

Print ISSN: 2617-4766

E-ISSN: 2617-4774

Đamá Nínau

REVUE INTERDISCIPLINAIRE
LETTRES, ARTS ET SCIENCES HUMAINES



Revue trimestrielle - N° 22, JUIN 2026

REVUE TRIMESTRIELLE - N° 22 Đamá Nínau | REVUE INTERDISCIPLINAIRE LETTRES, ARTS ET SCIENCES HUMAINES

Mise en page et Impression
IMPRIMERIE ST LOUIS

53, Rue N'ZARA Doulassamé Face Première Eglise Baptiste du TOGO
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SJIFactor - Scientific Journal Impact Factor

E-mail : evaluation@sjifactor.com

Website : <http://sjifactor.com/>

SJIF 2026 = 7.918 (Scientific Journal Impact Factor Value for 2026).

SJIF Impact Factor Evaluation [SJIF 2026 = 7.918]

"Dama Ninao" est une revue scientifique interdisciplinaire qui accepte et publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines. A cet effet, elle s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques. La Revue "Dama Ninao", entendu "L'Entente" en langue kabyè du Nord Togo, est créée dans l'intention de matérialiser la mondialisation ou la globalisation qui s'opère avec l'esprit d'équipe et d'échanges et la désuétude du monde autarcique. Le monde scientifique universitaire ne peut échapper à cet esprit d'équipe qui fonde un creuset où « le fer aiguisé le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité.

La Revue Dama Ninao nous renvoie à la Civilisation de l'Universel du poète sénégalais Léopold Sédar Senghor, qui prône la porosité des âmes avec l'acceptation de l'autre, de ce qu'il dispose d'utile pour mon avancement : sa civilisation, sa culture, sa langue ... Elle se fonde notamment sur la philosophie de Paul Ricœur qui préconise la perception de Soi-même comme un autre. Considérer soi-même comme un autre aux yeux de l'autre, nous amènerait à faire taire nos distensions et ressentiments afin de redimensionner notre espace, reconstruire notre histoire et notre société.

La Revue Dama Ninao s'est inspirée de la nature. Des insectes en miniature nous produisent de bels chefs-d'œuvre architecturaux, conjuguent leur génie créateur et leur force dans la patience et dans la tolérance. Ils créent des œuvres monumentales qui dépassent l'entendement humain, les termitières. A cet effet, la nature semble nous parler, nous guider, nous instruire dans le silence. Seules ces créations nous interpellent sans autant faire de nous des disciples. Comme la termitière qui, pour la plupart du temps, est une composante de maillons surgissant de la même matière, la Revue Dama Ninao se veut une termitière scientifique dont les enseignants-chercheurs en sont les maillons.

Au confluent de diverses sciences, la Revue Dama Ninao se propose de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

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Revue Dama Ninao Print-ISSN 2617-4766 E-ISSN 2617-4774

E-mail : revuedamaninao@gmail.com; infos@revuedamaninao.net

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Dama Ninao est une revue scientifique internationale. Dans cette perspective, les textes que nous acceptons en français ou anglais sont sélectionnés par le comité scientifique et de lecture en raison de leur originalité, des intérêts qu'ils présentent aux plans africain et international et de leur rigueur scientifique. Les articles que notre revue publie doivent respecter les normes éditoriales suivantes :

La taille des articles

Volume : 10 à 15 pages ; interligne 1.5, police 12 pour le corps du texte et les courtes citations ; police 11 pour les longues citations, Times New Roman, les références des citations doivent être incorporées dans le texte. Exemple : Guy Rocher (1968, p. 29), pas de référence en foot-notes à l'exception de quelques commentaires.

Ordre logique du texte

- Un **TITRE** en caractère d'imprimerie et en gras. Le titre ne doit pas être trop long ;
- **Nom et prénom(s)** du contributeur ou des contributeurs, **nom de l'institution** d'appartenance, **adresse mail**
- Un **Résumé (Abstract)** de 8 lignes en français et anglais, en interligne simple, suivi de 6 **Mots clés (Key words)**
- Une **Introduction** : elle doit avoir une problématique, une méthode et une structure.
- Un **Développement** : les articulations du développement du texte doivent-être titrées comme suit :

1-Pour le **Titre** de la première section

1-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

1-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième section

2-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

2-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

3- Pour le **Titre** de la troisième section (si l'auteur de l'article le souhaite)

-Une **Conclusion** : elle doit être courte, précise et concise en mettant en relief l'authenticité des résultats de la recherche.

