

Book of Readings

# The Need for Effective Entrepreneurship Education in Vocational and Technical Education in College of Education in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Nigeria as a nation is faced with insecure economy, problems of simultaneous inflation and recession as well as significant unemployment. The increasing rate of unemployment among graduates of technical and vocational education and unsatisfactory state of the nation's economy call for review and the integration of entrepreneurial skills into technical and vocational education programme to change the poor state of economic and human resources developments. Technical and vocational education is observed as educational programme that prepares individual for employment into various trades. It is important that the curricular of technical and vocational education needs to be reviewed to provide technical and vocational students with the entrepreneurial skills needed for self-employment and self reliance. This paper highlights the need for entrepreneurial skills into technical and vocational education.

### Introduction

The present situation of economic fortunes of Nigeria and the resultant massive unemployment of youths and adults had emphasized the need for every citizen to aim of self-reliance through self-employment. Skill according to Osinem and Duru (2006) is viewed as a well established habit of doing things by people. Nahavandi (2000) defined a skill as an acquired talent that a person developed related to a specific task.

Integration is a means of combining two or more things so that they work together for a better result. It is a way of using adequate contents with other members to develop good skills and habit in an individual (Summer, 1999). According to Nelson and Leach (2001) Technical and vocational education should not merely produced the job seekers who come to work on time do what they are told by complacent and respected authority. Technical and vocational education has role to play in training potential entrepreneurs Nelson and Leach (2001) observed that potential entrepreneurs are rarely taught the basic knowledge of entrepreneurial skills from secondary to tertiary level. This has far reaching implication for technical and vocational education should in the case of massive unemployment be the solution to joblessness. The present efforts of Federal Government of Nigeria to reduce unemployment and eradicate poverty may not achieve the desired objectives unless the technical and vocational education is given prominence in the country through proper funding and provision of good infrastructure relate the curriculum is enriched with entrepreneurial skill. Acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is mostly through science technology education. This education encourages invention, application of scientific principles, and promotion of the development and application of new sources of power and welcomes realistic industrial literacy (Summer 1999). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) advocates acquisition, of appropriate skills abilities and competencies both manual and physical for the individual to live in and physical for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society. To achieve this it recommends that a minimum time a child stays in the secondary school should be six years. Within this period, technical and vocational subjects are among the subjects that are taught to enable the child acquire entrepreneurial skills for self reliance as on enunciated education in the National policy on Education Iloje and Nahavandi (2000) observe that the National Directorate of employment was established in 1968 to tackle the high rate of unemployment especially on youths rate of unemployment in the country. The underlying

philosophy of N.D.E is self-enterprise; which emphasizes self employment in preference to wage employment. In Nigeria, each year several new enterprises are started but only half are in existence for into eighteen months or less, while only very few last for after twenty four months. This failure of small scale business has been attributed to lack of entrepreneurial skill on the part of the managers/operators of the enterprises.

Osuala (2004) observed that training for entrepreneurial development is not currently being well articulated by the Nigeria institutions.

Osoimehin (1998) contended that there is high level of technical invention in Nigeria, but owing to lack of entrepreneurship there is very low rate of product commercialization. Most institution in Nigeria facilitates a relatively high level of research but they do not facilitate entrepreneurial skill renters.

### **Needs for Entrepreneurial Skills into Technical and Vocational Education Curriculum**

Technical and vocational education has an important mission of preparing people for employment. This mission cannot be accomplished if jobs are not available for the skills acquired by recipients of technical and vocational education. Considering the number of unemployed in Nigeria, the need to integrate the curriculum of technical and vocational education cannot be over emphasized.

Many people have cried out against the rate of unemployment in the country. Okoro (2004) noted that unemployment has for some time now been the major evil that bedevilled the nation. They observed that the unemployment problem affects both professional and non-professional graduates. Oranu (2002) confirmed that employment opportunities are increasingly becoming slimmer and more difficult to come by nowadays. He therefore suggested that our educational system should be geared towards providing self-employment and self-reliance skills for graduates of this system.

The need for integration of entrepreneurial skills into technical and vocational education curriculum stems from the fact that jobs are not there for which people are being trained. Technical and vocational education is described as a fallacy since it is unable to solve the unemployment problem. The idea of technical and vocational education as a prerequisite for employment is relevant only in nations with fairly solid infrastructures and industrial economics, where some dignity is attached to technical jobs in factory or on the farms (Nahavandi 2000). Considering the economic and social realities of Nigeria, technical and vocational education curricular should be integrated with entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.

Technical and vocational education has a very important role to play in economics development of Nigeria. Small-scale industries have been identified as being very crucial to economic development of Nigeria. Development of small-scale industries is more that just the availability to capital, raw materials and skilled workforce. It requires availability of people who have skills and knowledge needed to mobilize, organize and co-ordinate capital and other resources of production. Technical and vocational curricular lack the necessary entrepreneurial skills development component needed for its recipients to be able to start and engage in small-scale industries. Hence, there is need for its integration.

