

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The paper examined the concept of entrepreneurship education and sustainability in the light of population explosion and ever increasing turnout of large number of graduates unemployed from Nigeria tertiary institutions of learning without corresponding measures to match the situation. The authors lamented government's insensitivity and neglect towards the plight of education particularly poor funding of the sector as one of the major challenges yet most important tool responsible for the rapid transformation and development of both human and material resources of any nation in the world. The paper strongly advocated for 26% government funding of education as recommended by United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) if Nigeria is to be among the strongest and self-reliant economies by year 20: 2020 vision and also reduce poverty rate and other negative vices such as armed robbery and youth restlessness thereby channel their energy and talents towards productive skills acquisition for gainful employment and also become job provider in the absence of white-collar jobs.

Introduction

Nigeria tertiary institutions have produced graduates that are unable to secure gainful employment while the aim of Nigerian education system as obtained in other developed nations is to produce individuals who should be able to make impact and blaze new trails in different aspects of human life for development of self and country. Graduates of different fields are roaming the streets of Nigeria as a result of lack of entrepreneur, technical and vocational skills necessary for employment as skilled personnel. This brought about the idea of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria targeted at ensuring improvement of educational quality by equipping the young ones with basic knowledge and skills that would make them functional and productive in the society. For Nigeria to deliberately move her economy from the present import driven to export driven, and to ensure national development, a more serious and realistic approach must be given to entrepreneurship education as it is the nerve responsible for the advancement of any nation. Any country that is left out of this will remain perpetually underdeveloped.

The objectives of entrepreneurship education scheme include: self-reliance, development and self-realization (FRN, 2013). The inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the school curriculum was necessitated by the rising wave of unemployment of school leavers. Entrepreneurship education is very essential if the product of these programmes are to function effectively in the society. Entrepreneurship education enhances creation of employment opportunities and also contributes to industrial growth and economic development. When many acquire entrepreneurial skills and become self-reliant, the agitation for government jobs will be significantly reduced, then, peace and tranquility will reign.

As Nigeria advances in the 21st century, education and technology must respond to the challenges of unemployment using entrepreneurship education to promote self-reliance and enhance effective utilization of both human and material

resources to improve on the lives of the people in Nigeria. Nigerian universities are mindful of the unemployment problem in Nigeria and also the need to find plausible solutions using appropriate tool hence the need for entrepreneurship education. A nation with skilled and resourceful human capital which is enhanced by entrepreneurship education holds the key to job creation, wealth creation, industrialization, international relevance and global competitiveness which are prerequisite for national development as specified by the 21st century (Chujor, 2012).

Education

Education is regarded as a vehicle of change and national development. It is the most important instrument for change and development in any society. It is concerned with all-round development of an individual: intellectual, psychological, social, religious and moral into a sound personality to enable him or her function well and contribute meaningfully in the society they may find themselves. Hence, education should integrate individuals into their society. Akinkuotu and Olufowobi (2016) see education as the development of the whole man, soul, body, intellectual, emotional and physical well-being. They added that education ought to be a process through which man is raised up in the right way so as to be good through the inculcation of the right values that empowers the learners to be fitted to their immediate environment. The relevance of education in the development of man and society cannot be over-emphasized.

Okeke (2010) defines education as the processes individual undergo through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes that are necessary for effective living in the society. It implies that education should prepare people to be enterprising as they may be employees of entrepreneurship employers. Ocho (2005) explains that, the type of education a nation provides for her citizens in a depressing economy like Nigeria's situation determines the success of such citizens and by extension the national development of such a country. According to Wushishi (2010) education ought to be a vital tool for transformation and a formidable

instrument for socio-economic empowerment. Wushishi further explained that education sector has the responsibility for producing and supplying the personnel required to propel and sustain the economy. The goals of wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value reorientation can be effectively pursued, attained and sustained through an efficient, relevant and functional education system. The delivery of education in Nigeria has continued to suffer neglects, compounded by inadequate attention to policy frameworks within the sector.

Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship is the ability to perceive and undertake business opportunities, taking advantage of scarce resource utilization. Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effect assuming the accompanying finance psychic and social risk and reserving the resulting reward, monetary and personal satisfaction and independence (Hisrich & Peters, 2002).