- **Références bibliographiques** (Mentionner uniquement les auteurs cités)

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En cas d'utilisation des tableaux, ceux-ci doivent être numérotés en chiffre romains selon l'ordre de leur apparition dans le texte. Ils doivent comporter un titre précis et une source. Les schémas et illustrations doivent être numérotés en chiffres arabes selon l'ordre de leur apparition dans le texte.

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Les instructeurs à qui la revue affecte les articles de leur spécialité, doivent les lire avec rigueur, rejeter tout article dont le contenu est en inadéquation avec le titre et/ou dont le raisonnement n'offre pas une qualité scientifique, faire des propositions pour l'amélioration dudit article, renvoyer l'auteur de l'article à la ligne éditoriale de la revue au cas où elle n'est pas respectée. Ils se doivent notamment de vérifier, par le biais d'internet, si le même article n'est pas déjà publié dans une revue en ligne.

Objectifs et portée

La revue Dama Ninao, de par son nom qui signifie « entente », a pour objectifs :

- de matérialiser le monde universitaire qui est un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité ;
- de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

La revue Dama Ninao a une portée scientifique et sociale. A cet effet, elle publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines et s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques sur appel à contribution thématique (colloque) ou varia. Elle est un espace de rencontre, de construction et de reconstruction des réseaux relationnels et scientifiques.

Professeur Koutchoukalo TCHASSIM

Université de Lomé

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WOMEN AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN PEACE ADZO

MEDIE'S *HIS ONLY WIFE*

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Abstract: This paper critically examines the way in which *His Only Wife* by Peace Adzo Medie promotes women's entrepreneurship education and career exploration. The study draws on a feminist analytical framework to focus on entrepreneurship and women's socioeconomic empowerment. The paper argues that training the large female population to become self-employed is a way to raise income, raise living standards, and break the cycle of poverty. It adds voice to the collective call for investing in entrepreneurship education and, above all women's entrepreneurship education to support African initiatives about sustainable employability and empowerment. Findings reveal that promoting an entrepreneurial culture among the female population can address societal challenges and lead to sustainable employability and socioeconomic empowerment for developing African states in the quest for stability and sustainability.

Keywords: Women, entrepreneurship, education, employability, empowerment, sustainability.

Résumé : Cet article examine de manière critique la manière dont *His Only Wife* de Peace Adzo Medie fait la promotion de l'éducation à l'entrepreneuriat féminin et l'exploration de carrière. L'étude s'appuie sur un cadre analytique féministe pour se concentrer sur l'entrepreneuriat et l'autonomisation socio-économique des femmes. L'étude soutient que la formation de la grande population féminine à devenir travailleuse indépendante est un moyen d'augmenter les revenus, d'élever le niveau de vie et briser le cycle de la pauvreté. Elle ajoute une voix à l'appel collectif à investir dans l'éducation à l'entrepreneuriat, en particulier dans l'éducation à l'entrepreneuriat féminin, pour soutenir les initiatives des états africains en matière d'employabilité durable et d'autonomisation socio-économiques. Les résultats révèlent que la promotion d'une culture entrepreneuriale parmi la population féminine peut relever les défis sociétaux et conduire à une employabilité durable et une autonomisation socio-économique pour les états africains en développement dans la quête de la stabilité et de la durabilité sociales et économiques.

Mots clés : femmes, l'entrepreneuriat, éducation, employabilité, autonomisation, durabilité.

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing world, entrepreneurship education has turned out to be a critical component in modern curricula and educational programs. Although the subject of entrepreneurship education has received significant attention and is of increasing importance to many scholarly fields of investigation around the world, the question of women's entrepreneurship education is still seeking validation and accreditation for public notice. To put things in perspective, Peace Adzo Medie, a Ghanaian writer, promotes in her novel *His Only Wife* (2022) – entrepreneurship education as an innovative politics of women's empowerment and a requirement for sustainable employability in her native Ghanaian society.

Accounting for existing definitions of the concept of entrepreneurship from academic literature, S. Prince et al., (2022, p. 33) have defined entrepreneurship taking into account five definitional elements based on “business creation, uncertainty, innovation, opportunity and new value creation”. From this definitional approach, one can understand that entrepreneurship embodies various aspects such as business creation, innovation and opportunity recognition. It involves identifying and pursuing opportunities despite uncertainty. It often gives way to the manufacture of new products, services or processes that add value to the market.

