

FUNCTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: ANTIDOTE TO NIGERIA DEVELOPMENT IN 21ST CENTURY.

BY

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Abstract

Education is believed to be the key to effective development strategies, Entrepreneurship education is the master key that can alleviate poverty, promote peace, improve capacity building, improve quality of life for all and help to achieve sustainable development. This could be possible when relevant/appropriate skills, competencies and techniques are inculcated into the recipients that can lead to job creation viz-a-vise self-reliance. Therefore, this paper examines how functional Entrepreneurship Education could be an Antidote to Nigerian development. The challenges of functional Entrepreneurship Education were also discussed. Finally, the paper advanced some suggestions on how to overcome the challenges so as to enhance Nigeria Development.

Key Words: *Entrepreneurship Education Antidote Nigeria Development.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the key to national development. This is because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people; empowers and equips individuals in society to participate in, and benefit from their national economy; facilitates economic development and provides the basis for transformation. Education is the essential tool for sustainability. The present global economic crises suggest that the entire world is in a war between financial/qualitative education and catastrophe (Aluwong, 2010). Entrepreneurship education is a type of education that has competency- based skills requisition and sound scientific knowledge capable of meeting up employment generation, training of unskilled workers, retraining of skilled workers to adjust to the technical innovation in their various occupations which will invariably help in reduction of poverty and meet with the Nigerian development (Suleiman 2010).

Entrepreneurship Education facilitates the acquisition of practical skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. It is therefore, a planned programme of courses and learning experiences that begin with exploration of career options, support basic academic and like skills and enable achievement of high academic standards, leadership preparation for industry-defined work and advanced and continuing Education. This type of education will help the recipient to tap the abundance resources available in Nigeria and harness such resources in order to produce goods and services needed in the country (Olorunmolu and Kizito, 2013). This will no doubt help the recipient to start up small or medium scale business and become employer of labour. This will reduce the unemployment rate in Nigeria and hence reduce or eliminate poverty and help to increase per-capital income in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship Education has been described as an antidote to unemployment and youth restiveness because entrepreneurial activities have been found to be capable of making positive contribution to the economy and quality of life of a nation (Adejumo 2000). Entrepreneurship

Education and training entails philosophy of self-reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment, promoting new sets of attitudes and culture for the attainment of future challenges (Oluremi and Agboola, 2011). In a nutshell, functional Entrepreneurship education will enhance job creation which will subsequently reduce unemployment, poverty and social vices in Nigeria. This will also help to improve the standard of living; hence promote social economic and political development in Nigeria.

Functional education to educationist is the kind of education that comes spontaneously from the influence of the environment. It is based on the child needs rather than oriented towards a national educational development policy. In this work, it is considered as the education, which could be imparted on the individuals, such as to prepare him to face the challenges of the National goals of his country. To achieve National goals, the nation's education policy, the nature and structure of entrepreneurship education must be tailored towards serving the needs of the students and citizens in order to work towards realizing the objective of development. To achieve such goals according to Mahieu in Yakubu and Hussaini(2011) opines that such education for nation development must promote initiative, flexibility, responsibility, creativity and enterprises. Functional entrepreneurship education should aim at creating awareness and mobilizes people for career in order to provide skills needed to promote business and development.

Development is regarded as an act or process of growth progress and improvement within a physical setting (Olorunmolu and Kizito, 2013). For Nigeria to develop, socially, politically and economically, there is need for a functional education that can turn the fortune of Nigeria hence a functional Entrepreneurship Education is needed for that purpose. It is therefore, against this background that this paper examines functional Entrepreneurship Education: An Antidote to Nigeria's development in 21st century.

Entrepreneurship Education

In Nigeria and the whole world at large entrepreneurship in being seen as a key to economic development process. When people are exposed to entrepreneurship, it is an evident that they would be opened to opportunities that will enable them to become creative and productive. This will enhance job creation and improve the standard of living of an individual in the society. In defining Entrepreneurship, it is important to note that there are as many definitions of Entrepreneurship as there are scholars of Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship involves identifying a problem (need) and turning it to opportunity (creation of product & service) through research with a view to satisfy the need and identifying customers who are able and willing to pay to have the problem solved (Olurenmi, Akinsanya & Olusegum 2015).

