

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

In realizing the important role which education plays as a veritable tool for the growth and sustainable development of the nation, there has been a clarion call for a more qualitative and functional education all over the globe. Entrepreneurship Education, which is skill-oriented and self-employment motivated, holds the key to Nigeria becoming technologically relevant and economically prosperous if systematically packaged and adequately delivered. Entrepreneurship benefits cannot be overemphasized in any society that desires sustainable development, because it creates new technologies, production and services; encouraging improved productivity and rapid economic growth. Economic growth will invariably have positive influences on the health, thereby leading to sound body systems, increase in the life span, improvement in social status and standard (condition) of living. Embracing and judicious application of entrepreneurship education principles will in no small measure propel Nigeria to the much desired enviable development level which she is currently yearning for.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Education, Sustainable national development.*

Introduction

It is a well known fact that education is one of the indispensable tools for national development. Education is a vital instrument for national and sustainable development and it involves the acquisition of fundamental knowledge and essential development skills needed for technological breakthrough and socio-political development which accelerates economic growth. The development of an educational system that is knowledge based both in structure and functionality requires the inclusion of entrepreneurship education. Through entrepreneurial education sustainable development has become a significant issue for all well-meaning administrations of countries across the globe (Ogedengbe et al., 2013; Laurie et al., 2016). As such, a series of strategies and programs have been identified and structured towards the development of the mentality of entrepreneurship across all sectors in these administrations across the globe.

According to Kuratko (2009) due to its impact on the growth of economies and sustainable development via entrepreneurial drive and persistence it is fast becoming a central point of economies globally. Therefore, Nigeria as a country be idle and observe other countries develop in its desire to implement and achieve economic independence and diversity. This will bring about advancement in unemployment, poverty and tackle issues in youth restiveness and other socio-economic challenges plaguing the youths today. According to (Eneh, 2011) the fact that the country has over the years remained as a country that is still developing has further strengthened the argument on the need for companies and person to fully adopt and implement the principles of entrepreneurship. This can be seen obviously in the number of educated school leavers armed with good educational certificates currently roaming the street of our towns and cities for any jobs.

Adawo & Atan (2013) opine that the phenomenon has become a full blown challenge amongst graduates of tertiary institutions. This is an unfortunate situation as most youths who are supposed to be productive and active members of the society become beggars, moving from one part of the town, state and country to another in search of greener pastures for which they are ill prepared and equipped for. Thus, this therefore buttresses the proposition by Bolarin (2012) who asserts that the need to carefully re-assess or re-evaluate the type and quality of education that is accessible to youths in Nigerian tertiary institutions of learning becomes imminent. Equally, according to Anyaogu (2009) opined that tertiary institutions should be geared towards producing graduates who are relevant to the society and economy at large. Graduates who will be able to make use of their knowledge and skills acquired to alter and shape the environment while creating jobs that empower the graduates. This has consequently led to the rise of a lot of crimes which include amongst other things kidnapping, prostitution, ritual killings, human trafficking, fraud, gambling as well as oil pipe vandalism to mention but a few (Adesina, 2013). According to a report by the National Bureau of Statistics (2016) the unemployment rate rose from 10.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2015 to 12.1 percent as at March quarter of 2016.

Entrepreneurship is a widely used term and is seldom completely understood by many who use it. It is a step in the right direction in the achievement of development. The need for entrepreneurship education started emerging in the mid 1980s. This is because before this period unemployment and poverty were not a national concern as it is currently. However, political instability and inconsistencies in the social-economic policies of successive government led to the emergence of high level unemployment in Nigeria. In the mid 80s, the Nigeria economy collapsed while youth and graduate unemployment hit the roof. There was large-scale layoff of workers and early retirements as a result of structural adjustment policies and bad economic trends in the country. In the face of this situation, entrepreneurship, which would have salvaged the situation, was not encouraged. It has been observed that tertiary education has not been properly included in the philosophy of self reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment that will promote pride in primitive work and self-discipline, encouraging people to take part actively and freely in discussions and decisions affecting their general welfare, promoting new sets of attitudes and culture for their attainment of future challenges.

