ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A CONDUIT FOR SELF-RELIANCE, EMPLOYABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN POST MILLENIUM NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

This paper examines entrepreneurship education as a way of exposing students to the knowledge of various skills and businesses while in school so that after graduation they become self-reliant rather than job seekers. The paper discussed the concept of sustainable national development packages in Nigeria, the analysis of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, entrepreneurship as a supplier of goods and services and unemployment. The paper conclude that enhanced sustainable national development, self-reliance and employment in post millennium Nigeria can be achieved through active entrepreneurial endeavors in one form of economic activities or the other. The paper recommends that the entrepreneurship education should be integrated into the school curriculum from elementary school to post-secondary education. The method of teaching and facilities should be upgraded to deliver the entrepreneurial educational experience and the young youths should be ready to imbibe entrepreneurship culture at school and when they are out of school as a possible solution to reduce unemployment.

Key words: Entrepreneurship Education, Self-reliant and Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education is that type of education tailored towards instilling and inculcating entrepreneurial spirit, self-reliant mindset and deepening student’s awareness of limitless business ideas and opportunities within and around their environment. Some well meaning Nigerians have the initiative to start new business but lacks the skills, tools, entrepreneurial spirit and support to succeed. To this end, Okeke (2000) argued that corruption, economic instability and lack of infrastructural and management capacity have also combined to stifle new business growth. On this account, Nigeria has experienced such grinding poverty that many of its youth today are out of school, into various artisan and apprenticeship jobs and hawking around major street to make ends meet.

However, it must be noted that, Nigeria as a nation is blessed with abundant human and natural resources that could position her as a world economic leader, yet poverty is ravaging her citizenry (Ijewere, 1999). Sad enough many Nigerians remained unemployed because they were not taught the culture of self-employment and thus they go roaming the streets seeking for white collar jobs upon graduation from school. The excessive emphasis on certificate qualification has invariably given rise to the student's syndrome of adopting unwholesome strategies for cheap grades and at the same time disregarding skill acquisition that could have cushions them in some alternative self-
employable business ventures. For this and other reasons, Nigeria appears to be incapable of solving her economic and social problems. It is against this background that this paper examined the following sub-topics: the sustainable National development packages in Nigeria, the analysis of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, entrepreneurship as a supplier of goods and services, unemployment.

**Sustainable National Development**

Sustainable national development comprises any strategic approach that helps to maintain development on a steady state for the future. It involves the indigenous use of non-renewable resources which the present and the future generations can make use of at the moment. Sustainable national development is one that assures that a nation, society or the individual is on a steady-ship of sustainable livelihood with the ability to create job, provide basic products and services, generate national income and enhance the purchasing power of the economy (Omesi, 2012). Sustainable national development that does not incorporate the development of competent auto-mechanics, truck drivers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, electronics and computer operators, database, medical technicians, nursing assistants, shoe cobblers, hair dressers, salons and graduates is not entrepreneurially based. When the above in the economy are developed to a large extent, there would be an overall national development in the country. Sustainable development is not all about the protection of the environment but it centers on how we can make good use of the available natural resources and spare some for future use. This entails the elimination of poverty and environmental hazard or degradation in order to make improvement in human welfare.

**Sustainable National Development Packages In Nigeria**

Sustainable national development packages in Nigeria has been packaged in various programmes of the government starting with operation feed the nation (OFN) of 1970, Green Revolution of 1980, Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure of 1986 (DEFFRI), National Directorate of Employment (NDE) of 1986, Family Economic Advancement Programmes (FEAP) and of the recent National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS). The above programmes were articulated to train, finance, guide and provide rural communities with road, water, electricity self help rural development programmes, skill acquisition and credit facilities for the unemployed but the implementation of the programmes stand out as a problem to sustainable national development in Nigeria (Barnes, 2010; Enu, 2010; Eno-Obong, 2012; Agbaeze 2007; Ure and Piret, 2006).

**Unemployment**

Unemployment is a major economic virus militating against the economy and well being of many Nigerians in recent times. These have resulted in increasing agitation from citizens, therefore, increasing insecurity in such countries. Zakaria (2006) and Ajufo (2013) support this by stating that the unavailability of job opportunity among youth, especially graduates has been identified as one of the major factors responsible for Youth restiveness and other social vices including prostitution, arm robbery, destitution and political thuggery. Armed robbery and stealing are some of the most glaring manifestation of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria and other developing and
underdeveloped nation today. The armed groups and conflict in Nigeria (AAPW) (2005) described robbery as being Nigerian's "fastest growing scourge". This negative phenomenon is mostly experienced in most country's commercial cities across the West Africa sub-region and beyond. In Lagos, Delta, Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers State in Nigeria, Kumasi and Temali in Ghana, Younde and Tokorandi in Cameron, to mention but a few.

The Role Of Entrepreneurs And Their Act Of Entrepreneurship

The entrepreneur is the person who kicks start business enterprise by mobilizing the available factors of production. He/she put new forms of industry on their feet: shoulders the impact of risks, uncertainty and other inevitable contingencies emanating from the business ventures. An entrepreneur is an individual with the right motivation: energy and managerial ability to build up a venture by his/her own efforts. This explains why Ginzberg (1934) posited that Adam Smith the 1st century philosopher and economist made a role distinction between the entrepreneurs, who manages his/her own capital and receives a profit and the inactive capitalist who receives interest. According to Afonja (1996), the entrepreneur is in his/her role the centre of an integrated model of economic development, which incorporated a theory of profit and interest as well as the theory of the business cycle and the capitalized system.