The present paper examines entrepreneurship education as a key competence that equips individuals with the skills, mindset and knowledge needed to pass through doubt, undo composite problems and grasp new opportunities. In this study, entrepreneurship education is developed in line with the definition provided by Eurydice Report (2016, p. 21) that puts forward that:

Entrepreneurship education is about learners developing the skills and mindset to be able to turn creative ideas into entrepreneurial action. This is a competence for all learners, supporting personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability. It is relevant across the lifelong learning process, in all disciplines of learning and to all forms of education and training (formal, non-formal and informal) which contribute to an entrepreneurial spirit or behavior, with or without a commercial objective.

It is clear from the above definitional approach that entrepreneurship education is designed to provide individuals with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to convert innovative ideas into entrepreneurial ventures. It is this type of entrepreneurship education that Medie is campaigning for women to grow as agents of social change and enhance the politics of employability in her narrative.

As “women are the subject of feminism” (J. Butler, 1990, p. 3), the current research paper dealing with the issue of women and entrepreneurship education follows a feminist analytical approach to promote women’s entrepreneurial visibility, proficiency, personal growth and empowerment through self-employability. As such, the critical point of departure in this work is the analysis of women and entrepreneurship education as represented by Medie in her fiction. The following research questions are formulated to guide the study: how is the politics of entrepreneurship education represented in Medie’s novel? To what extent does entrepreneurship education empower women and address societal challenges? To critically carry out the task falls in this inquiry, I outline the study into two main sections. The first section formulates a critique of the entrepreneurship education promotion through the reform of curricula and career building. The second and last section deals with how entrepreneurship education empowers the new generation of women leaders to drive economic empowerment and address societal challenges in meaningful ways.

1. The Promotion of Entrepreneurship Education in Ghana

Medie’s *His Only Wife* provides an excellent platform for exploring entrepreneurship education as a topical issue that deserves critical attention in her native Ghanaian society’s quest for stability and profitability for local and international economies. The novel highlights the use of entrepreneurship education as a means to triumph over the challenges posed by poverty and unemployment in Ghanaian society. Facing the critical acknowledgement of the widespread lack of jobs at the international, continental and national levels, Medie posits entrepreneurship education as an alternative solution.

1.1. Reforming the Curriculum: Towards Vocational Training

Medie is critical of the different educational curricula taught in schools, colleges and universities in her native Ghana. Worried by the alarming rate of unemployment, she stresses the urgent need to implement curriculum that offers technical and vocational electives. She shares the view of academic scholars who are of the opinion that schools, colleges or universities should:

offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles, provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades, inspire students with a desire of self-employment and achievement of excellence; raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the dignity of labor, provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development (N. N. Azolike et al., 2021, p. 20)

The statement above suggests a comprehensive vision to education, emphasizing the importance of schools in providing a diversified curriculum that caters to varying students, interests and future roles in society. The analysis of this statement underscores the importance of a well-rounded and practical educational system. Schools should not only focus on academic knowledge but also prioritize the development of technical and vocational skills, entrepreneurship, critical thinking and the dignity of all forms of labor.

Medie publicly recommends in her writing this approach of education that prepares students to meaningfully contribute to society and thrive in a variety of roles, both within the traditional workforce and self-directed enterprise. She features her main character Afi who shows a burning thirst and a particular interest in professional and vocational education. Afi is depicted as a schoolgirl who is unsuccessful in the general education system. As a first-person narrator, Afi gives an account of her academic performance in these lines: “my failure to pass the mathematics and science portions of the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination, twice, and make the grades to enter one of the public universities had taken a toll on our relationship” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 33). This sentence reflects the emotional and

relational impact of Afi's academic failure. Afi's inability to pass the mathematics and science portions of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination underlines the challenge of meeting academic expectations especially in traditional subjects such as mathematics and sciences considered crucial for university admission in West Africa. The failure to get the necessary grades for university admission is not only a personal setback but also limits Afi's future opportunities.

Moreover, these repeated failures indicate that Afi does not excel in traditional academic subjects, such as mathematics and the sciences, taught in the general education system in colleges and universities. This is why she refuses her mother's offer to pay for her enrolment at a private university. As an alternative, she nurtures the ambition to attend a vocational school to follow through her aspirations for self-employment and achievement of excellence in fashion school. Afi reveals her ambition as follows:

When I failed a second time to gain admission into one of the public universities, she had proposed getting a loan from Aunty to pay for my enrolment in one of the private universities that were springing up like mushrooms and charging way more than they were worth. But I refused, my confidence having sunk with each disappointing result. Also, I had grown to love sewing and begun to see it as a career. What I now wanted was to attend a proper fashion school. (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 57).

