

ACHIEVING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT THROUGH REPOSITIONING ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

The overall goal of entrepreneurial education is to impart on students and our youths with the right attitudes, knowledge and skills to act in an entrepreneurial way. Thus, empowering and preparing them to thrive in the unstructured and uncertain nature of today's environment. This paper therefore, examines the importance of entrepreneurial education in achieving youth empowerment in Nigeria; the challenges facing entrepreneurial education in universities and prospects. The reasons for entrepreneurship education as well as strategies for designing entrepreneurship education are also discussed. This paper argues that entrepreneurial education should not only be addressed at tertiary level but incorporated at all levels of education for an all-encompassing model and in achieving desired goals and ensuring self-relevance among Nigerian youths.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneurship and Youth Empowerment

Introduction

Nigeria faces a number of challenges that can only be met if she has innovative, well-educated, and entrepreneurial citizens who, whatever their walks of life, have the spirit and inquisitiveness to think in new ways, and the courage to meet and adapt to the challenges facing them. At same time, given the current socio-economic and political stance of the country, a thriving economy would require a greater number of young people who are willing and able to become entrepreneurs; who can launch and successfully develop their own commercial or social ventures, and who will become innovators in the wider organisations in which they work.

It is a common experience that many graduates from the Nigerian universities find it difficult to get employment every year. This is partly due to the curricula of the universities and other tertiary institutions which lay emphasis on training for white-collar jobs (Osibanjo, 2006). The socio-economic situation in Nigeria poses serious threats and challenges to both government and wellbeing of citizens of the nation as a whole. The unemployment problems further call for different strategies and actions for it to be ameliorated. Entrepreneurship education has been embraced by almost all the developed countries and its capabilities and efficacy in springing up economies is not in doubt. It is believed that refocusing education system will immensely contribute in developing the spirit and culture of entrepreneurship in country.

Entrepreneurial education is essential not only to shape the mindsets of young people but also to provide the skills and knowledge that are central to developing an entrepreneurial culture. Entrepreneurship education provides students motivation, knowledge, and skills essential for launching a successful venture company (Cho, 1998). Developing mindsets, generic attributes and skills that are the foundations of entrepreneurship can be achieved through indoctrination from an early age; that is, if it is incorporated into the national educational system with the seriousness it deserves. Because education is key to shaping young people's attitudes, skills and culture, it is vital that entrepreneurial education is addressed from an early age and up into higher levels of education such as in the universities. Entrepreneurship education should be available to all college students regardless of major courses and choice of studies to enhance competitive advantage, not only for students but the societies and nations where they are involved. The relationship between education and development has been established, such that education is now internationally accepted as a key development index. The importance of education cannot be over-emphasized; it is a fundamental human right, hence, the need for incorporating entrepreneurship in the educational system. In line with the above, this paper is discussed under the following heading: conceptual framework, importance of entrepreneurial education, need for entrepreneurial education, rationale for fostering entrepreneurship and its achievements as well as problems for effective implementation of entrepreneurial education in Nigerian universities. Finally, the way forward was highlighted.

Conceptual Framework: what is Entrepreneurship and who is an entrepreneur?

The term entrepreneurship has a history that dates back to 1732, when the Irish economist Richard Cantillon used the word in reference to

individuals with "a willingness to carry out forms of arbitrage involving the financial risk of a new venture" (Minniti & Lévesque, 2008). Defining entrepreneurship is complex and there is no universal theory of it. Entrepreneurship has been defined by various professions to mean many things since the middle age (Igbo, 2006). However, the summary of what entrepreneurship means will reflect the individual's definer's point of view is (Oviawe, 2010). Drucker (1985) called entrepreneurship as an "innovative act, which includes endowing existing resources for new wealth-producing capacity." While this definition may seem plausible, many researchers argue that entrepreneurship as such is still a field with no clear boundaries and that it lacks a clear conceptual framework (Bruyat & Julien, 2001; Busenitz et al., 2003; Ireland & Webb, 2007; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Gartner (1985) described it as the "creation of a new organization." It is important to note, however, that entrepreneurship, a primary source of innovation, may involve the development of new visions and business methods for established companies as well as the creation of new organization.

