

APPRAISING THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN INITIATING AND SUSTAINING A VIABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Provision of a viable entrepreneurship education for national development will not only assist greatly in ameliorating the problem of unemployment among the school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions, but also minimize the various crimes often committed by many jobless Nigerian youths. Acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, through viable entrepreneurship education helps an individual to become an effective entrepreneur who can properly coordinate other factors of production such as capital, land and labour in order to make the best use of them in the creation of utilities, resources and wealth, which pave way to national development. Educational management helps in initiating and sustaining a viable entrepreneurship education through the formulation of realistic and achievable goals of viable entrepreneurship education; designing the curriculum; determining the number of learners to cater for and consequent number of teaching and non-teaching staff required including the artisans and other resource persons in the community; deciding the location and design of the buildings needed; mapping out strategies for effective funding and appraising of the entrepreneurship education.

Keywords: Educational management, entrepreneurship, development.

Introduction

Education in Nigeria today is largely perceived as a form of investment in human capital development, which brings economic benefits and contributes significantly to the nation's future wealth. In recent times many Nigerians tend to look to education for the realization of their aspirations, hopes, desires and ambitions in most aspects of life. These include getting a satisfying well-remunerated job, having enjoyable leisure, living a meaningful spiritual life and working towards self actualization. As succinctly remarked by Nwagu (1976) "education is universally accepted as a form of investment in human beings, which yields economic benefits or returns and contributes to a nation's future wealth and development by increasing the productivity and consumptive capacity of its citizens". It is

therefore apparent that education is an indispensable tool which would not only assist in meeting the nation's economic, moral, social, cultural and political aspirations, but would also inculcate in the individual knowledge, attitudes, desirable values, skills, dexterity and character that would foster national development and self actualization. It is also re-echoed in the National Policy on Education (2004) that “educational activities shall be centered on the learner for maximum self-development and self-fulfillment”. Thus, as the economic development of a nation, which paves way for national development depends vitally on the creation of a labour force equipped with the necessarily technical skills for industrial production, there is an inevitable need for a viable entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

Ironically, the Nigerian school system in the last two decades has been producing more school leavers or graduates who are certificated but jobless. These products were trained to be seekers of white-collar jobs, rather than being “educated” to be self-reliant. Many parents and guardians, hitherto, send their children and wards to schools for the purpose of passing their examinations and acquire relevant certificates that would enable them secure well-paid employment later. According to Adesina (2005) “there should be a general understanding by all stakeholders in education, parents, students, teachers and employers, that the essence of education is learning and character-formation and not a mere possession of certificate of whatever grade”. Also, Igwe (1989) affirmed that “the focus of the entire school system should shift from passing examinations and the acquisition of certificate, to the acquisition of practical and salable skills”.

Commenting on the type of functional education required in Nigeria for accelerated national development and self-reliance, Amaele (2005) declared that:

Acquisition of desirable skills and abilities among others is a major criterion for education. After all, education aims at helping an individual to develop all his in-born or in built potentials. Any education that does not sincerely address the comprehensive tendencies of the individual members of the society is not worth the name.

Based on these premises, it behoves on Nigerian school system to make its products become self-employed and generators of employment for others. This lofty goal could be well achieved through a viable entrepreneurship education. As clearly stated in the National Policy on Education (2004) “there is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive, untied Nigeria; to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education”.

In the last two decades there had been increase in the demand for education at all levels in Nigeria. The Government, various religious organizations and the entrepreneurs have been compelled to establish more schools and tertiary institutions in the country and students' enrolment in these institutions, has been assuming an upward trend. The proliferation of these institutions and increase in students' enrolment will undoubtedly result in more job seekers going into the labour market. Ironically, this influx of more job seekers into the labour market will aggravate the problem of graduates' unemployment in Nigeria. In order to prevent these youths and adults from wallowing in abject poverty and despair, due to their inability to secure gainful employment after schooling, it becomes highly imperative to give a prominent attention to a viable entrepreneurship education for wealth creation, which paves way to national development. According to Oyekan (2000), "the causes and symptoms of poverty which curtail human development and quality life should be prevented through functional education, good leadership and dynamic creation of wealth".