The suggestion by Afi's mother to take out a loan for her enrolment in a private university indicates that the priority is placed on the conventional academic system and formal education as a marker of success in Ghanaian society. Afi's refusal of her mother's decision to take out a loan for her enrolment in a private university, coupled with her desire to attend a fashion school, marks a critical turning point. By seeing sewing as a career, Afi has discovered her talent and passion in a vocational field. Her desire to attend a proper fashion school shows a serious commitment to mastering the craft, reflecting a shift in ambition towards a creative, entrepreneurial career.

The development of Afi's decision to pursue vocational education or training over a traditional university education points up many important aspects of the value

of vocational education. Afi's decision to attend a vocational school instead of pursuing a conventional university education serves as a strong endorsement of vocational training. It brings to light the importance of diverse career paths recognition, the value of practical skills and the empowerment that resides in one's passion. Afi's choice promotes the idea that vocational training can be an equally rewarding and essential part of both personal fulfillment and economic growth, addressing societal problems and advocating for greater appreciation of specialized, skilled-based education.

Through the transition of Afi's school career from a student in the general education system to a professional or vocational student in the field of fashion, the writer makes recommendation regarding school authorities and officials in academic curriculum planning. She stresses on the urgency to include entrepreneurial education or vocational training in national education programs and curricula. Afi's character analysis reveals that Medie adds her voice to the collective call for renewal and rejuvenation in the development of educational materials in the curriculum of the public and private schools and universities in African countries in general and in Ghana in particular. By making Afi focus on sewing as a career, the author suggests that vocational education can inspire entrepreneurship, by offering individuals the opportunity to create their own businesses and entrepreneurial career.

1.2. Promoting Entrepreneurial Career

In writing *His Only Wife*, Medie believes that entrepreneurship can play a crucial role in fostering economic growth, innovation and societal development that is the reason why she encourages the education or training in various types of entrepreneurships. All the characters involved in the narrative are more inclined to take up entrepreneurial career. One of the forms of entrepreneurship culture developed with sustained attention in the novel is small business entrepreneurship. Many small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures are established by many entrepreneurial individuals who assume the roles of driver of entrepreneurial action in a myriad of ways. Peace Adzo Medie places a particular emphasis on agribusiness

in her practical model of entrepreneurship education in her novel. She draws the picture of uncle Pious as a non-formal entrepreneur who operates in the realm of agribusiness. Accounting for this representation of uncle Pious as a driver of entrepreneurial venture in the domain of agribusiness, one reads in the novel that uncle Pious “operated on a small poultry farm” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 19). Uncle Pious running a farm in this excerpt is indicative of an entrepreneurial spirit. The fact of operating a small poultry farm, no matter its size, requires skill in animal husbandry, resource management and the understanding of environment and market.

In keeping with the same theme of promoting small business entrepreneurship, the author winks at the food industries through the character of Olivia, Afi’s mother, who is developed as a baker. Olivia is a worker in Aunt Faustina Ganyo’s store, but she shows interest in self-employment. She finally opts for setting up a small business by starting baking. On account of her entrepreneurial initiative, the reader is informed that “she had confided that she didn’t intend to go back to Aunty’s store after the baby was born. She would stay with me as long as I wanted and would like to start a small business when she went to Ho. She wanted to go back to baking cakes and pies.” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 227). This passage reveals Olivia’s personal aspirations and decisions. She has confided about her future plans, indicating a significant shift in her life priorities. The desire to start a small business specifically in Ho and her intention to return to baking cakes and pies highlight her entrepreneurial spirit. This represents a professional choice as baking can be seen as a creative outlet that offers her fulfillment. Overall, through this character development, the author emphasizes a future-oriented perspective and mindset about the importance of entrepreneurship education.

Another variant of entrepreneurial culture that is highly valued in Medie’s artwork is e-commerce business. Laudon and Traver (2018, p. 47), write that “electronic commerce or e-commerce, refers to the use of the internet and web to transact business.” The use of internet and web to transact in today’s digital age has transformed every aspect of human life including the way businesses operate. The

integration of digital technologies into commerce has positively altered businesses styles and endeavors in the society. On realizing that e-commerce has become an indispensable part of modern entrepreneurship, the author views it as a new entrepreneurial culture that needs to be emphasized in the promotion of entrepreneurship education.

In the novel, a special column has been dedicated to the promotion of e-commerce as a new entrepreneurial culture which needs public accreditation. The author puts in perspective the issue of e-commerce promotion through the character of Uchenna. Uchenna is depicted as a manager of an online store. Uchenna introduces herself this way: “I manage Ghana Online (...). We are the largest online retailer in Ghana; you can get anything, and I mean anything, from our online store” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 98). Through Uchenna’s character, the author effectively promotes e-commerce as a viable alternative for hopeful individuals to take up entrepreneurial initiatives. In some extent, Uchenna serves as a role model, inspiring readers to explore opportunities within the e-commerce landscape.