According to Gana (2001), entrepreneurship is the ability to seek investment opportunities and establish an enterprise based on identified opportunities. The entrepreneur takes risks, is focused and energized by an inner drive. The ability to develop a new venture or apply a new approach to an old business is sole idea of entrepreneurship (Steinfiuff and Durges, 1993). In other words, the individual gives the market place a product or service by using resources. According to Gana (2001), entrepreneurship is the ability to seek investment opportunities and establish an enterprise based on identified opportunities. The entrepreneur takes risks, is focused and energized by an inner drive. The ability to develop a new venture or apply a new approach to an old business is sole idea of entrepreneurship (Steinfiuff and Durges, 1993). In other words, the individual gives the market place a product or service by using resources. Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully (Inegbebebor, 1987). The entrepreneur is essentially a person who owns or controls a business through which income is gained. National Directorate of Employment (NDE) (1989) in Onyebueke and Ochonogo (2002) defined entrepreneurship as the art which involves recognizing a business opportunity, mobilizing resources and persisting to exploit that opportunity in a new way. Esomonu (1998) defined entrepreneurship as the effective manipulation of human intelligence as demonstrated in a creative performance. This singular risk taking act leads an individual to create something of value from practically nothing.

On the other hand, the active form of entrepreneur, "entreprendre", can be translated as "to undertake or start something". Researchers and "economists such as Kirzner (1973, 1997) and, Baumol (1990,2002) are

among the most influential contributors to our understanding of entrepreneurial behaviour..." (Minniti & Levesque, 2008). The entrepreneur has been seen as an actor, innovator or a developer of technology. In general terms an entrepreneur is described as "one who organises, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise" (Woolf, 1980). Carnier, (1996) sees the entrepreneur as the centre of an integrated model of economic development, incorporating a theory of profit and interest, as well as a theory of the business cycle and the capitalist system. The entrepreneur is an innovator, one who carries a combination of the following: the introduction of a new product; the opening of a new market; the conquest of new sources of materials; and the organization of new industry. According to Morrison's (1999) study, the profile of an entrepreneur is one who: (1) is intelligent and analytical, (2) is an effective risk manager and a networker, (3) possesses a strong set of moral, social and business ethics, (4) exhibits a basic trader's instinct, and (5) is dedicated to life-long learning in many forms. The talents included in Morrison's definition are important requirements for becoming successful entrepreneurs in the knowledge era. Furthermore, Anayakoha (2006) described an entrepreneur as one who chooses or assumes risks, identifies business opportunity, gathers resources, initiates actions and establishes an organization or enterprise to meet such demand or market opportunity.

Watson, Hogarth-Scott and Wilson's (1998) and Morrison's (1999) studies also contend that entrepreneurial spirit needs appropriate social and cultural background to initiate motives for venture creation and aspiration for excellence in various academic areas in order to create successful venture. Lee and Peterson (2000) state that even those individuals who are motivated by such factors as financial rewards, achievement, social, career, and individual fulfillment need a national culture that supports and encourages entrepreneurial activity. Watson et al. (1998), Morrison (1999), and Lee and Peterson (2000) agree that great entrepreneurs do not grow by themselves, but that they are products of entrepreneurship-oriented societies and cultures.

Shane & Venkataraman (2000) proposed three major sets of research questions: "(1) why, when, and how opportunities for the creation of goods and services come into existence; (2) why, when and how some people and not others discover and exploit these opportunities; and (3) why, when and how different modes of action are used to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities" (Shane et al., 2000).