This paper appraises the role of educational management in initiating and sustaining a viable entrepreneurship education for national development. It examines the concepts of entrepreneurship education, educational management and national development. An attempt is made in the paper to set up models on the unique role of educational management in initiating and sustaining a viable entrepreneurship education for national development.

The Concepts of Entrepreneurship Education, Educational Management and National Development

Before appraising the role of educational management in initiating and sustaining entrepreneurship education for national development, it is deemed pertinent to have a cursory look at the concepts of entrepreneurship education, educational management and national development.

Entrepreneurship education is the inculcation in the individuals entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, attitudes, abilities and competences that would make such individuals live happily and successfully in the society and contribute meaningfully to its development. Thus, proper inculcation of entrepreneurial skills and social values will strengthen the individuals, with vocational competence and industrial experiences and desirable ethical orientation towards sustainable human development. Thus, through entrepreneurship education, individuals are nurtured and empowered with the enterprising productive abilities and habits that will enhance dignity of labour and desire for wealth creation.

Educational management as defined by Resser (1973) and cited by Nwankwo (1982) is the utilization of physical and human resources through co-operative efforts and it is accomplished by performing the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Also Mishra (2008) defined educational management as “the process of utilizing appropriate materials in such a way as to promote effectively the development of human qualities. It includes all those techniques and procedures employed in operating the educational organization in accordance with established policies”. Moreover, Afolabi (1998) defined educational management as the identification, organization and coordination of human, material, physical and fiscal resources, as well as other available education programmes, using them judiciously towards the attainment of objectives of education. Based on these definitions it is quite apparent that educational management embraces such managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing, financing, supervising, monitoring or inspecting and evaluating. Essentially, the educational manager may play a prominent role in planning, policy-making and programme designing, however, his primary role is geared towards the effective and efficient implementation of such educational plans, policies and programmes.

The term national development connotes that such nation has witnessed rapid advancement in its social, political, moral cultural, economic, scientific and technological dimensions. According to Ajayi and Afolabi (2009) “national development entails better living conditions for all citizens; producing more nutritious and very sumptuous food for all citizens to eat; individuals living healthier, happier and more comfortable life; sound education and enlightenment among the populace; improved transportation and communication systems, scientific and technological advancement and gainful employment for all citizens”.

Initiating and sustaining a viable Entrepreneurship education for National Development through Educational Management

A model depicting the role of educational management in initiating and sustaining a viable entrepreneurship education for national development is shown in figure 1. As clearly indicated in the model, the roles of educational management in initiating and sustaining a viable entrepreneurship education include resource planning, resource organization, funding, staffing and inspecting or quality control. The educational inputs for a viable entrepreneurship education include human, material, physical and fiscal resources. The

human resources include the teaching and non-teaching staff, experienced artisans and other resource persons in the community. The material resources include the books and periodicals and audio-visual materials, while the physical resources embrace the available buildings in the institution such as classrooms, laboratories, technical workshops, libraries, administrative blocks, assembly halls and other physical facilities in the institution. The fiscal resources refer to the fund made available in the institution to administer the entrepreneurship education. The role of the school manager is to identify all these resources and unify them towards effective realization of the goals of entrepreneurship education.

