
Contemporary Issues In Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum In The 21st Century Nigerian Tertiary Education

DAVIES EMEMOBONG EKANEM

&

GIFT KONGARUM DIMKPA

Department of Curriculum Studies and Instructional Technology,
Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education,
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State

Abstract

The study examined contemporary issues in entrepreneurship education curriculum in the 21st century tertiary Nigerian institution. The contemporary issues in entrepreneurship education curriculum highlighted in this study reflect the evolving nature of the business landscape. The issues include poor curriculum implementation across tertiary institutions, the teaching strategies, absence of infrastructure, low standard of education, insecurity, lack of political, insufficient funds, lack of proper planning, insufficient qualified manpower, and faulty foundation. The study concluded that by addressing these issues. Entrepreneurship education can equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to succeed in today's dynamic environment. The study recommends that the Nigeria government should increase its funding on tertiary educational institutions to enable them implement entrepreneurship education programmes.

Keywords: Contemporary issues, entrepreneurship, education, curriculum.

Introduction

The issues of unemployment, insurgency and social vices among graduates and youths in Nigeria and other countries in the world are no longer news. Over the last decade, entrepreneurship education has become an increasingly vital area of research, practice and policy consideration. It is a known fact that education is of huge relevance for total manpower development. The role of education in governance, socio-economic and technological developments of any country can never be underestimated (Akinbami, 2011).

This is largely due to the fact that it is through well-planned and implemented educational system that developed countries of the world have achieved their remarkable level of social, economic, scientific and technological advancement. The aim of this paper is to unveil the contemporary issues in entrepreneurship education in the curriculum (Steedman, 2012).

Education consists of different facets among which are entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education helps in identifying business opportunities and taking appropriate steps to establish them. One of the key production elements has been recognized as entrepreneurship. Although land, capital, and labor are also crucial production variables, entrepreneurship serves as their central axis. Entrepreneurship is a crucial component of an organization's ability to effectively mobilize its human and material resources in order to achieve its stated objectives (Akinbami, 2011).

The term "entrepreneurship" is used extensively to refer to today's inventive and creative commercial and industrial activities (Ojeigo, 2012). It is frequently described in terms of an entrepreneur, who is a person who recognizes business opportunities and takes advantage of the available resources to make profitable use of them. The non-insurable risks in his business are solely his responsibility, and he is also the one who allocates the financial and human resources to achieve his goals (Akinbami, 2011).

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a key driver of economic growth and innovation in the modern world. As the business landscape continues to evolve rapidly, it is imperative that entrepreneurship education keeps pace with the changing dynamics. To ensure the success of future entrepreneurs, contemporary issues must be integrated into the entrepreneurship education curriculum (Ojeigo, 2012).

Conceptual Clarification

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is the process of acquiring knowledge, special skills and experiences by an individual for effective conquering and adaptation to his environment. Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Variations of entrepreneurial education are offered at all levels of schooling from primary or secondary schools through graduate university programs (Agina-Obu, 2016).

Entrepreneurship education is the purposeful intervention by educators in the life of the learner to survive in the world of business (Pattarawat, 2013). Entrepreneurship education equips students with the additional knowledge, attributes and capabilities required to apply these abilities in the context of setting up a new venture or business. It has its focus on life and action orientation, primarily embodied in teaching students how to develop a business plan. It develops and stimulates entrepreneurial process, providing all tools necessary for starting up new ventures. This concept of entrepreneurship education has passed through developmental stages (Ihugba, et al. 2013).

Entrepreneurship education consists of three ingredients: creativity- creating all kinds of ideas; Innovation- find value in selected ideas; and entrepreneurship- develop a business from the innovative idea. Entrepreneurship training is designed to teach

skills and knowledge one need to know before embarking on a new business venture. While the programme may not guarantee success, you should be able to avoid many of the pitfalls awaiting your less well trained and vigilant contemporaries (Pattarawat, 2013).

Entrepreneurship education is a lifelong learning process, starting as early as elementary school and progressing through all levels of education, including adult education. The standards and their supporting performance indicators are a framework for teachers to use in building appropriate objective learning activities, and assessment for their target audience. Using this framework, students will have more progressive challenging educational activities; experiences that will enable them the insight needed to discover and create entrepreneurial activities, and the expertise to successfully start and manage their own businesses to take advantage of these opportunities (Ihugba, et. al., 2013).

Arvanites et al. (2009) share the above views when they state that innovative educational methods are needed to develop the entrepreneurial spirit and talents that are necessary to function effectively in an environment of strong market forces and complex people issues. They added that for entrepreneurship education to be most useful, it must address and develop in students, the skills necessary as an entrepreneur. Basically, entrepreneurship education is oriented towards four methods for practical results. These methods may include:

1. **Regular Entrepreneurship:** Which is most popular and suitable for opening of a new organization or starting a new business.
2. **Corporate Entrepreneurship:** Which is suitable for promoting innovation or introducing new products or services or markets in existing firms.
3. **Social Entrepreneurship or Social Venturing:** This involves creating charitable organizations that are expected to be self -financing in addition to doing their usual activities.
4. **Public Sector Entrepreneurship:** designs to improve innovation and customer service delivery.