More recently, The 2008 European Commission Report entitled 'Entrepreneurship in higher education, especially within non- business studies' favours the following definition:

"Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability

to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports everyone in day-to-day life at home and in society, makes employees more aware of the context of their work and better able to seize opportunities, and provides a foundation for entrepreneurs establishing a social or commercial activity”.

The same report also has: “Entrepreneurial programmes and modules [which offer] students the tools to think creatively, be an effective problem-solver, analyse a business idea objectively, and communicate, network, lead, and evaluate any given project. Students feel more confident about setting up their own business as they can now test their own business ideas in an educational, supportive environment” (p10-11 European Commission - Entrepreneurship in higher education, especially within non-business studies – Final Report of the Expert Group, March 2008). Furthermore, it can be postulated that the growing importance of entrepreneurial imagination is born by the need to embrace change as an opportunity in terms of way of thinking, identifying an opportunity, realizing that opportunity and taking it up with positive mindset.

What is Entrepreneurial Education?

Schumpeter, who was, perhaps, the first major economist to analyze the role of entrepreneurship in economic development argued that "to study the entrepreneur is to study the central figure in modern economic history." He attributed innovation to the entrepreneur. Sequel to his argument that there is need for entrepreneurship education many social scientists have come up with many definitions. For instance, it can be defined: "... as any pedagogical programme or process of education for entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, which involves developing certain personal qualities. It is therefore not exclusively focused on the immediate creation of new businesses." (Fayolle , Kyrö & Ulijn, 2006: 702).

Also, Alberti, Sciascia and Poli (2004) define 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. Another view of entrepreneurship education is the term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities (Omolayo, 2006).

However, entrepreneurship education should not be confused with general business and economic studies; its goal is to promote creativity, innovation and self-employment, and may include the following elements: developing personal attributes and skills that form the basis of an entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour (creativity, sense of initiative, risk-taking, autonomy, self-confidence, leadership, team spirit, etc.), raising the

awareness of students about self-employment and entrepreneurship as possible career options, working on concrete enterprise projects and activities; and providing specific business skills and knowledge of how to start a company and run it successfully.

Furthermore, current thinking views entrepreneurship education as having three roles, depending on the context:

1) Knowledge about entrepreneurship as a concept - to learn to understand entrepreneurship, 2) Entrepreneurial skills and competencies development - to learn to become an entrepreneur, 3) Knowledge and entrepreneurial skills pertaining to business start-up and new venture creation - to learn to become an entrepreneur (Bridge, Hegarty& Porter 2010).

However, the extent to which a graduate can be expected to become more enterprising as a result of their entrepreneurship education will inevitably vary from person to person. It depends on the extent to which they demonstrate some, or all of, the following; personal skills, attributes, behavioural and motivational capacities which can be used in any context (social, work, leisure etc). Prominent among these are: intuitive decision-making, capacity to make things happen autonomously, networking, initiative taking, opportunity identification, creative problem-solving, strategic thinking, self-efficacy, ability to cope with ambiguity) and having empathy with entrepreneurial ways of doing, thinking, feeling, communicating, organizing and learning.

Overall, entrepreneurial orientation is the development of entrepreneurial skills, effective and efficient application of the skills in management of business to create a significant difference from other business, recognizing the skill and allowing it to function effectively.

The Importance of Entrepreneurial Education and impacts on youth empowerment

The economic importance of the entrepreneur in world history has been recognized for several decades. Entrepreneurship is a key driver of our economy. Wealth and a high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneurially minded individuals, many of whom go on to create big businesses. People exposed to entrepreneurship frequently express that they have more opportunity to exercise creative freedoms, higher self esteem, and an overall greater sense of control over their own lives. As a result, many experienced business people political leaders, economists, and educators believe that fostering a robust entrepreneurial culture will maximize individual and collective economic and social success on a local, national, and global scale. Given this, it is important to prepare youth and adults to succeed in an entrepreneurial economy.