To follow through her campaign for promoting practical entrepreneurship culture, Medie does not fail to encourage the development of small and medium businesses that are the backbones of both local and global market economies in her native Ghanaian society. She builds her ideas on scaling businesses on the family business of the Ganyos in the narrative. The Ganyos are described as a wealthy and successful family who has built their wealth on a strong entrepreneurial culture. The family owns many entrepreneurial establishments such as cement factory in Liberia, flour distribution and retail chain companies, bakeries, depots and real estate companies in Ghana.

The character Fred Ganyo is presented as “a real-estate mogul” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 8) meaning he has built his fortune through investments in the real estate business. Elikem, the most successful businessman in the family of the Ganyos, is portrayed as a dynamic businessman who has developed a sophisticated sense of entrepreneurial flair to understand “the entrepreneurial financing ecosystem”

(Newman et al., 2022, p. 120). After graduating from university, he has been sent to Liberia to oversee the family's interest in a cement factory. Once there, Elikem Ganyo has grown to understand that "entrepreneurship is a process that depends on both opportunities and individuals" (Shane, 2012, p. 18). By understanding that entrepreneurship as a process hinges on opportunities and individuals, Elikem Ganyo designs a marshal plan for running a new business. The narrative substantiates that "After he arrived in Liberia, Eli carefully studied his surrounding for opportunities (...). Eli saw a place for himself in the chaos. He knew people who had money and he was confident in his ability to run a business (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 47-48).

Confident in his entrepreneurial ability and skills, the character Elikem Ganyo helps his family expand the family business by "knocking on the doors of government officials after regular office hours and inspecting the land for real estate project (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 48). By casting Eli's character as a dynamic and successful entrepreneur, the writer promotes the practice of entrepreneurship through several key methods of representation. Eli's portrayal as a successful entrepreneur serves to inspire readers to consider entrepreneurship as a viable and desirable career path. Eli's dynamism, adaptability and success offer a positive image of entrepreneurship, positing it as a field that rewards hard work, innovation and determination. By embodying these traits, Eli becomes a role model for promising entrepreneurs, suggesting that entrepreneurial achievement is attainable for those who are willing to take risks and work hard. Eli's narrative serves to standardize and lift up entrepreneurship, making it a pictogram of opportunity, success and positive transformation of the society.

In building contents for her master class teaching about the practice of entrepreneurship education in her artwork, Medie reaches the peak of her entrepreneurial pedagogy with the development of social entrepreneurship as the most important type of entrepreneurship education that needs public campaigns. She represents an inspiring model of entrepreneurship based on job creation opportunities, social capital and equity development which stands as a powerful force

for addressing social challenges and fostering changes. Otilia Manta discusses some of the key characteristics of social entrepreneurship and writes that:

Among the specific features of social entrepreneurship, we can mention the main benefits of this, namely: increasing the numbers of employed persons; innovation and the creation of new opportunities and services for social needs that are not provided by the society; creates social capital to meet sustainable development, promotes social equity by addressing the needs of disadvantaged people; demonstrates a sense of responsibility towards the people they serve and the consequences of the action taken. (O. Manta, 2019, p. 395)

The above statement suggests that social entrepreneurship goes beyond traditional business models by prioritizing social impact, innovation and responsibility. It plays a vital role in addressing gaps in society, creating employment, fostering innovation and contributing to sustainable development. Aunty Faustina Ganyo – Fred and Eli’s mother – is the embodiment social entrepreneurship in the novel. She is depicted as social entrepreneur who embodies the values of providing social and economic assistance to her community. Aunty helps many individuals in her community by providing economic support, whether creating job opportunities as in the case of Olivia, Afi’s mother who has secured job in her depot. She provides social support by addressing unmet needs such as access to education and access to essential services. In one episode of the narrative, the reader is informed about her initiatives in these lines: “I know for a fact that she pays school fees for more than fifty children in Ho. I’ve seen Richard stuffing the cash, fresh from the bank, into white envelopes to distribute to the families” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 168).