Concept of Development

Development in its simplest term is synonymous with growth. In the context of society, it is the sustained elevation of an entire society and social system toward a "better" or "more human"

life. Ikwuako (2001) referring to Smelser (1966) stated that when the term "development" is employed, four distinct but interrelated processes are usually borne in mind, namely: A developing society is changing from simple and traditional techniques towards the application of scientific knowledge at the realm of technology; The developing society evolves from subsistence farming towards commercial production of agricultural goods; The developing society undergoes a transition from the use of human and animal power to industrialization; and The developing society moves from the farm and village towards urban concentrations.

Todaro and Smith (2006) quoting Seers (1969) on basic questions about the meaning of development stated that: "The questions to ask about a country's development are-what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt, this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result "development" even if per capita income doubled". Pp 11.

The World Bank, which during the 1980s championed economic growth as the goal of development, joined the chorus of observers taking a broader perspective when in its 1991 World Development Report, asserted: "The challenge of development ... is to improve the quality of life. Especially in the world's poor countries, a better quality of life generally calls for higher incomes-but it involves more. It encompasses as ends in themselves, better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, less poverty, a cleaner environment, more equality of opportunity, greater individual freedom, and richer cultural life".

Concept of Entrepreneurship

The Consortium of Entrepreneurship Education (CEE, USA) defined entrepreneurship education as a form of education that is out to seek for the preparation of people, especially youths, to be responsible, enterprising individuals who will contribute to economic development and sustainable communities. Salleh and Gibbs (1990) conceptualized an entrepreneur as someone who exhibits a distinctive set of enterprising attributes. According to Salleh and Gibbs, these attributes embrace a number of skills, personality traits, acquire experiences and attitude. The enterprising attributes therefore, include creativity, initiative taking, analytical ability, high autonomy and achievement motivation.

A USAID-funded research by McBer and Co. and Management Systems International identified fourteen (14) personal entrepreneurial characteristics which appeared to be common behaviours of a successful entrepreneur as itemized by Manu and Brown (2007): Take initiative; Sees and acts on opportunities; Is persistent; Personally seeks information; Is concerned for high quality; Is committed to fulfilling contracts; Is orientated to efficiency; Plans systematically; Solve problem in original ways; Demonstrates self-confidence; Take calculated risks; Is assertive; Is persuasive; and Use influence strategies. Nsowah (2004) referring to Nsowah (1996) identified three important components of entrepreneurship.

1. Entrepreneurship consists of basic personality characteristics which mix together values, abilities and motivation. These include: creativity, assertiveness, which are somehow innate to the individual.

2. Entrepreneurship is viewed in terms of enterprise attributes like planning systematically, seeking and acting on opportunities etc.
3. Entrepreneurship goes beyond individual attributes to the performance of an economic or social role like managing a small business, ranging from wayside workshop to a high technology company.

Entrepreneur refers to a person as a leader, planner, programmer, motivator, risk-taker, creator, innovator, technocrat; while entrepreneurship refers to a process of leadership, planning, motivation, risk-taking, innovation, and decision-making. To an economist, an entrepreneur is one who brings resources, labour, materials, and other assets into combinations that make their value greater than before, and also one who introduces change, innovations and a new order. To a psychologist, such a person is typically driven by certain forces-the need to obtain or attain something, to experiment, to accomplish, or perhaps to escape the authority of others (Hisrich & Peters, 2002).

Concept of Sustainable National Development

"Sustainable development is development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: Viz

- The concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environments ability to meet present and future needs."

Starkey and Walford (2001) defined sustainable development as a concept that seeks to define a fair and just development. In the views of Adebola (2007), sustainable development is a kind development that can be initiated and managed properly in such a way as to give attention to continuity and preservation as people explore and explicit available resources for the enlargement of their existence.

The most interesting aspect of sustainable development is the fact that it puts in to consideration the present conditions of people as well as not compromising those that come later. Therefore, the concept of sustainable national Development remains the modern parameter of measuring development. The Bruntland Commission, (2007) defined sustainable Development as "the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs."

In another definition by Munasinghe (2004), sustainable national Development is a process of improving the range of opportunities that will enable individual humans and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems.