Entrepreneurship education should be a lifelong learning process, starting as early as elementary school and progressing through all levels of education, including adult education. In this way, youths will have progressively more challenging educational activities; experiences that will enable them to develop the insight needed to discover and create entrepreneurial opportunities; and the expertise to successfully start and manage their own businesses to take advantage of these opportunities.

Entrepreneurial activity and the resultant financial gain are always of benefit to a country. Therefore having entrepreneurial skills will enable one recognise a genuine opportunity when it comes across. Entrepreneurial skills and attitudes provide benefits to society, even beyond their application to business activity. Obviously speaking, personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship, such as creativity and a spirit of initiative, can be useful to everyone, in their working responsibilities and in their daily existence.

Need for Entrepreneurial Education for Youth Empowerment

Youth unemployment in Nigeria has been increasing because most graduates seem to lack relevant marketable skills. The Federal government recently acknowledged that about 80 percent of Nigeria's youth are unemployed while 10 percent are underemployed (Salami, 2013). According to the National Bureau of statistics (2010) the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2009 showed that unemployed persons constituted 31.1%, 13.6% in 2001, 12.6% in 2002, 13.4% in 2004, 13.7% in 2006, 14.9% in 2008, and 19.7% in 2009. With respect to age group, education and sex NBS (2010) data showed that persons aged between 15 and 24 years had 41.6% unemployed. For persons between 25 and 44 years, 17% were unemployed. For persons with primary education 14.8% were unemployed while those with post secondary education had 21.3% unemployed.

Nigeria had a population of 164.38 million in 2011. Out of this figure the labour force stood at 67.25million out of which 51.18 million were employed and 16.07 million unemployed. Unemployment has become a major problem for Nigeria (Salami, 2013). Salami (2013) noted that, with an unemployment ratio of 23.9 percent of the total population, over 38 million Nigerians are unemployed. Of the workforce, it means that 16 million are unemployed. Furthermore, the National Bureau of Statistics (2010) report show that approximately 112.5 million (68%) out of 164 million Nigerians live in relative poverty conditions.

Given this gloomy unemployment picture, one way to empower the youth is to provide them with adequate and qualitative education in order to make them job creators and eradicate poverty. What informs quality is basically in its usability and in earning a living. Education in general is

confirmed to have a positive impact on entrepreneurship (Robinson & Sexton, 1994). They found in their study that there is a strong relationship between education and the probability of becoming an entrepreneur and the probability of having success as an entrepreneur.

Furthermore, entrepreneurship is not just skill acquisition for acquisition sake. It is an acquisition of skills and ideas for the sake of creating employment for ones-self and also for others. Entrepreneurship leads to the development of small, medium and sometimes large scale businesses based on creativity and innovation. The success of these businesses in turn helps in developing the nation. It also reduces poverty rate with visible increment of employment rate among the youths (Oviawe, 2010). He highlighted the following as benefits: provides practical applications for students. It can be used to inculcate innovation spirit, targeted at the youths, create avenues for people to: manage innovations; manage entrepreneurial process; and develop their potentials as managers of creativity in given fields, boosts job creation and crime reduction. Hence, if entrepreneurial programmes is well planned and properly executed it will ensure that the issue of youth self-employment and job creation will increase. Also, menaces usually visible due to youth unemployment and restiveness will be highly reduced.

Rationale for repositioning entrepreneurship education in Nigerian schools

The history of Nigerian education system could be traced back to the colonial period the educational policy then was geared towards serving the interest of the colonial masters in term of supply of manpower for their effective administration of Nigeria colony and protectorates (Aladekomo, 2004). The policy was aimed at producing Nigerians who can read and write to hold certain positions such as clerks and interpreters without any entrepreneurial or professional skill to stand on their own or even establish and manage their own venture.