Entrepreneurship Education:

Entrepreneurship education is a form of education that seeks to provide knowledge, skills, attitude and motivation to students for entrepreneurial success in any setting. It equips learners with the ability to seek investment opportunities (Azonuche & Umeri, 2012). Adewole (2011) states that entrepreneurship education has been found to precipitate employment generation, assist with the growth of economy and the overall promotion of sustainable economic growth and development in nations like Zambia, Ghana and South Africa where recent surveys indicated that 25% of the population are self-employed. Towobola (2011) posits that Japan and America have utilized entrepreneurship education to improve the quality of their human capital as opposed to the traditional teach and listen approach which is prevalent in developing countries and Nigeria is not exclusive. The state of education in every society determines the health of the economy and the pace of national development.

Entrepreneurship education, according to Paul (2005), is structured to achieve the

following objectives:

1. To offer functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant.
2. Provide the youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
3. To serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
4. Offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management and to make certain bearing feasible.
5. To reduce high rate of poverty and create employment.
6. Reduction in rural-urban migration.
7. Provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium scale businesses.
8. Create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy.

Osuala (2010), in support of Paul (2005), states that if the above objectives receive proper planning, funding and implementation, they will produce quality graduates that will foster job creation and reduce or eliminate poverty in Nigeria stressing that this could be realized when graduates are self-reliant by establishing their own small/medium scale business.

Sustainability

One aspect of development programs that is often neglected is sustainability. The history of development aids has shown that too many projects start well but all too soon fade out and are quickly forgotten. This is true of Nigeria. Sustainability is a vision for the world in which current and future humans are reasonably healthy; communities and nations are secure, peaceful and thriving; there is economic opportunity for all; and the integrity of the life-supporting biosphere is restored and sustained. Sustainability is a process that helps create a vibrant economy and a high quality of life while respecting the need to sustain natural resources and protect the environment. It expresses the principle that future generations should live in a world that the present generation has enjoyed but not diminished. Sustainability is achieved

when all people on earth can live well without compromising the quality of life for future generations. However, it is increasingly recognized that sustainability cannot be achieved without addressing social justice issues. There can be no sustainable communities and institutions without social justice.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This concept has been further developed within the UN system which tends to use the term, 'sustainable human development'. The introduction of the "human" dimension places human development at the forefront of regional integration and sustainable development of a country or continent. In recognition of the centrality of the human dimension to development, the UN's General Assembly in 1986 adopted a declaration on the right to development stating that the human person is the central subject of development and called upon member states to ensure access to the basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2006). Sustainable development also implies devising a social and economic system which ensures real income rise, educational standard increase, health of a nation improves and the general quality of life is advanced. One of the most important sustainable programme for self and national development is therefore entrepreneurship education.

Education for Sustainability

Education for sustainability is a lifelong learning process that leads to an informed and involved citizenry having the creative problem-solving skills, scientific and social literacy, and commitment to engage in responsible individual and cooperative actions. President Council on Sustainable Development, (2006) sees education for sustainable development as a dynamic concept that encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility

for creating a sustainable future. Education for sustainable development is about learning to:

- i. Respect, value and preserve the achievements of the past.
- ii. Appreciate the wonders and the peoples of the Earth.
- iii. Live in a world where all people have sufficient food for a healthy and productive life.
- iv. Assess, care for and restore the state of our planet, among others.

Aare, (2014) defines educational sustainability as a change of educational culture, one which develops and embodies the theory and practice of sustainability in a way which is critically aware. It is therefore a transformative paradigm which values, sustains and realizes human potential in relation to the need to attain and sustain social, economic and ecological wellbeing, recognizing that they must be part of the same dynamic. In a nutshell, sustainable education requires that vigour and life be returned into the educational system and that education should not be regarded merely as a manufacturing process which is guided by automation. Education must address real issues affecting human lives.

Aare (2014) identifies several factors as obstacles to sustainable education to include poor funding, insecurity, strike, corruption, political interference, poor implementation of designed curriculum among others. These factors make education in Nigeria to be unsustainable. He conclude that education must as a matter of necessity be tailored towards addressing many problems that are today preventing the country from achieving its huge potentials.