Mc Gowan in Olurenmi, Akinsanya & Olusegum (2015) defined Entrepreneurship as a process which involves the effort of an individual (or individuals) in indentifying viable business opportunities in an environment and obtaining and managing the resources needed to exploit those opportunities. In business management, Entrepreneurship is regarded as the "Prime mover" of a successful enterprise just as a leader in any organization must be the environmental change agents (Anyadike, Eneh and Uka 2012).

Entrepreneurship in the above is the term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities. It could also be regarded as a purposeful intervention by an educator in the life of the learning to impact entrepreneurial qualities and skills to enable the learner to survive in the world of business (Ogundele, Akingbade and Akinlabi 2012).

Alberti, Sciascia and Poli (2004) defined Entrepreneurship Education as: the structured formal conveyance of Entrepreneurship competencies which in turn refers to the concepts, skills, and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth

oriented ventures. Entrepreneurship education is regarded as a lifelong learning process and consist of five stages namely, basic, competency, creative application, start-up and from the (Oluremi, Akinsanya and Olusegun 2015).

From the above definitions, it is evident that functional entrepreneurship education, if it is given all it deserves and properly implemented will produce quality graduates that will foster job creation and reduce or eliminate poverty in Nigeria. This could be realized when the graduates are self-reliant by establishing their own business, small/medium scale enterprises. This will enhance jobs creation and reduce the unemployment rate in Nigeria. It could also help an individual to identify investment opportunities and help them to harness untapped natural resources in Nigeria in order to produce the goods and services needed in the country. This will no doubt reduce or eliminate poverty and hence increase per capital income in the country which helps Nigeria to develop socially, politically and economically in 21st century.

How Functional Entrepreneurship Education could be an antidote to Nigeria development in 21st Century.

Functional Entrepreneurship Education plays a vital role in the social, political and economic development of any nation. This is possible when jobs are created for the citizenry by establishing a lot of business that could accommodate the unemployed youth in Nigeria. A qualified graduate of entrepreneurship education would have acquired enough skills relevant to management of small and medium business centre.

1. Creation of self-employment. An entrepreneur provides job for himself by establishing small business centre. This, according to Aiyeduso in Olorunmolu (2008) help to reduce the problem of unemployment and other social vices in Nigeria. The entrepreneur does not only provide jobs/employment for himself alone, but for others too. This in turn helps the individual to increase per capital income hence improve standard living.
2. The Entrepreneur determines or identifies the specific wants of the people and the type of goods and services that will fulfill those wants most comfortable. Emeruwa (2005) asserted that the entrepreneur does not only indentifies but mobilizes and organizes the resources to tap the opportunities using men, materials, money and machines to explore the opportunity.
3. Production of goods and service that is important to the well-being, comfort and happiness of individuals in the society at large.
4. Entrepreneurship stimulates rural, economic and industrial development. Entrepreneurship contributes to the development of rural areas. It does this by establishing their small/medium scale enterprise in such areas by discouraging rural migration. Entrepreneurship provides ample job opportunities to the rural dwellers. It also provides goods and service, which could be found in an urban area and sometimes provide infrastructural facilities.
5. The entrepreneurs are usually motivated in their activities not only by the need for material contributions to the welfare of the communities but also desire to make profit. This uplifts the dignity of labour.
6. Through entrepreneurship education, utilization of local resources is made possible. The graduates of this specialized education set up their small/medium scale business, which will enable them to utilize the local resources available in their vicinity. The uses of local raw materials are discarded by products of large firms as primary input in their production processes. Owuala in Olorunmolu (2008) asserted that in terms of their economic benefits small firms can be said to be greater in production of local resources, maximizes them than

their large counterparts. The provision of raw materials for the big firms help them to increase their production hence employ more personnel thereby creating jobs for unemployed youth in the country.