The Nigeria industrial policy that came immediately after independence placed emphasis and concentrated attention on the establishment of big companies and completely neglecting the development of small scale sectors (Aladekomo, 2004). This neglect invariably hampered entrepreneurship at the micro level in Nigeria at the very beginning, which is consider to be a very essential for economic growth and development. During that period there was an over pressing demand for white collar job for majority of graduates, an upshot of colonial educational policies.

As the government perceived the importance of small scale industries to the economy, attention on small and medium sector increased. This in turn prompted the need for the support of entrepreneurs activities in the small and

median industries in the country. As a result, Nigeria Industrial Bank (NIB), Nigeria Bank for Commerce and Industries (NBCI), Nigeria Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) were set up to encourage entrepreneurship. This boosted entrepreneurial activities in the country.

However, the Nigerian education is at a crossroad as far as producing individuals who will work to deserve and justify their pay, work independently, globally and bring creativity into their work place. For example, the result of a three week large scale, rapid national survey in 2004 jointly sponsored by NUC and Education Trust Fund (ETF) to determine the needs of the labour market that Nigerian university graduates are failing to meet revealed that of 100 individuals and 20 organizations visited, 44 percent rated Nigerian science graduates as average in competence, 56 percent rated them as average in innovation, 50 percent rated them average in rational judgment, 63 percent as average in leadership skills, 44 percent as average in creativity. On needed skills like literacy, oral communication, information technology, entrepreneurial, analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making 60 percent rated them as poor. This view of Nigerian graduates further explains why there has been an increase in unemployment rate (Oviawe, 2010).

Hence, given the growing number of students coming out from various institutions into labour market and the increasing unemployment rate, the government was worried and needed to take measures to rectify the situation. In an attempt to ascertain the way forward and in response to the socio-economic problems of the country, questions were raised by government and policy-makers as to what the right education for Nigeria was and what kind of education may be suitable in propelling development in the country.

In order to ameliorate the persistent socio-economic problem especially unemployment among youths and high incidence of poverty in the country, the need for entrepreneurship education arose. Calls for reorientation among students and their teachers to ensure debunking and unlearning the earlier belief of being employed rather than self employment after schooling.

The government is expected to play a greater role in providing the necessary atmosphere and policy framework for the success of this transformation process. This will ensure that while students are in school they acquire the necessary skills and training to identify an exploitable opportunity and eventually endeavor into venture creation.

Sagagi (2007) stated that “fostering an environment that encourages entrepreneurs to invest in technology and new activities is critical to the required economic growth in Nigeria. The task ahead is not the sole domain of the federal government. Entrepreneurship educators/trainers could

significantly contribute in the change process”. The government can only perform its economic function by making sure that the rate of unemployment in the country is drastically reduced but that cannot be achieved through providing employment to all or teeming number of all employable into its institutions or agencies.

Hence, developing entrepreneurship is a means of providing employment and a powerful weapon of fighting poverty in the country. The key to transforming Nigeria’s strong natural resources advantage is the creation of an appropriate human resource space through education. This appropriate human capital or resource space is the ideal educational environment for producing individuals with a mindset of self-reliant, creativity and high productivity ready to cope with the 21st century world of work (Aliu, 2007).

It is against this backdrop that the need to redefine and refocus the current system of education with a view to creating and enhancing the supply of entrepreneurship initiatives and activities arose (Akpomi 2008; Adejimola and Olunfunmilayo, 2009). It is expected that our educational institutions will become centres for inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship rather than the spirit of passing exam to get white collar jobs.

Highlights of achievements on fostering entrepreneurial education in Nigeria

Stimulating the processes of enhancing economic growth and youth empowerment through boosting entrepreneurship education among the citizenry is not entirely a new phenomenon in Nigeria. Several institutions and government agencies have been engaged in different aspects of fostering entrepreneurship in Nigeria since the seventies.