Her actions reflect the core principles of social entrepreneurship as she actively addresses local issues and uplifts individuals through innovative solutions. By leveraging her resources and networks, Aunty plays a crucial role in fostering both economic and social development of her community. As a social entrepreneur, Aunty strengthens the fabric of her community by nurturing trust, cooperation and collaboration through sisterhood meeting depicted as “Women’s Guild” in the novel. Her role as a connector in “Women’s Guild” brings about what Bell Hooks (2000, p. 15) calls “female bonding” to solve common problems, creating a sense of shared

responsibility. Through “Women’s Guild” Auntie offers mentorship, guidance and emotional support by building stronger social ties and enhancing the overall well-being of her community.

2. Entrepreneurship Education: Employability and Empowerment

Medie’s *His Only Wife* presents entrepreneurship education as a powerful means for addressing social challenges from unemployment and social inequality to poverty. The novel emphasizes that entrepreneurship education not only fuels economic growth but also creates opportunities for dealing with some of the society’s most burning social challenges. It encourages individuals to grow to be change-makers, driving progress in areas such as unemployment reduction, social inclusion and empowerment.

2.1. Entrepreneurship Education and the Provision of Employment

In *His Only Wife*, Medie offers a glowing picture of entrepreneurship education as one of the most important forms of education that enhances human capital development, promotes social inclusion and boosts employability. The novel opens a perspective for discussing the thorny problem of unemployment that plagues Ghanaian society in particular and developing African societies in general. It depicts unemployment in Ghana, like in many developing countries, as a pressing issue that has extensive implications for both the individuals and the broader society. The author critically examines the socioeconomic realities of unemployment by portraying it as a social malaise. Characters in the novel discuss the entrapment of the Ghanaian society in the cycles of joblessness through the dialogue below:

“I can’t wait to be done with school and to have a proper job, so that I can afford to do all of this, she said.

“Have you started applying?”

“There are no jobs to apply for in this country. Nothing! You have to know someone and even then, you’re not guaranteed a good one.” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 117).

The statement “there are no jobs to apply for in this country” reflects the scarcity of jobs in the Ghanaian society. It encapsulates the characters’ deep

dissatisfaction with a broken system where job shortage and lack of meritocracy prevail. Through this utterance, the characters feel trapped in a system that offers little opportunity for employability. Job scarcity in this context leads to a situation where “the masses of unemployed youth with hardened eyes that told you of unspeakable past and impossible future” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 47). At this juncture, the author presents the struggles of unemployed youth in developing Ghana where unemployment is both a symptom and a cause of societal challenges. In the context of employment, this phrase reflects both the historical causes and future consequences of youth unemployment, touching on the personal and collective experiences of these individuals.

Confronting these “masses of unemployed youth”, Madie feels the urgent need for reforms and investments that address both the historical causes and future consequences of youth unemployment. She develops in her work the entrepreneurial spirit among the youth as they navigate the complex landscape of self-employment, showcasing both challenges and opportunities within informal economies and start-ups. She shares the view that “entrepreneurship is at the heart of the solution to poverty.” (C. K. Prahalad, 2004, p.4) that is the reason why she emphasizes the role of businesses and entrepreneurial ventures in transforming the lives of individuals living in poverty. She advocates for creating opportunities through market-based solutions. The novel sets the stage for exploring how entrepreneurship and business innovation can be catalysts for human capital development and job provision.

F. M. Nafukho and H. M. Muyia (2010, p. 93) point out that “Entrepreneurship education is essential as it equips learners with the knowledge, skills and attitude to create jobs for themselves and others, thereby reducing unemployment and contributing to socioeconomic development.” Medie corroborates with this postulation of entrepreneurship education and genuinely focuses on the development of women entrepreneurship education. In the novel, she demonstrates that women entrepreneurship education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of global economies and communities. She shows the ways in which

women entrepreneurship education can contribute to sustainable employability. She emphasizes on women business training by building female characters imbued with entrepreneurial qualities that help them “adapting or reinventing business models or adopting new business models (Newman et al., 2022, p. 120).

The author places greater focus on female entrepreneurs as the central actors when examining how entrepreneurship copes with the issues of employability. Knowing that “the decision to exploit an entrepreneurial opportunity is also influenced by individual differences in perceptions and in optimism” (S. Shane and S. Vankataraman, 2000, p. 223), Medie fills her main character, Afi with optimism in the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunity to set up her business in the fashion industry. Afi is portrayed as a confident and aspiring social entrepreneur equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitude to create jobs for herself and the other members of her community. She firstly graduates from Sister Lizzie’s sewing shop in Ho, but as she feels the need to attend a proper fashion school to acquire more expertise in fashion design, she moves to Accra where she works and collaborates with Sarah, a fashion designer who “has been trained at a fashion school in London” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 83).