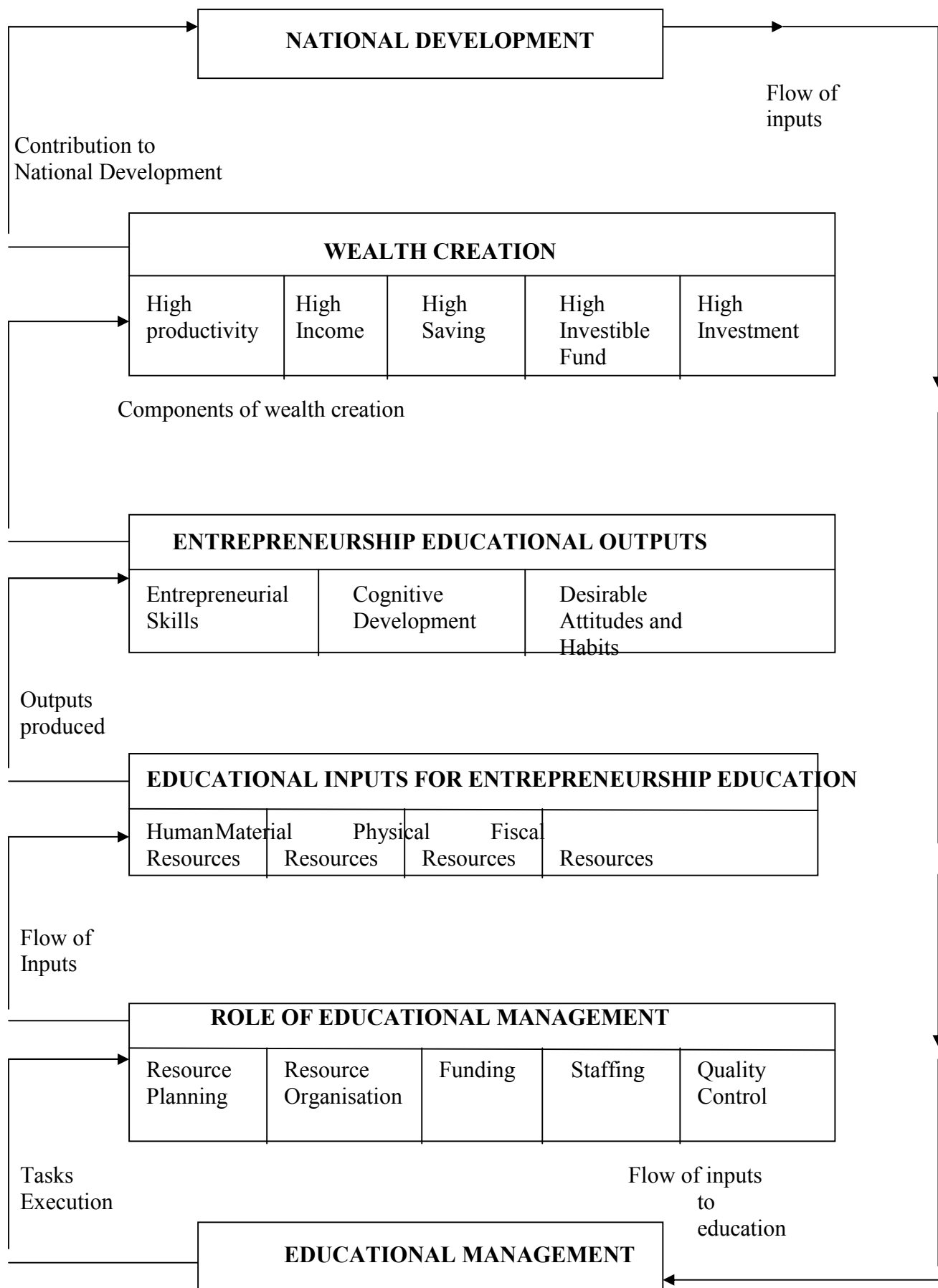


Figure 1: A Model of the Role of Educational Management in initiating and sustaining Entrepreneurship Education for National Development

As further indicated in figure 1, the expected viable entrepreneurship educational outputs include acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, proper cognitive development and well inculcated desirable attitudes and habits. All these will help the recipient on his mission to create wealth, by deciding on the small scale business to embark upon, by seeking initial financial assistance or loan from wealthy individuals, philanthropic organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, micro-finance banks or the government through the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). Gradually, he becomes a renowned entrepreneur and can procure more material inputs, and produce more products which he sells and acquires high income. With more income, his investible fund will increase and consequently invests more, which in turn brings about high productivity, thus creating a formidable wealth. It is a truism that this human resource development through a viable entrepreneurship education, contributes significantly to national development. Contributing to the importance of human resource development in national development, Mishra (2008) declared that “human resource development seeks to improve the performance abilities of the populace by strengthening their cognitive skills, manual dexterity and by inculcating appropriate attitudinal values”. Thus, a nation that aims at achieving a buoyant and efficient economy and rapid national development must improve the quality of her labour force through a viable entrepreneurship education.

