
APPRAISAL OF QUALITATIVE AND PRODUCTIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The unemployment rate demands for the re-positioning of our educational policies and programmes in the production of self-reliant graduates that will not only be independent but employers of labour. This paper sought to examine the objectives of entrepreneurship education in terms of empowerment, diversification and job creation, as well as the significance of the discipline in incorporating skills, integrating of economic models, professionalism, and entrepreneurship ethos. The paper further addressed the challenges that bedeviled entrepreneurship education such as lack of standard system on curriculum provision and evaluation, insecurity, and poor perception of the discipline with suggestions such as collaborative curriculum drafting, employment of qualified teachers, and adequate supervision of facilities for effective learning and sustainability.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, education, economy, entrepreneurship.

Introduction

Structural changes in the economy shifted Europe's comparative advantage towards knowledge-based activities. These changes have led to opportunities for new entrepreneurial initiative, particularly in the area of services. Europe's competitiveness, innovation and economic growth depend on being able to produce future leaders with the skills and attitudes to be entrepreneurial in their professional lives, whether by creating their own companies or innovating in larger organizations. Entrepreneurship education is the first and inarguably the most important step for embedding an innovative culture in Europe (Wilson, 2008). If it is to make a success of the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment, Nigeria needs to stimulate the entrepreneurial mindsets of young people, encourage innovative business start-ups, and foster a culture that is friendlier to entrepreneurship and to the growth of small and medium-sized businesses (Akpomi, 2008).

The important role of education in promoting more entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours, starting even at primary school, is now widely recognized. Since education and especially universities play a vital role in the transformation of economies and societies, the specific role of higher education institutions in fostering entrepreneurship is considered to be an appropriate topic of investigation, discourse and dissemination (Akeredolu-Ale, 2005). Education can help the development of entrepreneurship (Akeredolu-Ale, 2005). Promoting entrepreneurial skills and attitudes education in entrepreneurship provide benefits to society even beyond their application to new business ventures. In a broad sense, entrepreneurship should be considered as a general attitude that can be usefully applied in all working activities and in everyday life, such as creativity and innovation (EU Commission, 2004).

According to Lazear (2005), entrepreneurship requires general knowledge and the formal education system normally increase this, particularly at the lower levels that are most common in developing countries. To the extent that wage earners are more

specialized and general competence do have a small impact of wage earners ability, education also has a limited impact on the selection to become a wage earners. On the other hand, the distribution of individual ability is heterogeneously distributed and there might be differences across groups - for instance that women tend to become wage earners when their education level increases.

Teaching younger students' entrepreneurship education is more about enterprise education. The purpose is for students to take more responsibility for themselves and their learning, to try to achieve their goals, be creative, and discover existing opportunities and in general to cope in our complicated society (Miron-Shatz, Shatz, Becker, Patel, & Eysenbach, 2014). Moreover, the aim is for them to take an active role in job markets and consider entrepreneurship as a natural career choice. This education involves developing behaviours, skills and attributes applied individually and/or collectively to help individuals and organizations of all kinds to create, cope with and enjoy change and innovation. This involves higher levels of uncertainty and complexity as a means of achieving personal fulfillment and organizational effectiveness.

Enterprising education is the process by which such behaviour is practiced and supported. These skills, behaviours, and attributes are exhibited in organizations of all kinds ranging from within the family to the wider community context. It may embody elements of learning for the pursuit of some task. Moreover, it involves learning through a particular pedagogy and learning about, which then refers to cognitive learning (Gibb, 2006).

Kyrö (2007) posited that, entrepreneurship education deals with three main components: 1) self-oriented, 2) internal, and 3) external entrepreneurship. Self orientated entrepreneurship refers to an individual's self-oriented behaviour. Self oriented entrepreneurship is the basis for developing internal and external entrepreneurship (Remes, 2004). Internal entrepreneurship deals with entrepreneurial and enterprising behaviour. External entrepreneurship is about doing business (Ristimäki, 2003). Even though self-orientated and internal entrepreneurship resemble each other, the difference between them is in the collectivistic sense which emerges in internal entrepreneurship development and which could be developed in organizations (Remes, 2001). If an organization possesses internal entrepreneurship, it realizes its opportunities, makes use of them and demonstrates self-trust (Heinonen, 2001). Self-orientated entrepreneurship is basically only about an individual's development.

Kyrö (2005) argues concerning self-orientated entrepreneurship: 'In general, entrepreneurial and enterprising behaviour involves the idea that the human being, looking around him and combining different elements, creates holistic realities, which have their consequences in action. Even when the environment is full of paradoxes and events, the entrepreneur chooses what is suitable for him and his ideas. He does not select his elements from a single environment; on the contrary, his ideas can spring from anywhere and this combines different elements and this enhances the creation of something new. As in basic education, self-orientated entrepreneurship should be emphasized (Remes, 2001).