Working with Sarah “in social networks where, collaborating individuals can learn to innovate and develop market resources, products and services” (V. Iacob and R. Mironescu, 2013, p. 40), Afi innovates by creating her fashion enterprise which offers many products and services to her community. Afi’s fashion establishment benefits local economies by creating employment opportunities. The narrative of the services provided by Afi’s fashion boutique is depicted as follows:

The boutique was thriving (...). With Sarah’s help, I was able to hire five tailors, three of them were Togolese men. One of the women graduated from Sarah’s school before but hadn’t made on her own, and the second woman was the product of a rival design school. I also employed three young people to assist the tailors with ironing and to clean organize. Nancy, my overly serious cousin and Tɔgã Pious’s daughter, oversaw the production and kept everyone in line in my absence. I had brought her from Ho to help me set up and manage the workshop. She had been selling tomatoes in the big market and had been happy to leave that job behind (...) Ellen, the boutique manager,

and her two assistants usually opened before I arrived. (P. A. Medie, 2022, pp. 2035-236).

Through this passage, Afi stands as “a manager of financial and human capitals” (V. Iacob and R. Mironescu, 2013, p. 36) who provides employment to the members of her community. Through the service of the fashion establishment, she has succeeded in increasing the numbers of employed people by creating a new service for social needs. Afi’s fashion house that employs about thirteen workers can be analyzed in terms of its contribution to employment and the reduction of joblessness. By creating a fashion enterprise, Afi is directly contributing to the employment of many individuals. This is significant as it offers a source of stable income to the workers and their families, thereby improving their livelihoods. By employing these workers in her fashion enterprise, Afi reduces the unemployment rate within the Ghanaian society where “there are no jobs to apply for.” On realizing that joblessness constitutes a pressing issue in the whole Ghanaian society, such initiatives can play a crucial role in addressing the problem. Besides, Afi’s entrepreneurial move can inspire other hopeful business owners in the community. The ripple effect of this small-scale employment can contribute to a reduction of poverty and social and economic empowerment in the community.

2.2. Entrepreneurship Education and the Politics of Empowerment

Medie draws a striking perspective on the politics of empowerment in her conceptualization of entrepreneurship education as an alternative to address social challenges in her native Ghanaian society. She principally focuses on women entrepreneurship education and posits it as a fail-safe source of women’s empowerment. For D. Narayan (2002, p. 5) “empowerment refers to the expansion of assets and capacities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.” The expansion of assets and capacities of individuals is well represented in the novel through female characters that hold accountable enterprises that affect positively their lives in a myriad of ways.

Through entrepreneurship education, the author adopts many perspectives on women's empowerment that "emphasize the idea of women as active agents in, rather than passive recipients of development strategies" (A. E. N'dri, 2024, p. 90). For female characters in the novel, entrepreneurship education has offered a pathway to economic social and empowerment, allowing them to contribute to their families and communities and enhance their societal status. Many women in the narrative utilize entrepreneurship education as a tool of empowerment. The novel portrays women entrepreneurship education as a means of self-empowering that enables them to engage in entrepreneurial endeavors within a patriarchal Ghanaian society, thereby altering their roles in society. Entrepreneurship education has enabled Afi and Evelyn to understand market dynamics, financial management and business planning and running. As female entrepreneurs, the characters Afi and Evelyn have been empowered to "gain mastery over their lives" (J. Rappaport, 1987, p. 15). They are portrayed as empowered women who have learned to take charge of their economic and social leadership. In one episode in the narrative, Evelyn gives the secret of her entrepreneurial success when Afi asked:

"Yes, how were you able to start?"

"Small, small. I saved money from my first year of working at the agency and bought the land. I had planned to build a house. In fact, that is why I bought the first block machine, but other people building in the area kept asking to buy my blocks and I figured I could make good money selling to them. I didn't even have a mixer when I started; the boys used to do everything by hands, but I've since been able to upgrade. And let me tell you, the money is good. I've already built three houses out of the blocks factory, one in Accra, one in Tema, and one in Kpando". (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 139).

The analysis of this passage reveals that Evelyn is sharing a key aspect of entrepreneurial success with Afi. It implies that Evelyn is offering insights or guidelines on how to achieve success in business. To a broader extent, it can be seen that through Evelyn, the author is teaching a form of mentoring or guidance where Evelyn provides practical advice, strategies and a step-by-step plan to help her fellow Ghanaian women to navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship. By developing Evelyn's character in such a way, the writer is equipping her contemporary Ghanaian

women with the necessary tools to formulate a strategic plan that can lead to sustainable business growth. In essence, through the character of Evelyn, Medie offers a roadmap that combines both strategic thinking and actionable steps to her fellow Ghanaian women to achieve their empowerment and “to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes” (J. Friedmann, 1992, p. 30).