From this point of view, the entrepreneur is an innovator who carries a combination of the following roles: the introduction of a new product, the opening of a new market, the conquest of new sources of materials and the organization of a new industry. He/she is a pacesetter, an investor, a risk bearer who crafts strategies. He/she performs pioneering roles in an organization. The outcome of the entrepreneur’s input or effect is as a result of his/her entrepreneurship. In line with this, the World Bank (1996) asserted that entrepreneurship seek to discover how best the graduates can convert their education to productive ventures. Most scientific technological and socio-economic development of many nations is essentially dependent on entrepreneur education.

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is that type of education tailored towards producing a self-reliant or self-employed person. It is aimed at instilling into the learner trait such as: innovativeness, ingenuity, resourcefulness, and endurance. The enduring disposition will consistently regulate the learner's choice of action. This implies that the test of possession of entrepreneurial skill is measured or quantified in the quality of decisions made by the recipient of entrepreneurship education when confronted with the challenges arising from the business ventures.

Entrepreneurship education is meant to enable the Nigerian youth overcome the problem of unemployment and business challenges. This must have been the reason why the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2004) stated in her National Policy on Education that one of the goals of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) is to give training and impart the necessary skills to the individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.

Interpretatively, entrepreneurship education is to prepare students to lead rather than following, to operated within a global parameter rather than within a parochial perspective; to exhibit and uphold basic values rather than hoping for the fast buck; to add role to the market place and invest in innovation, technology and human resources.
that offer long-term solutions rather than being seduced by quick fixes and initiative practices (Marchigiano Monraoy, 1991). Entrepreneur education has a multi-disciplinary focus which includes technological, sociological and psychological perspectives.

Entrepreneurship education is not new in Nigeria. It has earlier on been stated that Nigeria’s philosophy of education is geared towards educating her citizens for self-reliance (FRN), 2004). The critical problem is that Entrepreneurship education has not been redressed as it ought to, in most disciplines at the tertiary education level. The students are still interested in their certificates and grade levels of pass. Similarly, Abiogu (2004) stated that teachers are treated like Fulani cattle, where the herdsman decides what grass the cattle must feed on irrespective of whether the cattle like the taste of the grass or not. Be that as it may, the tertiary institutions are busy pushing out their graduates only to join the band-wagon that languish away in the reservoir of unemployed at the twilight of Nigeria epileptic economy and socio-political comersault. Therefore, it is the logic of this paper that Entrepreneurship education is a necessary condition for socio-economic and industrial development of Nigeria. This is a possible practical option by Nigeria education industry can create employment for its masses.

Entrepreneurship As A Supplier Of Goods And Services

Entrepreneurs serve as suppliers to other enterprises and bigger organization, factories or industries. These may include farm produce such as; cocoa for food and beverage manufacturing industries, rubber for plastic and applied product industries, cassava and yam for chips, flour and other allied products industries etc.

The supply of such products to bigger factories and organization brings economic power to the entrepreneur, self fulfillment, it nurtures indigenous raw materials, it helps in resources utilization, it leads to creation of employment reduces unemployment and eradicates poverty. Thus, Entrepreneurial education enable recipients live a meaningful and fulfilling life and contribute to national development (Gibb, 2002, Agweda and Abumere, 2008). Entrepreneurship education aids the acquisition of team-building skills critical for both small-scale business and large-scale business.

Entrepreneurship education is useful for national security by creating career opportunities as identified by Okekeani (2008) cited by Akiri (2011), Anho (2013):

- Agriculture crop production
- Animal husbandry
- Barbing
- Beauty care
- Coal production and sales
- Clothes dyeing and tire
- Driving career (cars, keke and okada)
- Iron and steel production
- Money collection (daily/monthly ususu)
- Paper and pulp
- Petroleum (petrochemical production)
- Poultry
Conclusion

The paper, from the on-going is in agreement that Entrepreneurial development is important to the attainment of sustainable national development in Nigeria. For Nigeria economic and educational programmes to strive, Nigerians must be cultured with competence, inventiveness, creativity and awareness. This is the best way entrepreneurs who wish to set up their own small-scale business can be encouraged. This paper maintains that since unemployment portends mayhem, ant-socialism and national instability, Entrepreneurship education practice is to be adopted for employment creation in Nigeria educational institutions.

Recommendations

The recommendations are hereby suggested;

1. Youths must be ready to imbibe the entrepreneurship at school and when they are out of school as a possible remedy for unemployment.

2. Nigerian higher institutions should take up the lead of redesigning the curriculum to meet up with the demands of industries, and self-employable undertaking.

3. Stakeholders should support skill-based education rather than mere certification that is devoid of problem-solving orientation.

4. Nigerian youths should be prepared to go into small-scale venture.

5. The higher institutions should focus on curriculum that is aimed at a growing job market and expanding the production of qualified professionals most required by industries.
Reference