Nigeria evolved the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which is described as a home grown medium term development and poverty reduction plan. NEEDS rests on four key pillars one of which is “Growing the Private Sector”. Under NEEDS, the private sector is positioned as the engine of growth of the economy. It is in this context that Nigerian Universities under the aegis of the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) committed themselves to produce entrepreneurial graduates for the stimulation of private sector growth in Nigeria (NUC, 2004).

Through NEEDS therefore the education and training of entrepreneurs in Nigeria became a national agenda. Before NEEDS however, the National University Commission had incorporated entrepreneurial development as a compulsory course to be taught in undergraduate programmes of administration and management under its approved minimum academic standards for Nigerian Universities (NUC, 1989). The aim of the

Commission was to have a curriculum that will “encourage self reliance in the individual and of the nation” (p.1).

In a quest to harness, inculcate and develop the entrepreneurial career of the younger generations and also improve their potential toward entrepreneurial skills, the need to incorporate entrepreneurial education in the system was born. Hence, the mandatory entrepreneurship education programme for undergraduate students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria by government. That is, the creation of a curriculum that is all encompassing in developing the spirit and culture of entrepreneurship in the youth through educational programmes in universities and other institutions of higher learning.

Furthermore, the Centre for Management Development whose mandate included entrepreneurship development (Williams, 2003) attempted to develop a model to facilitate the identification, selection and training of potential entrepreneurs. Institutions such as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the defunct Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) and the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (NBCI) and the Nigerian Youth Service Corps (NYSC) have had programmes for entrepreneurship development.

However, some of these efforts have almost always been short-lived and have had minimal impact on the Nigerian economy. According to Ekpeyong (2007) the delivery of entrepreneurship development programmes in Nigeria is poor as “... a variety of teachers are hurriedly assembled and given materials also hurriedly written...”. The period of training is often inadequate and follow-up activities are neglected.

In order to ensure effectiveness of entrepreneurial education, these programs should leverage on the culture of high-tech entrepreneurship to help students become entrepreneurs, and enable them learn what they need to develop ideas into successful businesses, and how to increase entrepreneurial opportunities in their nation, institutions, and state. The training material should introduce students to technology transfer system, entrepreneurial educational programs, and entrepreneurial network.

Through lectures by faculty members and experience in practical entrepreneurship endeavour, visits to start-ups, and live case studies with successful entrepreneurs, students will be exposed to the content, context, and contacts that enable entrepreneurs to design and launch successful new ventures. Specially designed team projects give students hands-on, practical experience developing a business plan, while networking events bring them together with members of nation’s entrepreneurial community.

Entrepreneurial education should be implemented at all levels. As such schools should be seen not only centers for knowledge creation and acquisition but also centers for human empowerment and development

through entrepreneurial skill acquisition and training. This will greatly assist in changing the psyche of our youths from studying to get certificates and work, to thinking of coming to school to acquire entrepreneurial skill and to work for themselves.

Problems associated with fostering Entrepreneurial Education in Nigerian Universities

The introduction of entrepreneurship education as a compulsory course in the Nigerian universities was so as to address the problem of graduate unemployment and strategically position the economy for leadership in Africa. However, for the effectiveness of this policy it is recommended that the Nigerian ecosystem be harnessed before meaningful entrepreneurship development can take place (Adejimola & Olufunmilayo, 2009).

Despite the compulsory entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, many graduates still remain unemployed for a long time after graduation. The entrepreneurship education delivered to undergraduates seems not to be meeting the aims and the objectives for the compulsory course. The content and management of the course seems to be porous. The purpose of establishing the entrepreneurship course seems to be defeated. (Ifedili & Ofoegbu, 2011).