Furthermore, Technical and vocational education curricula should be modified to provide gradates of the programme with board based knowledge and skills that can enable them get employment in a range of related occupations. Presently, technical and vocational education prepares students for single or specific occupation thereby limiting their chances of getting employment. Nelson and Leach (2001) noted that "students in developing nations are prepared for single tasks or jobs rather than clusters of related jobs, with one result-their employability is additionally limited in economics where jobs are few".

### **The Concept of Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Skills**

Okoro (2004) describes entrepreneur as the capitalist individual who recognise money making opportunity and set up a business to exploit it. Iloeje (1999) defines entrepreneur as person who organizes, manages and assume and risk of a business or enterprise. He further stated that owners of small business firm may be called entrepreneur because they have chosen to assume risks; identify business opportunities; gather resources initiate action and establish organization to meet some demand or market opportunity. Entrepreneur tends to be independent and self sufficient and they also have some resistance of working with government or any other agency to meet common goals. Entrepreneurs therefore have ability to spark new ideas and new products that create business which in turn create need for new jobs.

Osuala (2004) and Duru (2006) see entrepreneurship as specialized training given to technical and vocational students to acquire skills, ideas and management out lot self established trade or business, who coordinates factors of production and bears the reset of uncertainty by wresting scarce resource on trade and business ventures (Nwaokolo 1994 and Osuala 2004).

Entrepreneurship aims at:

- Providing meaningful training for youths to make them self-reliant and subsequently encourage them to derive profit and be self independent.
- Providing youths with training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size businesses.
- Providing youths with training skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society.
- Providing youth with enough training is risk management.
- Making uncertainty bearing possible and easy.
- Providing youths with enough training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities (Eze 2007).

According to Afoja (1999) entrepreneurship means making living by working for one's self. Entrepreneurship therefore, involves the ability to set up a business as different from being is employed while technology education is geared towards acquisition of technical skills. Entrepreneurship education deals with the skills of business ownership and management. He further said that technical entrepreneurship is particular subset of general business entrepreneurship in which the money making – opportunity is based on a new and improved technology and the technical entrepreneur is the person how combines skills of the classics business entrepreneur with those of the research engineer, or scientist, vocational technical and vocational education possess the potential of production both the general.

### **Importance of Entrepreneurship education to Vocational and Technical Education in the Colleges of Education**

A number of options and alternatives are being considered for the purpose of making education more relevant in the nation's education reform agenda. As part of the reform approaches to making Vocational and Technical Education more effective, entrepreneurship education can offer Vocational and Technical Education appeared to be wider beyond the scope of the production of teachers of Vocational and Technical Education. Other possibilities that can be realised include:

- Widening of job opportunities beyond the production of teachers of Vocational and Technical Education as Entrepreneurship Education can facilitate the creation and establishment of small and medium scale business enterprises.

- Acquisition of more elaborate skills, knowledge and attitudes in vocational programme areas of vocational and Technical Education that may be attractive to larger number of would be employers.
- Reduction of wastage levels associated with restructured programmes in the nation's tertiary institutions, and
- Making the products of the Vocational and Technical Education programme in the nation attain new global professional competences needed in the dynamic and emerging labour market.

### **Recommendations**

Apart from the requirements identified as needed to make entrepreneurship education work in the Vocational and Technical Education programmes, some pertinent recommendations also include:

- i. Emphasis should be placed on practical institutional delivery in Vocational and Technical Education programme with equal emphasis on learners activities in every unit of the programme.
- ii. Successful entrepreneurs in Vocational and Technical Education related occupations in the local community should be regular visitors cum facilitators as guest speakers identified by Vocational and Technical education department in te nations institutions.
- iii. The Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) programme through which students in Vocational and Technical Education programme come in contact with first-hand practical experience of how industries or enterprises function should become more sharply focused and defined. Stricter and more qualitative supervision of the students on these programme may be required as part of requirements for certification or programme completion.

### **Conclusion**

The entrenchment of entrepreneurship education into Vocational and Technical Education of the school curriculum is laudable. It is considered as a sure means through which National Economics Empowerment and Development can be attained. However, policy statement alone in this direction without re-engineered school curriculum that is heavily laced with strategies and effective curriculum instructional delivery system cannot yield the anticipated programme effects. Retraining personnel in vocation and Technical Education for more effectiveness and the liberal provisions of facilities in the nation's Colleges of Education are needed for the learners to tap into the great and dynamic economy of the nation through the school's entrepreneurship education. Certainly, the acquisition of appropriate skills, competences, mental and physical for the products of the colleges to live in and contribute to the development of the society has far reaching implications for sustainable National Development.

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