Evelyn is the embodiment of women’s economic empowerment as she joins her voice in the campaigns that “call on women to rise up and take charge of their economic future”. (W. Maathai, 2006, p. 219). Evelyn gives Afi a lecture on the urgent need for her to empower herself economically to shape a sustainable and equitable future as follows: “You have to learn to enjoy the money and ignore the man’s faults. Enjoy yourself; go shopping, (...). Invest the money he gives, start your own business, help your mother start a business.” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 175). Through Evelyn’s teaching, the author advocates that women’s economic independence is critical to fostering their personal and community empowerment. Investing in businesses helps women build generational wealth, create financial stability and reduce reliance on external financial support. It allows women to make decisions that directly influence their economic status. Through the picture of Evelyn urging Afi to invest and start her own business, the author suggests that entrepreneurship remains the most powerful way for women to economic independence. By owning a business, women can create control, decision-making power and leadership that can build a network of influence for encouraging other women to take similar paths. She posits women’s entrepreneurship as a prerequisite of their economic independence constituting a transformative force that allows them to lead empowered lives, take control of their future and uplift other people in their community.

It is the transformative force of women’s economic independence that leads the African first woman president E. S. Johnson (2009, p. 256) to state that “the future of Africa lies in women achieving economic independence. When a woman controls

her own money, she can change not only her life but the lives of her family and community”. This transformative power of economic independence for women is emphasized by the novelist when she puts forward that, women’s economic independence leads to their personal and social empowerment attainable through entrepreneurship education. It means that the concept of women’s economic independence which is a key to personal and social empowerment revolves around the idea that when women are financially self-sufficient, they can take charge of their own lives and challenge societal limitations. The challenge of societal limitations can be attained through “entrepreneurship education which empowers women to challenge social norms, bridge gender gaps, and foster economic independence, thereby creating transformative agents of change within their communities” (K. Hutchings and P. G. Nelson, 2017, p. 52).

In this context of societal challenges, the writer suggests that entrepreneurship education enables women to turn their business ideas into reality, providing a practical and sustainable route to personal and social independence. For her, as many women engage in entrepreneurship, they can reshape societal expectations and contribute to a social culture where gender equality is attainable. Through this lens, she portrays Afi as a social entrepreneur and transformative agent of change whose growing economic autonomy and decision-making capacity empower her to resist patriarchal domination and ultimately seek a divorce from an unfulfilling polygamous marriage.

Afi informs her husband about her decision to divorce in these words “I want a divorce (...). Because you’ve been cheating on me and lying to me. Because I don’t want another woman in our marriage” (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 266). Afi makes such a decision because as a social entrepreneur and transformative agent of social change, she gains the confidence and necessary power to challenge social norms, bridge gender gaps and break barriers in her male-dominated society. She is determined to do better and triumph over all societal challenges when she asserts “I’m still young, my business is doing well, I will work and take care of myself and my son. Even if

Eli decides not to give me one cedi after today, we will still be fine (P. A. Medie, 2022, p. 269). This statement reflects a strong sense of personal and social empowerment. By focusing on her business, Afi is demonstrating self-reliance which is a key element of empowerment. She is not only securing her financial independence but also setting an example of responsibility and resilience for her son. This kind of mindset can inspire other individuals to recognize their ability to shape their futures, emphasizing that social success and empowerment come from one's own dedication, effort and determination. Empowerment in this context becomes a cycle of personal growth, self-activeness and confidence.

Conclusion

The present study discusses how entrepreneurship education promotes the development of women entrepreneurs and creates employment opportunities that contribute to women's socioeconomic empowerment. The paper argues that training the large female population to become self-employed is a way to raise income, raise living standards and break the cycle of poverty. It adds voice to the collective call for investing in entrepreneurship education and above all women entrepreneurship education to support African states initiatives about sustainable employability and empowerment. In the style of the novel, it could be a way to create interest in entrepreneurship and spread the word to larger audience by encouraging more youth to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career option. The study suggests that the development and provision of youths and adults' entrepreneurial skills and a pedagogical focus on these issues could create a fertile ground for self-discovery, motivation and career choices. The study draws a significant conclusion on the necessity for promoting an entrepreneurial culture among the youth, adults and female population in developing African states in the quest for stability and sustainability in terms of youth employability and empowerment. The study lays emphasis on espousing entrepreneurial culture as entrepreneurship education is an

incubating ground for self-awareness, which paves the way for self-employment foster the spirit of opportunity recognition.

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