There is need to find out the problems with the programme and how it can be managed and delivered so as to meet its goals and objectives. There are many challenges facing Nigerian universities which need to be discussed and addressed if entrepreneurship education is expected to attain the desired goals in the country. Inegbenebor (2005) categorized some of these challenges as follows: i) The wage-earner culture of students: The current dominant culture is a wage-earner culture. In many ways, the socio-cultural environment does not favour entrepreneurship given the collectivist values of the society. There is a need therefore for entrepreneurship education to have a significant promotional content to stimulate and sustain the interest of students in the programme. ii) Ignorance of university administration on value of entrepreneurial education: Many university administrators are largely ignorant of the value and potential of entrepreneurship education in national competitiveness and development. Entrepreneurship education in such institutions may not have the level of support that it needs to gain acceptance among students and staff.

iii) What to teach and to who: It is important to study the entrepreneurship educational needs of students, the community and society when designing entrepreneurship programmes so as to understand "what to teach and to whom". The question of who is the target for entrepreneurial education is important because while everybody can benefit from

entrepreneurship education, the constraints of large class size for teaching effectiveness makes it imperative for this question to be addressed. iv) Who is to teach entrepreneurship: teaching entrepreneurship requires special training and experience. Hence, there is need to build capacity in this area for it to have meaningful results. One technique that can be useful in improving of teachers' entrepreneurship to encourage the educational institution involved is to share resources, knowledge and experience in this area through seminars, conferences and workshops. v) Lack of teaching Materials: There is a dearth of teaching materials especially case materials that are suitable for teaching entrepreneurship in Nigerian Universities. It is suggested that entrepreneurship teachers in the various institutions should embark on producing real cases, projects of entrepreneurs, and exercises that are suitable for experiential learning among students. vii) Un-co-ordinated and weak institutional support for entrepreneurship education: Government and policy-makers responsible for entrepreneurship development has not started to address the problem of entrepreneurship education at all levels of the educational system. It is important to note that the stimulation and sustenance of entrepreneurship education and small business management training can be traced to carefully articulated government policy and funding.

Ways of ensuring effective and efficient entrepreneurial education in our schools

Addressing some of the issues concerning the practicability of entrepreneurial education in Nigerian universities requires; curriculum review, sensitization and mobilization of institutional support for entrepreneurship education, programme focus and funding together with the political will and stability of the government should be provided for entrepreneurship culture and development (Adejimola & Olufunmilayo, 2009).

i) Curriculum review: Effective entrepreneurial education requires nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit from early ages, and continuing it right through all educational levels must be recognized. The current education curriculum needs to be more extensive so as to accommodate entrepreneurship at all levels of education.

At each level of education, it is reasonable to expect different outcomes as students mature and build on previous knowledge. Entrepreneurship education means many different things to educators - from primary schools to university, from vocational education to a university MBA. But the overall purpose remains to develop expertise as an entrepreneur.

For example, at earlier stages of education, entrepreneurship should be infused in classes where it provides the context for learning other basic

skills and motivating students to want to learn. In the more advanced grades it may become a separate course supporting the outcomes of the higher levels of the lifelong learning model.

ii) Sensitization: Also, it is important to sensitize the public and educators on the need for entrepreneurial education. Moreover, it is necessary that university administration are well educated on entrepreneurship education. The National Universities Commission (NUC) should organize seminars, workshops and campaigns with the aim of enhancing the knowledge of university administrators, the public and students in this area. Hence, there is need for orientation of both students and university administrators.

iii) Programme focus: Educators are challenged with designing effective learning opportunities for entrepreneurship students. Sexton and Upton (1984) suggested that programs for entrepreneurship students should emphasize individual activities over group activities, be relatively unstructured, and present problems that require a “novel solution under conditions of ambiguity and risk.” Students must be prepared to thrive in the “unstructured and uncertain nature of entrepreneurial environments” (Ronstadt, 1990).

iv) Mobilization of institutional support for entrepreneurship education: Government and its agencies responsible for entrepreneurship development should start addressing the problem of entrepreneurship education at all levels of the educational system. The stimulation and sustenance of entrepreneurship education and small business management training can be traced to carefully articulated government policy and funding.

v) Funding: Agencies such as the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDA) needs to address this issue with the aim of providing funds to the universities and other institution for entrepreneurship education.