The specific contributions of educational management to the initiation and sustenance of a viable entrepreneurship education for national development are aptly discussed as follows:

(1) Goal Setting and Resource Planning

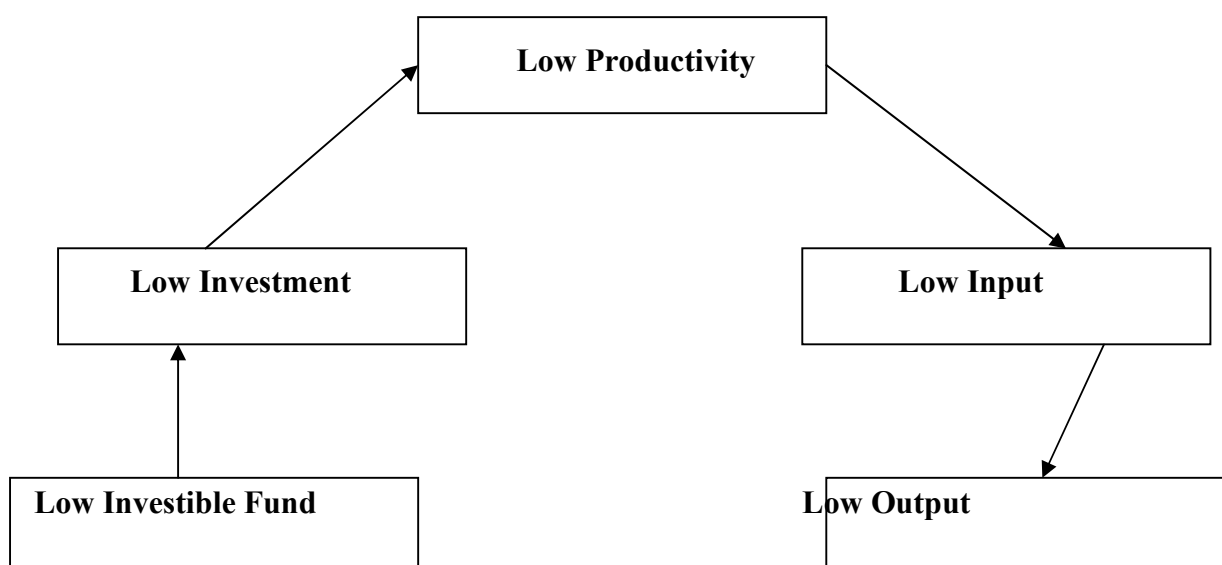
Good planning is a central factor required for initiating and sustaining viable entrepreneurship education for national development. Planning for viable entrepreneurship education entails deciding on what to be done, how and when to do it; when and who is to do it. Educational management contributes significantly to the initiation and sustenance of viable entrepreneurship education through realistic goal setting and effective resource planning by following these procedural steps.

(a) Formulating Realistic and Achievable Objectives of the Entrepreneurship

Education: The envisaged objectives of viable entrepreneurship education for national development are highlighted as follows:

- To acquire entrepreneurship skills as vital equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute meaningfully to the development of the society.
- To acquaint the individuals with the world of work and services of the community and cultivate in them a deep sense of respect for manual work.
- To inspire individuals to be actively involved in productive work, as they proceed from one level of education to another and earning some wages, while they are learning.
- To inculcate in the individuals positive attitude of team work and socially desirable values such as dignity of labour, regularity at work, co-operation, tolerance, helpfulness, sympathy, open-mindedness, commitment, responsibility and self-reliance.
- To provide opportunities for creative self-expression and acquisition of practical and applied skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.
- To break the vicious circle of poverty and economic stagnation in a nation that is beset with socio-economic vicissitudes and political resentment and upheavals.

The vicious circle of poverty and economic stagnation as illustrated in figure 2, becomes apparent in a nation that is experiencing low productivity in all economic spheres, due to low input. When there is low input, the output will be drastically reduced and this paves way to low income. The low income will definitely result to low investible fund and consequently low investment. This again will lead to low productivity.



