
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND INNOVATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT; ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

This Article examined Entrepreneurship education and innovation in tertiary institutions and National Development: Issues, Challenges and Practical Solutions. The paper, considers major issues/challenges affecting entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria such as, large class size, absence of practical studios, and workshops/Entrepreneurship centers, absence of trained teachers, dilapidated classroom blocks etc. The paper argues that if National Development must be attained, entrepreneurship education must be taken seriously by all and sundry. It was suggested amongst others, that Government should urgently provide more/bigger classroom blocks and also build Entrepreneurship practical centers in our higher institutions.

Key words; *Entrepreneurship, Education, National Development, Practical Solutions.*

1.1**Introduction**

Education has generally been regarded as the training and development of the mind and character of an individual. It is necessary if human beings must live meaningfully and attain their individual needs, desires, goals and aspirations. Education is no doubt the process through which people are

exposed to every relevant knowledge, skills and values needed for the sake of stability and sustainability of the recipients and the society in general. Education is therefore a means to a good end in all ramifications. The importance of Entrepreneurship Education both to individual and national growth and development cannot be over emphasized. That is why several scholars have researched and are still researching on the importance of Entrepreneurship in the economic development of a country. Research works on entrepreneurship have also centered on reasons for entrepreneurship, challenges, benefits and the future of Entrepreneurship, etc.

Entrepreneurship as a concept has been defined in many ways by several scholars. Drucker (1985) in Ugiagbe and Nwaogwugwu (2008) defines an Entrepreneur as one who always searches for change, responds to it and exploit it as an opportunity. According to Njoku, Nwosu and Ogechi (2017), Entrepreneurship is the Willingness and ability of an individual to identify and successfully carry out investment opportunities in an environment. It is the mobilization of resources to take advantage of an opportunity to provide new or improved goods or services. It refers to the capacity and attitude of a person or group of persons to undertake ventures with the probability of success or failure. It is the service rendered by an entrepreneur. It involves the process of generating ideas and venturing into

business risks created by dynamic environment and making the best of opportunities for profit purpose. Nwachukwu (1990) defines an Entrepreneur as a person who can see and evaluate business opportunities, gather the necessary resources to take advantage of them and initiate appropriate action to ensure success. Hisrich et al (2008) view entrepreneurship, as the process of creating something new with value, by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial psychic and social risks and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence.

While scholars have agreed that there is no “one best definition” of entrepreneurship, it is also agreed that the legion and myriad of definitions we have in literature, bother on three main components as earlier suggested by Shapero (1975).

These components are;

- Initiative taking
- The organizing and re-organizing of social and economic mechanisms to turn resources and situations to practical accounts.
- The acceptance of risks or failure.

From the foregoing, it implies that individual involvement in entrepreneurship education is paramount and critical if entrepreneurship

education must succeed in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Moreso, for entrepreneurship Education to succeed, several ingredients must be at work and once these ingredients are not in place, there are bound to be challenges.

This paper which is an opinion paper, seeks to consider Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions and National Development, issues, challenges and solutions.

2.1 Definition of Terms/Review of Related Literature

Here, we shall both define, review and overview some related terms and concepts, as follows;

(a) Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the totality of self-asserting attribute that aids an individual to map out latent business opportunities in conjunction “with the capacity to organize requisite resources with which to profitably take advantage of such opportunities in the face of calculated risks and uncertainty. (Nwosu&Ohia, 2009, in Babalola, 2010). According to Ojeifo (2013), entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual or firm to identify environmental challenges and exploit them, such as an opportunity to produce goods and render services for public consumption.

However, both Sexton and Smior (2007) in Enyokit, and Enyokit (2014) view. Entrepreneurship as conceptualized in a formal or informal structured learning that inculcates in students/trainees the ability to identify, screen and seize available opportunities in the environment in addition to skill acquisition.

It is popularly said that entrepreneurs are the driving force in any economy, and when these Entrepreneurs are educated, they are likely to do better in the expansion and advancement of the economy. Leading to National Development. According to Nnaa (2013), National Development is generally speaking an offshoot of individual development.

(b) Entrepreneurship Education

Education is the means through which people acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes. This is made possible through a teacher. Teachers are the human points of contact with students. Who the teacher is and what the teacher does, mediate all other influences on the quality of education. Teachers have the potential for enhancing the quality of education by bringing life to curriculum and inspiring students to curiosity and self-directed learning. (Awotua – Efebo, 1999).

Fafunwa (1974) gave seven aspects or objectives of any form of education as follows;

- To inculcate the child's latent physical skills.
- To develop character.
- To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of Authority.
- To develop intellectual skills
- To acquire specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labor.
- To develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in family and community affairs.
- To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

To this end, the importance of Entrepreneurship education both to individual and National growth and development cannot be over-emphasized. That is why research on entrepreneurship appears to be a never-ending process.

With the recent recessionary season experienced by the country, it is no longer news that we can no more depend on oil for both individual and national survival. This paper is of the opinion that entrepreneurship

education remains one of the best options beyond oil, for National Development.