7. Through entrepreneurship education, a pool of potential entrepreneurs who are well equipped with skills and technical know how to manage small/medium scale industries are produced. This will equally help in job creation. Through quality entrepreneurship education, Nigeria could produce a lot of entrepreneurs who could establish and manage businesses on their own.

Based on the above merits, it is no doubt that entrepreneurship education could be used as major weapon in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by empowering the individual in the society to be self-reliant.

Challenges of Functional Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Functional Entrepreneurship Education played a vital role in equipping individual with necessary intellectual capacity, skills and right type of work habit and attitude to be able to create jobs for the growth of the Nigeria economy.

However, what is quite essential is the extent to which the Entrepreneurship Education programme can be implemented to realize these goals. The programme is confronted with a lot of challenges which brought a setback in the attainment of its objectives. These challenges have not enable Nigerian to enjoy the benefits of this programme as expected. This limits the achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs) in Nigeria.

Some of the challenges of functional entrepreneurship education have been pointed out by eminent scholars such as Gana (2000) stated that poor funding by government and non-governmental organizations; poor and ineffective planning, supervision and evaluation of the programme across the board. Also Aiyeduso (2004) highlighted that inadequate teaching materials, equipment and infrastructural facilities are some of the challenges affecting entrepreneurship education. He further stated that the challenges posed on globalization, information and communication technology (ICT), all these effect on curriculum, methodology, facilities, staff and equipment. In Anyadike, Emeh, & Ukah, (2012), the challenges of entrepreneurship education was entrenched by inadequate qualified teachers and instructors as well as supporting staff at all levels; inadequate motivation for available teaching and non teaching staff which affects staff efficiency, retention, creativity and initiative. Emphasis on theoretical knowledge rather than practical knowledge due to lack of entrepreneurship education; high level of corruption and very poor maintenance culture in the system (Osuala 2010). In Oluremi, Akinsanya, and Olusegum (2015) the challenges of entrepreneurship education could be traced to poor enabling business environment, access to credit/loan facilities, infrastructural decay, mass poverty, inflation, technological infraction, political instability, epileptic power supply, inflation and insecurity of lives and properties which hamper economic and business activities.

Recommendations/Suggestions

In view of the foregoing discussion, the following recommendations are put forward as measures to take in handling the situation.

1. Streamlines entrepreneurship education curriculum along the lines of practical skills acquisition and up to date technological innovation in the world business.

2. All institutions of higher learning offering entrepreneurship education should be mandated to establish Entrepreneurship Education Centre. This Centre should be equipped with all the modern facilities which could enrich the students with both theoretical and practical skills acquisition.
3. Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) should be enhance and made more effective.
4. Government and Non governmental agencies should provide enabling environment and such environment be sustained for assurance. Such as infrastructural facilities, water supply, modern information technology (ICT) among others.
5. The fight against corruption and indiscipline should be continued with vigor at all levels and sectors.
6. Effective supervision and evaluation of programme implementation and funding must be ensuring on a continuous basis.
7. Emphasis must be on practical skills rather than on theoretical because the business world is dynamic and there is a need for constant change. This could be done by enhancing more credits to Students Industrials Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). That is by increasing the period from four months to six months.
8. More universities should be made to run entrepreneurship education as a discipline like Accountancy, sociology, psychology etc. This will solve the problem of inadequate qualified staff to teaching the course in our institution of higher learning in Nigeria.
9. Government should employed more qualified staff, teaching and instructors and there should be special allowance given to motivate for efficiency, retention, creativity and initiative.

Conclusion

Functional entrepreneurship education has been viewed as veritable antidote to the endemic problem of poverty, hunger and youth employment. When youth are trained, they explore opportunities in their immediate rural environment instead of chasing shadows and uncertainties in the urban centres. This will certainly reduce the social vices, especially the endemic insurgency in this part of the country. The development of functional entrepreneurship education will go a long in creating employment; give young people the opportunities to develop their enterprising skills, empowering the young to be job creators rather than job seekers and by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to raise their output, Income and wealth.

Finally it will improve the image and highlight the role of entrepreneurs in the society.

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