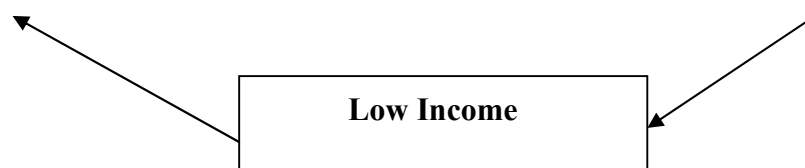


Figure 2: Vicious Circle of Poverty and Economic Stagnation

(b) Designing the Learning Programme or Curriculum: In order to achieve the lofty objectives of the viable entrepreneurship education for national development; educational management assists in designing its curriculum which is not only pragmatic in nature, but also has well built-in-job training programmes. The recipients of entrepreneurship education should be exposed to practical oriented programmes such as building construction, with special focus on bricklaying, roofing, painting and tile decoration. Others include motor mechanics, repair of electronic gadgets, metal works, panel beating, typewriting, hotel management, catering services, welding, computer data processing, telephone technology, irrigation technology to boost agricultural practices, baking, cloth weaving, mat weaving, bead making, photography, fashion design, barbing, textile works, goldsmithing and so on. The curriculum should be flexible enough so as to be able to meet the varying needs of the learners and their society. According to Aggarwal (1981) “all the knowledge a pupil gains in the school, all the cultures the pupil acquires in the school will be of no use, if he cannot make both ends meet when he enters life”.

(c) Determining the numbers of learners to cater for and consequent number of teaching and non-teaching staff required for the entrepreneurship education programmes, including the artisans and other resource persons in the community.

(d) Educational management also assists in resolving the location and design of the buildings needed for such a viable entrepreneurship education. Site selection constitutes an indispensable step in school-plant planning. Location of a suitable site for the entrepreneurship education programmes should be considered in connection with the following factors: accessibility, aesthetic values, topography and nature of the soil, safety from danger, freedom from health hazard, space for future expansion and availability of public utilities.

(e) Educational management also assists in mapping out strategies for sourcing for the required learning resources for entrepreneurship education. Learning resources according to Adeboyeje and Afolabi (1992) “are the instructional tools ranging from elementary improvised devices to highly complex and sophisticated machines specially designed to help teaches cope with specific teaching needs and situations”. In initiating and

sustaining viable entrepreneurship education, adequate provision must be made for learning resources such as concrete objects, verbal representations which include printed materials such as textbooks and workbooks, projected words on slides, transparencies and filmstrips designed to convey an idea, skill or attitude. Others include still pictures, motion pictures such as television, film and video-tape recordings and audio recordings made on magnetic tapes, discs or motion picture sound tracks. Provision must be made for programmed textbooks and instructional programmes prepared for teaching machines or computers. Prominent attention must be given to provision of graphic representations such as charts, graphs, cartoons, posters, globes, diagrams and drawings of things or events to convey an information, idea, skill or attitude.

(f) Educational management assists in identifying the strategies for evaluating the entrepreneurship education. This is the qualitative judgement or appraisal of attitudes, manipulative skills, personality traits, intelligence and other attributes of the learners. Also, to ascertain the extent to which the objectives of the entrepreneurship education have been accomplished.

(2) Organising viable Entrepreneurship Education:

Educational management plays prominent role in the organization of viable entrepreneurship education. Organisation is an administrative process which entails enrolling and placing the learners for viable entrepreneurship education programme; assigning staff that is teaching and non-teaching staff as well as the artisans and other resource persons in the community to specific tasks; designing the lecture time-table, purchasing needed materials and placing them in different positions as considered helpful for the realization of the goals set for the viable entrepreneurship education.

(3) Provision of Funds

One of the most crucial tasks of educational management in initiating and sustaining viable entrepreneurship education is the provision of sufficient fund for the programme. According to Ogunu (2000), “adequate financial input is crucial to the success of any system of education, because provision of facilities and equipment, payment of teaching and non-teaching personnel, procurement of materials and other needs is dependent upon availability of fund”. Therefore, to initiate and sustain entrepreneurship education for national development, adequate funds must be jointly provided by all stakeholders of education. These include the households, firms and other industrial establishments, philanthropists, religious organizations and all the tiers of government that is, Local, State and Federal.