Age (2005), identified some objectives which sustainable national development is expected to realize: increase capital income and employment, promoting human welfare satisfying basic needs; protecting the environment. Considering the path of future generation, achieving equity between rich and poor and participation on a broad basis in development and decision making is important

From the above definitions, there are common phenomena which they all shared; that is prioritizing the development of the present generation without compromising the future generation. Kundun cited in Ugoh (2008), viewed sustainable development as a construct, which envisages development as meeting the need of the present generation without compromising the need of the future generation. This implies that while education (Entrepreneurship Education) meets the need of the present, it does not compromise the ability of the future generation to meet own needs. Arogundade in Oguejiofor and Ezeabasili (2014) pointed out that the major essential tool for achieving sustainable development should include;

- Improving the quality of basic education
- Reorienting existing education programme to address sustainable development
- Developing public awareness and understanding
- Providing training for all sectors of private and civil society.

Entrepreneurship Education and Sustainable Economy in Nigeria

The concept of sustainable economy requires upholding the circulation of money and economic considerations in the pursuit of an improved standard of living and poverty alleviation. Sustainability includes intergenerational equity, just and peaceful societies, social tolerance, environmental preservation and restoration, poverty alleviation and natural resource conservation. The major essential tools for achieving sustainable economy include the following areas:

1. Improve the quality of basic education.
2. Reorient existing education programmes to address sustainable economy.
3. Implementing various poverty alleviation programmes
4. Rural electrification
5. Developing employment generation and enhancing agricultural output and income.

The Nigerian government seems to have woken up to the reality that the country needs to break away from the vicious cycle of poverty, infrastructural neglect, corruption and other social problems. The reason being that, after 52 years of achieving colonial independence, it cannot be argued that Nigeria has attained her optimum level of economic development. According to Kolawole and Omolayo (2006), many individuals have difficulties in translating their business ideas to realities and creating new business ventures because of lack of necessary information and skills needed to achieve their targets. To them, the school curriculum was in the past oriented towards making graduates suitable only for white-collar jobs. This underscores why millions of our youths and a lot of university graduates roam the streets of the major cities and towns in search of white collar jobs.

For many developing countries, entrepreneurship has been a powerful engine of economic growth and wealth creation, and is crucial for improving the quality, number and variety of employment opportunities for the poor. It has several multiplier effects on the economy, spurs innovation, and fosters investment in people, which is a better source of competitive advantage than other natural resources, which can be depleted. Entrepreneurs create new enterprises, new commercial activities, and new economic sectors. They generate jobs for others; they produce goods and services for society; they introduce new technologies and improve or lower cost outputs; and they earn foreign exchange through export expansion or the substitution of imports. Entrepreneurial

activities, if properly carried out and supported by active government policies and infrastructures has the capacity to bring Nigeria out of its current levels of poverty; currently having over 10% of her population living under \$2 (two dollars) a day and 54% living under \$1 a day. Even with the presence of white collar jobs for graduates who want to pursue professional careers, it is also expedient to acquire entrepreneurial skills. This serves as a means to the end of generating extra income for self sustenance. According to Audretsch (2007), Smith (2009), Oteje (2009), and Osalor (2009), it is generally believed that entrepreneurship is a major driver of sustainable economy. Nigeria has great potential to excel through entrepreneurship because of its vast human and natural resources. Entrepreneurship is beneficial to every person and by extension Nigeria.

Obstacles of Entrepreneurship Education to the Achievement of Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship Education programmes are faced with numerous obstacles in a bid to effectively achieve its aims and objectives. Among the numerous obstacles are:

