2015). Entrepreneurship in education: What, why, when, how. *Entrepreneurship 360 Background Paper*. OECD.
- Light, P. C. (2008). *The search for social entrepreneurship*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Lyons, T. S., Alter, T. R., Audretsch, D., & Augustine, D. (2012). Entrepreneurship and community: The next frontier of entrepreneurship inquiry. *Entrepreneurship Research Journal*, 2(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.2202/2157-5665.1064>
- McGivney, V. (2000). *Working with excluded groups: Guidance on good practice for providers and policy makers in work*. NIACE.
- Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R. S. (2019). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussions and analysis*. Jossey-Bass.
- Nunoo, C. (2021, October, 19). Unemployment biggest challenge: Needs swift action- TUC. *Daily Graphic*, p. 1.
- OECD. (2014). *Effective local strategies to boost quality job creation, employment, and participation*. Report prepared for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting LEED.
- Ofori-Atta, K. (2021, June 4). Venture into entrepreneurship: Finance Minister to youth. *Daily Graphic*, p. 20.
- Ross, C. (Ed.). (2017). *Influencing change: Community learning and development in Scotland, 2001-2015: The making of an empowering profession* (Vol. 2). International Association for Community Development.
- Scarborough, N. M. (2012). *Effective small business management: An entrepreneurial approach* (10th ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Shaw, M., & Crowther, J. (2017). *Community engagement: A critical guide for practitioners*. University of Edinburgh Press.
- Talmage, C. A., & Gassert, T. A. (2020). Unsettlingly entrepreneurship by teaching dark side theories. *Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy*, 3(3), 316–345. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2515127420910415>
- United Nations. (1986). *Non-formal education for integrated rural development*. United Nations Document Office.
- Wilson, G. L. (1999). *Groups in context: Leadership and participation in small groups* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill College.
- Wohlfart, O. (2020). "Digging deeper?" Insights from a novice researcher. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19, 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940692096377856>