(4) Staffing

The sustenance of viable entrepreneurship education for national development depends greatly upon the quality of the staff recruited for the programme, as well as the effectiveness with which they discharge individual and group responsibilities. Apart from obtaining and developing teachers for viable entrepreneurship education, the morale of the teachers must be maintained, through attractive incentives such as regular disbursement of their salaries and allowances, opportunities for advancement, provision of adequate working tools and aesthetic pleasing working environment.

(5) Quality Control

The ultimate goal of educational management is improvement of teaching and learning in schools. Thus sustenance of viable entrepreneurship education relies greatly on quality control. This entails the constant overseeing the work being performed by various groups or bodies handling entrepreneurship education programmes, stimulating or encouraging the groups or bodies, helping them to improve at their work; coordination of the different aspects of the work being performed by the members of the group. Thus, quality control in the entrepreneurship education is the extent to which the teachers and other resource persons including the artisans are motivated towards full attainment of the goals set for the entrepreneurship education.

Conclusion

As the nation looks on to education as an indispensable tool for meeting her economic, social, political, cultural, moral, scientific and technological needs which collectively contribute to national development, high priority should be accorded to the provision of a viable entrepreneurship education. As entrepreneurship education equips the individual with the necessary skills and attitudinal orientation needed to forge ahead in one's chosen career in life, as well as contributing meaningfully to the development of the nation. Thus, provision of a viable entrepreneurship education for national development will not only assist greatly in ameliorating the problem of unemployment among the school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions, but also minimize the various crimes often committed by Nigerian youths. Acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, through a viable entrepreneurship education helps an individual to become an effective entrepreneur who can properly coordinate other factors of production such as capital, land and labour, in order to make the best use of them in the creation of utilities, resources and wealth, which contribute significantly to national development.

Recommendations

It is a high level of self deceit preaching the gospel of self employment to the youth who had just left the secondary school or even University without any capital to fall back upon. It is equally self-deceit thinking that given the present economic situation globally, that a sum of twenty thousand naira would help any individual to settle down to any self-employed business or commercial project in any part of this country. It becomes highly imperative for the government to encourage the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Micro-Finance Banks, philanthropic organizations and Non-Governmental Organisations to provide the capital base needed for the take-off of small scale businesses by these school leavers who have received training in entrepreneurship.

There is inevitable need to include entrepreneurship education in the curriculum across disciplines in the tertiary institutions and senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Moreover, regular conferences, seminars and workshops should be organized by government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations and Managers and Directors of private firms and companies on entrepreneurship education to the unemployed youths, graduates and other workers in the public sector who may wish to set up their own business. Also, the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and Teaching Service Commission in all States, should be further strengthened and empowered in their monitoring and quality control functions to ensure that entrepreneurship education meets the needs, expectations, desires and aspirations of the students.

A viable entrepreneurship education for national development could be successfully accomplished, if the education system is effectively funded. The funding of education in Nigeria should be a collective responsibility of Federal, State and Local Governments, as well as the households, community and private sector. While the educational institutions should embark upon some profitable commercial ventures, for the purpose of generating additional revenue for meeting their critical needs.

As entrepreneurial skills are useful in Government establishment and parastatals, all tiers of Government, should widen their industrial base, diversify their economy and the productive sector to enable the absorption of school leavers into gainful employment. This approach will make education more pleasurable and meaningful to the youths.

The curricular at all levels of education in Nigeria should be more pragmatic and have built-in-job training programmes, which will enable individuals to acquire relevant entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment.

A viable entrepreneurship education can only be given, when the educational system is well supported with highly motivated professional teachers. The teaching service conditions must improve to prevent exodus of teachers to other countries and premature retirement from teaching profession. Moreover, the professional growth of the teachers should be accorded high priority, so as to boost their morale and motivate them to be more productive.

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