Prospects of promoting entrepreneurial education among the youths

To stimulate rapid economic development especially in a developing country such as Nigeria, it is important to focus on preparing the entrepreneurs who would start new businesses or expand existing ones. Entrepreneurs have a great diversity of personal characteristics, the common one: being willing to take a risk in return for a profit. Although there is no educational degree requirement to become an entrepreneur, it is helpful to have developed good support skills including communications, interpersonal abilities, economic understanding, digital skills, marketing, management, and math/finance skills.

It is also important to note that entrepreneurship is not learned by reading a textbook and then taking a test to prove you are one. The youth can build confidence in their abilities to become entrepreneurs in their future as a result of a variety of entrepreneurial activities provided throughout education. Entrepreneurship education activities are a real-life vehicle for developing academic skills. Entrepreneurship education opportunities are important at all levels of education, from experiences for elementary school children through skill development for existing entrepreneurs.

The way forward

Effective and efficient entrepreneurial education for better results in Nigerian universities: -

a) There should be regular seminars, workshops and conferences for staff, students and the general public to strengthen and refocus on entrepreneurial education. Strengthening research and capacity of researchers into evidence based researches will promote participatory methods. This will encourage synergy among government, private sectors and the general public on the need for encouraging and developing entrepreneurial spirits among students.

b) Educational planners and administrators need to ensure that class sizes are broken down into manageable size. By so doing learners are better supervised on their practicals and results become more achievable.

c) Continuous assessment should be properly administered to students without failure and monitored by trained professionals. There should be adequate provision of infrastructural facilities. Instructional materials should be adequate and in good condition.

f) Only well informed lecturers should be employed to teach and head entrepreneurial centers recently approved by NUC on university campuses. Government should in addition encourage private bodies to establish good study centers with well qualified personnels to educate and train the prospective entrepreneurs in the country.

g) Government should increase the budget for the implementation of this government policy on mandatory entrepreneurship education and the budgeted sum should be released in order to actualize the purpose of the funding.

h) Youths should be introduced to entrepreneurial activities at their early stage to enable them grow alongside with it in and out-of-school programmes. Government should incorporate practical/field training scheme in the existing mandatory entrepreneurship curriculum of tertiary institutions.

j) Entrepreneurship subjects should be introduced as one of the compulsory subjects in all secondary schools in the country. Through this

methods students who transcend into university level would have become conversant with the tenets of entrepreneurial demands.

k) Entrepreneurship lectures, teachers/trainers should periodically be retrained and encouraged in the area of research to update their skills in order to be relevant in today's era of dynamic and globalized environment.

Conclusion

As Nigeria moves forward it is important to reflect on the great contributions that entrepreneurs have made to the development of world economy. Where would we be without the persistence and creativity of such notable entrepreneurs as Henry Ford, Bill Gates, and Joe Dudley? Nigeria may be known as a resource-rich nation endowed with oil, but our true wealth lies in our people, especially our young people. Only by unlocking the potential of this treasure - by giving them a chance to work or to create their own jobs - will we finally achieve the prosperity that our resources have so far failed to bring to our continent. Finding opportunities for young people is a critical challenge for a nation where 78.8 million (2011) youths aged between (15 and 24) were unemployed (Eroko, 2012). With no signs that population growth will slow in the decades to come, it is imperative that Nigeria leverage the talent and energy of its youth to create dramatically higher levels of prosperity and equality and avoid the latent risks of unemployment and social instability.

To decisively reorient Nigeria toward increasing success, equity, and stability, we must fully empower the nation's greatest untapped resource - its youth. Providing access to entrepreneurial opportunities and experiences will ensure that all young people have the opportunity to develop their talent and realize their dreams. Ultimately, youth empowerment through entrepreneurial education is the door to equipping the nation's active population with the necessary skills to survive in today's uncertain environment.

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