Entrepreneurship Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Using entrepreneurship education as a vehicle of sustainable development, its objectives has been pursued theoretically by reviewing the different government policies on education and the place of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. It is not an exaggeration to say that economic development and sustainability are hinged on creativity and innovation which are the

defining features of entrepreneurial education and must be used to define the country's developmental efforts towards a sustainable future (Okhakhu & Adekunle, 2012). In line with this review, there is need for real orientation towards building entrepreneurial mind-set for youths. It therefore holds that certain theories on entrepreneurial education and development be considered including challenges of entrepreneurial education and the way out. Furthermore, policy implication and recommendations be raised for consideration. These include among others, a call on relevant authorities to make fresh commitments towards entrepreneurial development by refocusing the education policy towards entrepreneurially eliciting programmes.

Advantages of Entrepreneurship Education

Bolarinwa (2001) enumerated the following as advantages of entrepreneurship education.

- i. It helps students to form basic knowledge about the function and operation of business and develop some level of familiarity and comfort with business environment.
- ii. It plays a complementary role in developing the occupational knowledge, job skills and work experience.
- iii. It offers opportunity for job experience for earning, saving and investing money at earlier stage of life than their peers, contributing their belief in their abilities and sense of self-worth.
- iv. It create employment, reduce high rate of poverty and also reduce rural-urban migration.
- v. It serves as catalyst for economic growth and development.

Constraints of Entrepreneurship Education

There are some constraints to entrepreneurship education.

- i. Ineffective implementation of

designed curriculum as well as inability of supervising and regulatory agencies such as Nigeria University Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) to clearly articulate the curriculum objectives.

- ii. Lack of Experts: Resource persons in the field of entrepreneurship facilitators, absence of relevant text books, poor funding and poor teaching aids acted as draw backs to the programme.
- iii. Other challenges identified by Ozozo (2003), Ariyo (2010), Ikpo (2010), Mambula (2012) are in the areas of constraints to access bank credits, lack of government's support in promoting small business and excessive political interference, extortion by government officials, poor infrastructural facilities and logistics.

Similarly, Paul (2005) summed up the following at the major problems of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

- i. Lack of trust by Nigerians which has resulted in the rejection of made in Nigeria goods as being inferior to imported ones.
- ii. Corruption: Gratification in the form of double taxation and bribes are common with government officials.
- iii. Lack of management know-how. This result to inability to use appropriate concepts and principles in business.
- iv. Direct shortage and inadequate infrastructural facilities such as epileptic power supply and bad roads which are death traps.
- v. Unguided and unrestricted importation of goods and services via the globalization process and its attendant liberalization and deregulation process.

Conclusion

In the light of serious challenges of unemployment in Nigeria today, the need for

Nigerians to seek avenues for self-employment and self-fulfillment has become imperative. Nigerians, especially graduates from tertiary institutions, can no longer rely on white collar jobs that are not in existence or visible. The alternative source is entrepreneur and reduction in over-reliance on importation and consumption of foreign goods. The paper stressed that if Nigeria is to be among the top 20 economies and also attain vision 20:2020 as a sustainable nation by the 21st century, government needs to provide an enabling environment (security), safe-guard lives and properties, maintain law and order and accord education sector the desired attention as a basic tool to sustainability among others.

Suggestions

In order that Nigeria overcome the challenges of unemployment and reduce the negative vices such as youth restlessness, armed-robbery, kidnapping for ransom and other social economic problems such as poverty, the following suggestions should be urgently addressed:

1. For effective promotion of entrepreneurship education as in Brazil, Australia and USA, Nigerian government needs to provide security, safe-guard lives and properties, maintain law and order and freedom to do business.
2. Government should release up to 26% of her annual budget for education as suggested by UNESCO. This will go a long way to boost the provision of necessary materials, equipment and personnel needed for full implementation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.
3. Government should provide small and medium loans to school graduates to start up business through such as programme YES in Niger State, National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). There is need to motivate stake holders in education in order to enhance effective monitoring of the

programme. This could be allowed through remuneration in terms of increment in wages and promotions, and salaries paid as at when due to discourage corruption. Mobility should be made available to ease or facilitate monitoring of the programme.

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