

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AS A STRATEGY FOR
SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN WOODWORK TRADE IN TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN
NIGERIA.

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Abstract:

Entrepreneurship continues to gain momentum within framework of potential efforts and strategies to boost employment and job creation for youths. Regrettably, most technical trade entrepreneurs do not achieve optimal success in their business due to poor entrepreneurial skills and strategies. Woodwork entrepreneurial are often faced with huge financial burden resulting from lack of stable income. This situation neither empowers them to manage their problems nor to provide the quality services needed by the society. This paper identifies strategies for prospective entrepreneurship skills in woodwork education needed for adjustment. It provides some important basic information and made laudable recommendation

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial education is seen today as the framework of all business efforts. Nafukho (2002) stated that entrepreneurship education is a catalyst for business formation. Entrepreneurial education according to Nelson (2006) refers to competency based education capable of satisfying the needs of the individual and that of the economy. Acquiring relevant technical skills alone without appropriate entrepreneurial skills will not guaranty success in business. Fadele (2009) submitted that vocational entrepreneurship education should not only be seen in terms of specific skills but should also indicate in the learners the acquisition of general knowledge necessary to function within and outside the organization. According to Igbo (2006) lack of basic financial and investment education and relevant technical skills is why educated persons often end up in retirement as poor and wretched fellows. A wise vocational teacher should help his/her students to understand their options in a free market economy and encourage them to look for entrepreneurial opportunities as end to the mission of entrepreneurship education in the vocational education curriculum.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes are the acquisition of relevant knowledge, practical skills and attitudes for gainful employment in a particular trade or occupational area either self or paid employment. The training must be flexible, adaptable, and life-long. TVET in short terms is education and training for work. TVET is taken to encompass all educational and/or instructional experience which might be formal or informal, pre-employment related, outside the job or on the job, in schools or in industries. The training is designed to directly enhance the skills, knowledge, attitudes, competencies and capabilities

of individuals, required in undertaking gainful employment. The major challenge in the world today is to find ways of living and working sustainably, so that the reasonable needs and wants of people from all walks of life and in all countries can be satisfied without over-exploiting the natural resources upon which all life depends.

TVET takes on a complex and distinctive character with regard to sustainable industrial development and economic growth. This is because TVET produces and consumes resources; as well as affects attitudes towards sustainability held by future workers in all nations. The historical antecedents of TVET give it a foundation upon which to build future commitments on national industrialization and economic growth. During the process of TVET, the greater the exposure of trainees to sustainable concepts, practices and examples, the more likely the desired workplace culture change will take place in the future. Moreover, the delivery of sustainable practices must be universal; that is, including not only pre-service TVET, but also on-the-job learning and worker upgrading and retraining. Continuing TVET will continue to predominate in the future, in order to accommodate both technological and job change for the success of the transformation agenda.

TVET plays a vital role in human resources development of the country by skilled manpower, enhancing industrial productivity and improving the quality of life. One of the most important features of TVET is its orientation towards the world of work and the emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills. TVET delivery systems will therefore, if

well placed train and entrepreneurial workforce that Nigeria needs to create wealth and emerge out of poverty.

Current ICT Initiatives and Projects

Nigeria's education ministry is yet to design its ICT policy for education. The Ministry's ICT department was created in February 2007. However several different initiatives by government agencies and the private sector to introduce and promote ICTs in education are underway. The drawback to these programmes is generally sporadic and insufficient supply of electric power in the urban areas.

Empowering Youth through a Sound Entrepreneurship Education

The following strategies will assist in empowering the youth at the various levels of education to self-reliant:

- Creative Positive Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship

Encouraging the enterprise spirit in young people is a pre-condition to achieving progress in employment, growth competitive and innovation. The argument is that entrepreneurship should be seen as a general attitude that can be usefully applied in all working activities and everyday life. When this becomes the focus of education, it will nurture in young people those personal attributes that form the basis of entrepreneurship such as creativity, spirit of initiatives, responsibility of confronting risks and independence.

- **Seminar and Workshop**

Seminar and workshops on entrepreneurship skills and attributes which are needed by entrepreneurs to succeed in business should reorganized for students and pupils. Mere successful entrepreneurs and experts could be invited ,to deliver lectures on entrepreneurship to broaden students mind and help them more about the entrepreneurship from their experiences

- **Inter Challenge**

Through the intern challenge are given the opportunity to be interned to a small business organization where they can practice the skills they have learned. Participating youths may be given opportunity to apply for a paid long holiday internship with a local entrepreneur. Through this programme, entrepreneurial awareness among the young people is promoted, and a stronger bridge between the educational system and the business world is further strengthened.

- **Use of Competent and Qualified Teachers**

The teacher employed to leach entrepreneurship education should be competent and qualified in terms of qualification, practical skills and knowledge of business opportunities available after graduation. The teacher is expected to know both the methodology and the content of the subject so that he can leach (he students effectively. Owori (2016) citing Jacob (1999).), disclosed that qualified, competent, and dedicated teachers who have the interest of their students at heart should be employed in our schools to ensure qualitative education at all levels.

- **Teaching Strategies**

Teachers should use appropriate teaching methods (such as demonstration and field trip) in teaching entrepreneurship education so that students can understand the lesson.

Entrepreneurship education should be properly taught so that when students graduate they can make use of the knowledge acquired and establish their own business instead of waiting for government employment. Entrepreneurship village or centre should be made available by each by institution so that students can be exposed to the real practical about each chosen entrepreneur or business.