As a consequence, the focus is not only on developing factors related to motivation, self-awareness and creativity (Menzies & Paradi, 2003), and responsibility for

learning (Heinonen, 2004), but also on co-operation and interaction, which refer to internal entrepreneurship development. In comparison, in the school context, external entrepreneurship education is about developing innovation (Gibb, 2005), and business ideas as well as strengthening co-operation between schools and work life, including such activities as work experience and study tours. Through these processes we have a chance to develop an enterprising society, which means entrepreneurship and the development of an enterprising mindset in societies.

Education influences the selection to become an entrepreneur through various mechanisms. More education is generally correlated with higher wealth and consequently lower start-up costs for enterprise activities. The direct impact of education might also differ across occupations and therefore influence the initial choice of occupation. If education has a higher impact on the productivity in business activities compared to other occupational choices, more talented persons become entrepreneurs. When education improves the entrepreneurial ability, but not the productivity of an individual employee – education will increase both the likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur and the performance of the entrepreneur (Shane, & Venkataraman, 2000).

Goals & Objectives of an Entrepreneurship Education

Wilson (2008) identified the goals and objectives of Entrepreneurship Education as follows;

People Empowerment: Teaching people innovative ways to make a living, enables them to take control of their circumstances. Thus, entrepreneurship education is being used as a tool to empower men and women. Technically trained women, for example, struggle to find employment in a male dominated domain. The education is aimed at improving their self confidence and giving them a chance at becoming self reliant so that they are not totally dependent on employment. This form of education also builds up self-awareness. It provides a dynamic platform on which an individual can explore his strengths through practical application and not theoretical knowledge gained from basic education.

Diversification: Entrepreneurship education teaches students to recognize and seize diverse opportunities for financial gain. This allows people to work in authentic environments that best suit them. As a result there is greater individual satisfaction as compared to conventionally employed workers. Market diversification increases a consumer's options and allows for more dynamic competition.

Creation of Employment: Unemployment is a rampant problem in many societies. Entrepreneurship education aims at empowering people to create employment opportunities. The aim of this training is to enable these people to start the small and medium enterprises important in any country's growth. This sector accounts for half the private workforce in the United States. Most people seeking employment depend on entrepreneurs to embark on new ventures and hire them.

Individual Competence: Entrepreneurship education imparts qualities such as self motivation and financial responsibility. In addition this education empowers people to have self discipline since entrepreneurship involves taking well

calculated risks. People who have gone through this kind of training are able to recognize opportunities. Entrepreneurship education also encourages innovation in the running of organizations.

Inspiration: Another factor important for supporting graduates entrepreneurship is entrepreneurial programmes, especially if they include an inspirational part. Surely, knowledge and resources could increase the likelihood of success for those who are going to start a new venture, but it turns out that it is the inspiration that raises attitude, intention and increases the chances that students will eventually set up their own businesses” (Souitaris. 2007).

Forms of Qualitative and Productive Entrepreneurship Education Programmes

In the context of discipline entrepreneurship education programme (EEP) opined 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., 2006). Linan (2004) found that there are four different kinds of entrepreneurship education programmes. The first, "Entrepreneurial Awareness Education", aims to increase knowledge about entrepreneurship and to influence attitudes that may impact intentions. The second category is described as "Education for Start-Up". These Programmes are geared toward people who generally already have an entrepreneurial idea and need to solve practical questions about becoming self-employed. The third category, "Education for Entrepreneurial Dynamism", focuses on people who are already entrepreneurs and want to promote dynamic behaviours after the start-up phase. The last category "Continuing Education for Entrepreneurs" describes life-long learning programmes and focuses on experienced entrepreneurs. (Linan, 2004).

Significance of Entrepreneur Education in the Appraisal of Quality and Productivity

The importance of entrepreneurship education in the appraisal of quality and productivity is not far-fetched as Akeredolu-Ale, (2005) and Akpomi, (2008) posited some of the followings;

Entrepreneurship Behaviours: Entrepreneurship Education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in widely different contexts. It can be portrayed as open to all and not exclusively the domain of the high-flying growth-seeking business person. The propensity to behave entrepreneurially is not exclusive to certain individuals. Different individuals will have a different mix of capabilities for demonstrating and acquiring entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes. These behaviours can be practiced, developed and learned; hence it is important to expose all students to entrepreneurship education

Economic Postulation: Entrepreneurship education directs the application of acquired knowledge to the production of goods for human consumption by postulating and estimating the future demand, and determining the appropriate quantity and timing of inputs, calculating probable production costs and selling prices, and have the arts of super-intending and administration. As this combination is not common, the number of successful entrepreneurs is limited, especially in industry.