Entrepreneurship education can therefore be described as a situation where entrepreneurial lessons, skills, attitudes and behaviours are passed across to students through formal classrooms and other associated media. However, the operational definition of Entrepreneurship education is the willingness and ability of a person to or persons to acquire educational skills to explore and exploit successful business enterprise.

(c) Concept of National Development

National Development as a concept has today become a professional industry of highly specialized practitioners. The practitioners according to Enyekit et al (2017) play two major roles as follows; to provide leadership in policy making and to administer policy, programs and projects. National development has its own compartments such as, Economic Development, Political Development, Educational Development, etc. However, it appears that most often, National Development tend to principally tilt towards economic Development indices. Actually, Economic Development is a term very familiar to both economists, politicians and others since the beginning of the 20th Century. The concept as a matter of fact does

not have a concise meaning; however, it has been in existence in West Africa for centuries. Economic Development can be said to be the process by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. It also has a direct relationship with the environment. Economic development can also be considered as a static theory that documents the state of an economy at a certain time. (Mansell&Wehn, 1998). According to these authors, economic development has been understood since world war II to involve economic growth, as it has to do with increase in per capita income. It is said that Economic Development practitioners generally work in public offices in the state, Federal or local level, or in public – private partnership organizations that may be partially funded by federal, state or local tax money.

These economic development organizations function as individual entities and in some cases as departments of local government authorities. Their role is to seek out new economic opportunities and retain existing business wealth.

As can be seen above, National Development has a direct relationship with economic development in more ways than one.

3.1 Issues/Challenges Affecting Entrepreneurship Education in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

One of the six goals of the “Education for All” (EFA) established at the World Education Forum held in Dakar, 2000 by UNESCO is to ensure that the learning needs of all young people and Adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs. To this end, the provision of vocational skills training constitutes an important component in our bid as a country to achieve these EFA goal. Unfortunately in recent times, there has been a decline in technical and vocational education enrolments, all over the country. When the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) was created, one of its aims is to better equip our large population of young people for the world of work (UNESCO, 2000 in Babalola, (2010). In February, 2001, NBTE began the implementation with a radical review of the curricula for 28 disciplines including electrical, mechanical and civil Engineering areas of specialization.

Consequently, as part of the goals of the then president of Nigeria OlusegunObasanjo, to make the Country become one of the world’s top 20 Economics by the 2020, he mandated that all University Students in Nigeria, regardless of their course of study, be

exposed to entrepreneurship Development study. This is because

Nigeria realized that she would need to increasingly globalize education in two key areas namely;

Information and Communication Technology and Entrepreneurship.(Olaitain, 2017).

Some of the thorny issues and challenges affecting Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria include the following:

- Inadequate classrooms
- Large class size due to merging and increase in intake of students in some departments.
- Lack of practical lessons due to the unavailability of studios, workshops, etc.
- Absence of trained teachers/poorly trained teachers.
- Lack of information / adequate information.
- Lazy attitude of students in not wanting to take Risks in practical Entrepreneurship ventures
- Belief in the acquiring of degrees to catch a white collar job etc.

4.1 Entrepreneurship Education as an option for National Development

Entrepreneurship education remains the vehicle through which National Development can easily be attained. This is because of the enormous benefits drivable from it. Some of these benefits include;

- Job Security
- Financial rewards for success.
- independence (of the Entrepreneur).
- Opportunity to be creative and innovative.
- Psychological satisfaction.
- Enhancement of social status in the community.
- Stimulation of indigenous entrepreneurs.
- Modernization /transformation of local industries and technologies.
- Employment generation
- Economic linkage/support services.
- Contribution to general wellbeing and international cooperation.
- Development of rural areas etc.

(Njoku, Nwosu&Ogechi, 2017, Ugiagbe and Nwaogwugwu, 2008)

5.1 Conclusion

This paper has revealed some of the terrible situations prevalent in Nigerian tertiary institutions with reference to Entrepreneurship education. Students learning and interaction is not possible when class sizes are too large. Entrepreneurship is a practical course which needs proper mental stimulation, and so when there are no practical centers, studios and workshops, creativity is not also possible as innovation is thrown to the wind.

6.1 Suggestions

To bring about National development by the means of Entrepreneurship education; the following suggestions are made by the authors;

- (1) Both State and federal governments should look into the issue of large class size by way of providing more spacious classroom blocks in our tertiary institutions.
 - (2) Government should also urgently renovate all dilapidated classroom blocks in our tertiary institutions.
 - (3) Workshops, studios and other practical centers meant for Entrepreneurship education should be provided.
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- (4) Entrepreneurship education should be taken more seriously by all and sundry.
- (5) Entrepreneurship classes and lecture periods should be divided into two; one for lecture hours and the other one for practical work.
- (6) Teachers and Lecturer of Entrepreneurship courses should have practical businesses themselves.
- (7) Young Entrepreneurs should be celebrated in Nigeria.
- (8) Entrepreneurship teachers and lecturers should continue to undergo training and re-training.

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