- **Counseling**

The entrepreneurial teacher needs to counsel the students on entrepreneurship education because some of the students are still very young so that they will know the importance of entrepreneurs up education. These teachers will guide the students properly towards establishing their own business instead of folding their hands and waiting for government job only.

- **Visitation to Entrepreneurship in the Community**

On once in a while basis, entrepreneurial education teachers should organize visits to local entrepreneurs for their students. Students undertake to take case studies of successful businesses. Through such visitation, instructors can expose students to successful small business provide opportunities for students to practice their skills, enable students to become familiar with entrepreneurial and management it tasks, and introduce students to contacts that they can draw upon pursue their entrepreneurial dreams (Adebusuyi, 2002).

The Guiding Principles

Innovation: the central concept of entrepreneurship is the introduction of something new in the form of product or services. This however, appears to be one of the most difficult tasks for the entrepreneur. This is so because one requires the understanding of the ever changing environment in which we live. Change is the only thing constant in today's world.

Maintain principles that would build trust, integrity and credibility of the management from the market. Investors and clients evaluate the management of an enterprise in terms of these qualities, where these qualities are lacking they will have no confidence in the enterprise. This may lead to the collapse of any enterprise (Anyakoha, 2006).

Coping with the challenge of frustration and anxiety: for then beginning entrepreneur, situations such as fear of sales, intense competition, lack of capital, management ability, etc. could create enthusiasm, frustration and anxiety. Injecting some innovations in your approaches could provide a break through.

Investment proposal: put down in writing the nature of the business, market target, and other factors of the enterprise including risks that are involved.

Legal Issues: seek and meet all legal requirement put in place by relevant authorities to regulate such businesses.

Employ qualified manpower: consider the essential traits, qualifications, skills and knowledge needed for the job.

Compete favourably in the market: be aware of whom your competitors are; their strength and weakness, and devise strategies that will enable you to triumph.

Establish an efficient accounting system: ensure that factors identified and costed in the business proposal are accounted for (Onu, 2006).

Woodworking Occupations

The woodworking trade has several occupations. Among them are wood machining carpenters, Joiner, Upholsterer, Finisher, pattern maker, cabinet maker, furniture maker, boat builder, vehicle body builder, interior finisher.

Entrepreneurship skills and TVET: The missing link.

Entrepreneurship is the ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully. Entrepreneurship involves three important features, namely, organization of business, production in an exchange economy and the management of risks (Ihekoronye, 2006). This means the entrepreneur is someone who takes risk of investing money into a venture or business in a bid to make profit. According to Igbo (2006) an entrepreneur is a factor on fostering economic growth. He or she owns and runs a small business that he or she can call his her own. The entrepreneur must possess some creative skills and competencies to succeed in business. Such skills include:

1. Skills for managing money, men, materials, machines and methods (5Ms)
2. Marketing and sales skills, and
3. General business competencies.

Entrepreneurship education may be described as the art of seeking and or providing information that are needed for a successful entrepreneurship. A good education in woodworking technology and relevant financial and investment skills is a sure way to financial freedom. The woodwork occupations command respect as one of the lucrative and fast growing businesses due to high demands on well-furnished homes. Despite challenges from the use of materials such as plastic, the wood trades continue to grow. In addition to other advantages it has over other materials, wood has been identified as a renewable energy. Many businesses are established. Each year and a good number of them fail (Anyakoha, 2006).

Failure may result from:

1. Incompetence resulting in wrong decisions.
2. Lack of experience in management, management of men, money, material, machine and market (SMs).
3. Lack of knowledge of operational methods, procedures and policies relating to the business.
4. Neglect: Lack of adequate supervision.
5. Fraud: Situation where employees cheat on goods and money and are not quickly detected.
6. Inadequate capital needed to establish and sustain the business.
7. Lack of sense of potential threats or weaknesses to the business.

8. Setting unreasonable and un-measurable goals and lack of objectivity in the business transactions.

A popular adage says down fall of a man may not be the end to his life. In a similar but even more positive saying, Ford (n.d) stated that "the best we can do is size up the chances, calculate the risks involved, estimate our ability to deal with them, and then make our plans with confidence". Failure of one plan should not be allowed to degenerate into a total business' failure. When implementation of business plan is properly monitored, warning signs can be detected early enough to allow a corrective mechanism to be put in place. Let's not forget that "change" is constant, accommodate it in order to succeed.

Strategies for Successful Entrepreneurship

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3. Coping with the challenge of frustration and anxiety: for the beginning entrepreneur, Situations such as fear of sales, intense competition, lack of capital, management ability, etc. could create enthusiasm, frustration and anxiety. Injecting some innovations in your approaches could provide a break through.
4. Investment proposal: put down in writing the nature of the business, market target, and other facts of the enterprise including risks that are involved.
5. Legal issues: seek and meet all legal requirement put in place by relevant authorities to regulate such businesses.
6. Employ qualified manpower: consider the essential traits, qualifications, skills and knowledge needed for the job.
7. Compete favourably in the market: be aware of who your competitors are, their strengths and weakness, and device strategies that will enable you to triumph.
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Conclusion/Recommendation

Considering the versatile role of entrepreneurship education to economic development, efforts should be made by teachers, school administrators, government at state and national level to

work towards inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum at all levels of education in Nigeria. An entrepreneurship body could also be set up by the government to work out the modality and strategy for the inclusion and implementation of this education in Nigeria while government should be ready to make available enough funds towards the realization of these noble objectives. Also for the success of entrepreneurship education, training and retraining programme should be planned and organization by government for teachers at all levels of education, in order to prepare them for the task ahead.

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