

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN CURRICULUM: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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### Abstract

*Entrepreneurship Education is the process through which individuals are made participating members of the society. It enables them to become capable of living in the society and contribute towards its economic development. The objectives of this paper is to discuss issues and challenges driving entrepreneurship education in Nigeria since it remains vital in the real sector and the sustenance of economic development. This paper also focused on the concepts of entrepreneurship and importance of entrepreneurship education. This shows that a functional educational system takes cognizance of the dynamics of the labour market, equips its graduates with occupational skills and competences to enable them to be self-reliant. Furthermore this paper recommended that educational programmes at all levels of education should be made relevant for provision of needed entrepreneurial skills to the youths.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Education, Issues Challenges

The sense of Entrepreneurship Education is to put one's ideas into action, define one's goal and work towards their achievement by creating and implementing relevant plans. This relevant plans is not only for those who would like to start their own business but, rather to all those who wish to introduce changes into their economic and social environments. These competences are applicable both to young learners as well as to adult learners, and are referring to specific goals of developing adequate knowledge, followed by skills and attitudes. The specific skills, attitudes

and set of knowledge relevant for this competence can be realized through creativity of benefits for themselves, the communities and societies by taking initiative and responsibility and achieving desired economic and social results.

### Concept of Entrepreneurship

According to Omolayo (2006), Entrepreneurship is the act of starting a company, arranging business deals and taking risks in order to make profit through the educational skills acquired. Entrepreneurship is about taking a risks, it is a process of creating new ventures that did not previously exist; it is creation of new wealth through implementation of new concepts. It is believed that what entrepreneurs have in common is not personality traits but a commitment to innovations. For innovations to be successful, the entrepreneur must be hardworking, talented, knowledgeable and purposeful. Another concept of entrepreneurship according to Aruwa (2004), it is the ability of some people to accept risk and combine factors of production in order to produce goods and services. It can be seen as the ability to be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. It is also the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment. Two important factors are involved for entrepreneurship to succeed: the presence of an entrepreneur and an enabling environment. Entrepreneurship is the willingness and the ability of an individual or a

firm or an organization to identify an environmental change and exploit such an opportunity to produce goods and services for public consumption.

### **Educational Policies and Practices for Lifelong Entrepreneurship**

Lifelong education in entrepreneurship can be interpreted on several levels. It is associated with the most comprehensive objective related to providing information about entrepreneurship, its social role and the potential entrepreneurial careers. Another approach can be found at the level of developing entrepreneurial solutions to problems in students' personal and professional lives. In most cases, those that provide entrepreneurial activities are generally found among the existing schools, colleges and universities involved in economic education. Since entrepreneurial solutions are sought and created throughout an individual's life, they should not be limited to the traditional places of formal learning.

There is need to integrate entrepreneurial topics into the curriculum at all levels of education, including the lifelong learning curricula. The goals, objectives and learning experience are to be changed by emphasizing exposure of students to realistic experience and interactive communication with the facilitating teacher/instructor. Learning should take place outside the classrooms at different "real-world outlets", including businesses and non-profit organizations. The outcomes of such an approach to lifelong learning are expected at two levels: individual and the institutional. At the individual level, they should be provided with better chances in a social environment where they would develop knowledge, skills and abilities while institutions which are providers of lifelong education are assumed to change in line with the dynamic society.

There are few cases of good practice in lifelong education for entrepreneurship Europe,

singled out by the European commission report, including the case of the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECEL). SEECEL has developed learning objectives for all educational levels, as well as teaching material and methodologies, including tools and approaches for teacher training. Another good practice can be located with the Croatian Agency for Vocational Education and training and Adult Education (AVET) which implements the project of "Virtual" training firms, established within the Vocational Schools in Croatia. In these virtual companies, students develop practical entrepreneurial competence and learn how to solve real-world problems.

At the curriculum development and instructional levels, both public and private sector organizations should promote entrepreneurship as a key competence at all levels of educational system. Institutions of higher learning need to be involved in the process with modular lifelong learning programme aimed at elimination of the existing skill mismatches.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Human capital theory provide a framework for examining the impact of acquired variables such as Education, learning and experience on career outcomes in skills acquisition. Ojeifo (2013), opined that Education should be designed with a view to create and enhance the supply of entrepreneurial initiative and activities. The emphases here is to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in the student through education. This calls for more serious adjustment of policies and new curriculum in line with demand of the present time.

**Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education**

According to Paul (2005),

Entrepreneurship education is structured to achieve the following objectives:

- To reduce high rate of poverty;
- Reduction in Rural-Urban Migration;
- Create employment generation;
- To offer functional education for the Youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self oriented;
- To inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the Youth and adults which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on;
- Create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy and
- To serve as a catalyst for economic growth & development.

**Importance of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

Essien (2006), defined entrepreneurship as the totality of self-asserting attributes that enable a person to identify latent business opportunities, together with capacity to organize need resources with which to profitably take advantage of such opportunities in the face of calculated risk and uncertainty. Below are some of the importance of entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria Baba (2013)

- i. Entrepreneurship Education provides frame work for teachers to use in building appropriate objectives, learning activities and assessments for their target audience;
- ii. It provide experience for students to develop their insight needed to discover and create entrepreneurial opportunities and the expertise to successfully start and manage their own business to take advantage of these opportunities;
- iii. It focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviour, skills and attributes in widely different context;

iv. Entrepreneurial skills and attributes provide benefits to society, even beyond their application to business activity;

v. Wealth and a high majority of Jobs are created by small business started by entrepreneurially-minded individuals, many of whom go on to create big business;

vi. It creates the spirit of capitalism;

vii. Entrepreneurship brings about innovation which is the engine to Economic development;

viii. It directs the application of acquired knowledge to the production of goods for human consumption;

ix. Entrepreneurship education provides creative freedom, higher self-esteem and an overall insight to control their own lives and

x. The National Policy on education made it clear on the need for functional, practical and acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies as equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute to the development of his/her society and this can only be attained through entrepreneur Education.

**Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

There are many challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria. Nigeria like most developing nations of the world is faced with various problems and harsh realities which include poverty, unemployment, conflicts and diseases (Baba, 2013). Despite the profound benefits of entrepreneurship education, it is still not fully blown in Nigeria. Different concept have been attributed to entrepreneurship Education in different tertiary institutions in the country. Some of these programmes present entrepreneurship education programmes in the context of vocational and technical education rather than developing the spirit of entrepreneurship in

various disciplines of skill acquisition and performances.

The various problems that hinder the developing of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria include Aruwa (2004)

- i. Poor access to vocational and skills development training for rural and urban youths involved in the informal economy;
- ii. Lack of Data for processing Entrepreneurship Education because there is limited programme design for it;
- iii. Lack of substantial funds for practical teachings of business ventures;
- iv. Absence of a pro-active regulatory environment that encourages innovative enterprise development at the grass roots level and
- v. Deficits of significant infrastructural attainment as regards to roads & electricity

#### **Strategies for Effective Entrepreneurship**

##### **Education**

According to Nwangwu (2006) and Akpomi (2009), The following strategies enumerated below will help to sustain viable entrepreneurship in Nigeria:

- i. The Curriculum should be enriched to incorporate more vocational economic development strategies and technical training;
- ii. Government should establish small business schools where interested students and community members can participate to make students to be self-reliant;
- iii. Entrepreneur Internship programme should be develop by the Government by matching students with successful entrepreneurs with clearly established education programmes;
- iv. Establishment of an Enterprise college to serve as skill-acquisition centre for the youths should be done by the Government;
- v. Government should be involved in the creation of an economic friendly environment where taxes on small scale business will be reduced to the barest minimum and

- vi. Government should provide incentives for students of vocational & technical schools to motivate them to establish their businesses after school.

##### **Conclusion**

Entrepreneurship education to any nation especially a developing country like Nigeria is no doubt of great achievement. Its role in economic growth cannot be over-emphasized in all its ramifications. It is necessary that aggressive effort should be made to see to its full implementation. According to Nwachukwu & Nwamuo, (2010), Entrepreneurship education is a central Pillar to economic growth and development as well as employment generation and poverty alleviation. Machinery should be set in motion to provide an enabling environment characterized by adequate facilities by the government. There is need for skilled and innovative workforce in the global economy where individuals can function effectively in the society.

##### **Recommendation**

For effective entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, this paper made the following recommendations:

1. New discovery for entrepreneurship should be encouraged & fully funded;
2. Entrepreneurship training and transfer of knowledge should become a part of societal culture;
3. To salvage Nigeria from the clutches of poverty, the National Universities Commission (NUC) should as usual set the minimum benchmark of the courses in Nigeria Universities;
4. Research findings kept in the library should be commercialized for empowerment;
5. Nigeria should collaborate with systems of other counties abroad for exchange of ideas and knowledge transfer through access to research work ;

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6. Introduction of Entrepreneurship study across colleges and department as general courses in Nigeria should be encourage by all stakeholders and
7. Youths should be exposed to training in technology to keep them in tune.

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