- 1) **Shortage of Qualified Entrepreneurship Teachers:** The problem mostly is that qualified Entrepreneurship Education teachers prefer opting out of teaching to industries, thereby increasing the shortage of qualified personnel in Entrepreneurship Education and in the absence of these Entrepreneurship Education teachers, people from other discipline come into the department to teach courses without imparting the right knowledge on the students.
- 2) **Poor Funding:** In Nigeria, educational institutions are not adequately funded. At times, funds meant for education are directed to the other sectors of the economy. That is why Ugwuogo (2013), expressed that "it is a well known fact that one of the major problems bedeviling education in Nigeria today is inadequate finding and Entrepreneurship Education is no exception.
- 3) **Inadequate Provision of Facilities:** Laboratories, equipment, tools, library facilities, lecture rooms, work books and other materials for the effective implementation of Entrepreneurship Education curriculum content are not adequately provided. This creates problems for business educators. Therefore graduates of business who were taught without these facilities will not in any way be able to defend their certificates.
- 4) **Poor Remuneration and Motivation of Teachers:** Nigerian teachers, Entrepreneurship Education teachers inclusive, are poorly remunerated and motivated. The problem of teacher's remuneration in the education system in Nigeria has been from its inception. Teachers salaries, allowances, entitlements are always paid in arrears; at times they are denied of these entitlements. According to Okpuzo and Ogidan (2012), poor remuneration is responsible for the poor attitude to work of some teachers, they go about doing their private businesses instead of concentrating on how to improve teaching and learning in the school.
- 5) **Poor public image of Entrepreneurship Education Programme:** There is still poor public image of Entrepreneurship Education programme. This is in line with the observation of Olufunke, (2003) that parents prefer their children to study courses like pharmacy, medicine, law, engineering, e.t.c because they regard vocational education as a course for "Never do wells" who could not secure admission into other disciplines. This attitude of people towards vocational education, especially to Entrepreneurship Education contributes

to the problems in teaching and learning of Entrepreneurship Education. Idialu (2007) stated that there is still a strong tendency towards white collar jobs as a result of low status associated with Vocational Education, Entrepreneurship Education inclusive.

- 6) **Inaccessibility of Digital and Internet Technology:** The non-availability of digital and Internet technology in the classroom has greatly affected both Business educator and students. Students are supposed to be taught the use of digital and Internet facilities.

This is against the UNESCO (2002) view, that the following conditions must be met:

- The Entrepreneurship Education teacher must have the knowledge and skills to use the new digital tools and resources to help all students achieve high academic standards.
- Students and business educators must have sufficient access to digital technologies and internet in their classroom, schools and Entrepreneurship Education institutions.
- High quality, meaningful and culturally responsive digital content must be available for the educators and learners.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship education has continued to be critically discussed topic among scholars and the corporate world as a result of its impact on sustainable development. Its Impacts will be better felt amongst developing nations across the globe where there is urgent need for transition into a development economy as a result of its devastating impact on health, security and finance. It has therefore become apparent that entrepreneurship can be taught and that countries who seek to continuously develop most adopt entrepreneurship education. Nigeria is no exception and there is no better time than presently if the nation is to overcome its present economic woes and transition into a developed culture so as not to jeopardize the future of generations to come. Nigeria can key into the Economic survival theory which highlights that entrepreneurship is encouraged by those impacted by unpleasant circumstances in life.

The period of graduates picking up their certificates and wandering the streets seeking for white collar jobs that are no longer available is fast becoming a thing of the past and Nigeria must recognize and adopt measures to embrace this while recognizing and proffering solutions to the challenges of entrepreneurship education in the country such as the government and relevant stakeholders committing to eliminating this challenges. It is therefore hoped that given this shared responsibilities, entrepreneurship will flourish and be employed as a essential tool for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered for effective entrepreneurship education in Nigeria:

1. Entrepreneurship education should be started as early as primary school and progress through all levels of schooling to further inculcate and develop entrepreneurial skills in young people.
2. Entrepreneurship training should be a compulsory part of programmes of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Nigeria to make the fresh graduate self-employed after a year mandatory programme to serve their father land.

3. The National Universities Commission (NUC) should lay more emphasis on the creation of entrepreneurship development centre where at least two compulsory courses on entrepreneurship will be offered by all undergraduate students' irrespective of their discipline in Nigerian universities. The same thing should be done for the Polytechnics and Colleges of Education.
4. It is also recommended that, the government should give adequate attention to entrepreneurial development in the country through the provision of good economic environment to encourage individual participation in business while this is guaranteed, entrepreneurship will thrive and consequently sustain economy.
5. Pool local public and private funds to create a small venture capital fund.
6. Establishing an enterprise college aimed at fostering the specific skill sets required for entrepreneurship to serve as skill-acquisition centers for the youths.
7. Creating an economic friendly political environment.
8. Improving on the government taxation on small scale businesses.

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