Integrated Model of Economic Development: Education entrepreneurship is 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

Development of Skills and Attitude: Entrepreneurial skills and attitudes provide benefits to society, even beyond their application to business activity. Obviously, personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship, such as creativity and spirit of initiative, can be useful to everyone, in their working responsibilities and in their daily existence. Also the relevant technical and business skills need to be provided to those who choose to be self-employed and/or to start their own venture – or might do so in the future.

Appraising Entrepreneurship Education at All Levels

Entrepreneurship should be taught to students in all disciplines in the institution (Shane, 2003). It is not out of place to say that many business ideas emerge from non-business disciplines but are often waved aside or ignored because students are not sufficiently educated in the knowledge and skills required. Thus, the need for Entrepreneurship Education becomes imperative due to the following reasons.

Cultivation of Entrepreneurship Spirit: The spirit of entrepreneurship is the spirit of self-reliance and enterprise, and it is the support of triumph in entrepreneurship. It is also the spirit of being a master in controlling the destiny, displaying subjective initiative and striving to realize dreams. The spirit of entrepreneurship is the spirit of hard struggle, which is defined as a fine tradition of the Chinese nation and a good quality of fearlessness, thrifty and diligence. The spirit of entrepreneurship is the spirit of innovation and consciousness of developing new ideas and new ways. All the new schemes should be proposed faithfully and practically to emancipate the mind, create new chapter and keep pace with times.

Strengthening the Professional Qualities: Entrepreneurship education needs students to exercise and to improve professional qualities and abilities in all aspects in the course of study and practice that centred on Leadership, Risk-taking and Teamwork.

Expanding ways to Employment: As a choice of occupation, entrepreneurship is a way to employment. Faced with a tough job market, it is of necessity to develop entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities so that college students can obtain some knowledge of funding small business and professional qualities which are needed to entrepreneurs. And it is a choice of occupation for contemporary undergraduates to form their own small business and become self-employed by their comprehensive abilities and government's preferential policies.

Part of Quality-oriented Education: Developing entrepreneurship education is a part of developing quality-oriented education, and it is the support and concrete reflection of quality-oriented education in colleges and universities. Entrepreneurship needs comprehensive qualities, especially some high-quality talents. Therefore, entrepreneurship education is a new talent training mode

which is established on the basis of quality-oriented education. At the same time, as a kind of innovation, entrepreneurship demands broad horizon, wide knowledge, create wisdom and effective grasp of the market; it also requires good abilities of organization and coordination and skills of interpersonal relationships.

Problems of Appraising Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

The abysmal achievements of Nigeria entrepreneurship education, both in theory and in practice, are obvious to all, but, at the same time, there's need to realize that there are still various problems to be solved: these include:

The misunderstanding of entrepreneurship education,
The serious lack of entrepreneurship education teachers, and the disequilibrium of their abilities,
Lack of a standard system on curriculum provision and evaluation of curriculum,
Lack of security system for entrepreneurship education,
Lack of implementation etc.

All these problems stated above are common existing in Nigerian education (Akpomi, 2008). Among all the problems, the major issue is the bias on entrepreneurship education. Some colleges and universities have a narrow understanding of entrepreneurship education as training for the students to become a director or a business owner directly. Lots of them even use the data of graduates becoming a business owner as the evaluation criteria to assess the quality of entrepreneurship education. All these seriously misunderstood the meaning and objectives of entrepreneurship education. So, it is quite necessary to restate clearly the objectives of entrepreneurship education. Only with the help of objectives, the entrepreneurship education could go on the wheels in Nigerian colleges and universities.

Conclusions

This paper examined entrepreneurship education from the process perspective, viewing students as crossroads of a transformation process in sustainable national development. The aim is to make the student: independent, homing, self esteeming, committing, adaptable, cooperative, persistent and studious. In order to get a bit closer to the issue, pain is taken to look on the basic concepts of education, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. It further suggest that entrepreneurship education is taken as a crucial task at several levels in societies, and it is publicly guided and funded, it is natural that the results achieved are taken into consideration in the targeting and shaping of future aims and actions - this is important both for the policy makers and for individual teachers.

Suggestions

Government/parents should collaborate with the technical and vocational section of UNESCO to draw out a standard and befitting curriculum that will complete internationally.

Government in collaboration with all agencies of employment should employ qualified and skillful teachers with vocational knowledge in all schools.

The technical and supervisory unit of inspectorate division should have able personnel's with adequate knowledge in vocational education to supervise schools offering vocational subject to ensure adequate knowledge and skill delivery.

Security is paramount in all aspects, therefore, government should as a matter of fact provide adequate security in all school to safe guard the installation of all the machines in the school and this can be achieved through fencing and employment of security personnel's.

The wrong perception of the scheme by the general public on the school be corrected through government sensitization by providing good jingles and drama to general public.

Poor assessment by the public should be corrected through donations by government other private organization by rewarding firms that excel in their business.

Entrepreneurship education should not be paper and pen programme, it should be put into practice.

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