Entrepreneurship education is very crucial for entrepreneurship development because it is the engine that propels creativity and innovations into practical manifestations in form of business ventures and other investment opportunities (Ihugba et al., 2013). Without a functional education the manifestation of entrepreneurship skills in individuals may be difficult. Entrepreneurship education which is offered to individuals so as to enable them become successful entrepreneurs has been categorized into various types.

1. **Entrepreneurial Awareness Education:** As the name indicates, this form of entrepreneurial education aims at creating a phenomenal awareness of entrepreneurial knowledge for people and on the basis of which they can have a general knowledge of entrepreneurship (Pattarawat, 2013).
2. **Education for start-up:** This form of entrepreneurship education is practice-oriented and it is aimed at preparing an individual or group of individuals to start up their own business and become full-fledged entrepreneurs. Here, the course content deals essentially with how to start up the business of one's choice, sources of finance for the business, creation of an enabling environment to start up. The business and other legal and ethical issues relating to the business (Ihugba et al., 2013).

3. **Education for Entrepreneurial Dynamism:** This form of entrepreneurship education act as a quality assurance measure which will enable the entrepreneur to manage the business successfully after it has been established. Thus, this form of education does not only involve the inculcation of knowledge and skills for starting up a business or ventures but it also involves the development and acquisition of managerial acumen and behaviors which can guarantee the smooth running of the business (Pattarawat, 2013).
4. **Continuing Education:** This is education provided for entrepreneurs so as to continuously keep them abreast with the ongoing trends in their areas of endeavor. Continuing education in all intents and purposes seeks to improve and update peoples knowledge and skills on current issues and make them adaptable to hanging situations. Consequently, continuing education provided for entrepreneurs will enable them to stand the test of time with regard to the management of their enterprises for greater profitability (Osuala, 2010).

The State of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

The fundamental goal of entrepreneurship education is to equip the participants with the knowledge, skills, are competencies for embarking on entrepreneurial endeavors in a variety of economic settings. In support of this viewpoint observed that entrepreneurship education is designed to teach on the skill and knowledge he or she needs for establishing and running new business venture. However, it is not worthy that entrepreneurship education has in recent times received appreciable attention from the Federal Government of Nigeria. This statement is from the realization that education is a potent tool for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria.

During the Yar'adua administration which included wealth creation as the number three item of its seven-point Agenda directed Universities in Nigeria through the National Universities Commission (NUC), to commence entrepreneurship education as a vehicle for equipping Nigeria undergraduates with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills requisite for job creation and self-reliance upon graduation (Agina-Obu, 2016). For the purpose of achieving this objective, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up a presidential committee which mandate was to see to the successful implementation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. To this end, the membership of the committee was derived from the NUC, National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Education Trust Fund (ETF), International Labour Organization (ILO), UNESCO and the Hamitle Consult, a consulting firm on entrepreneurship education in the country, while the NUC was the co-coordinating body. Course in entrepreneurship studies have also been made compulsory for all students in other tertiary education institutions in Nigeria (Agina-Obu, 2016).

More so, as substantial number of Nigerian citizenries has participated in seminars, workshops and conferences built on entrepreneurial skill acquisition also observed that virtually all young graduates have been tutored or received some form of tutoring on entrepreneurship through the National Youth Service Corps Orientation Programme. All these point to the fact that entrepreneurship education has been seen as a dependable strategy for job creation, poverty alleviation, self-reliance and employment generation (Agina-Obu, 2016).

Aladekomo (2017) said the Nigerian Post-independence policy of education built on “education for paid employment rather than self-employment education: The nation’s current massive unemployment and rural poverty are mainly due to the neglect of small businesses in the industrialization policy. Therefore, it is observed that

inadequate attention is paid to the education of entrepreneurship skills at the time. The 1970s saw a fundamental change in Federal and State Government's attention to small and medium scale industries. They realized the sector's enormous potential for job creation, reduced reliance on foreign goods and technology, rural growth, and better mobilization of domestic's savings. This was why the policy of 6-3-3-4 system was inaugurated in 1982 to better entrepreneurship education. The mode of this 6-3-3-4 was to either opt for technical or vocational training or follow the more academic route. It was the national policy on education (NPE) on skill education that brings about the 6-3-3-4 system in 1977 which has not successfully resolve the contemporary issues due to lack of funding, lack of qualified personnel's, poor infrastructure, gender inequality, parent's interference (Agina-Obu, 2016).

In an attempt to create a more vibrant economy in Nigeria brought about National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) of 1987. This organization was total in the traditional vocational apprenticeship system by using the local master craftsman as the Springboard. The 2004 National Economic Empowerment and development Strategy (NEEDS) and National Directorate of Employment Scheme (NDES) was for sustainable national growth and poverty reduction which are overseen by the Apprenticeship scheme. The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) instituted in 1971 was for skills acquisition institute in Nigeria. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) trained Unemployed people to acquire vocational skills and entrepreneurship (Suleiman, 2010).

Many of these attempts have failed, for lack of commitment to sustain such efforts. The National Policy on Education (NPE) states that the primary goal of University Education in Nigeria as contributing to national development through high-level relevant workforce training, acquiring physical and intellectual skills to enable self-reliance and productivity, forging national unity and promoting global interaction. The method of implementation has, however, borne insubstantial evidence to show for the efforts (Akinbami, 2011).

Going through the history, there were no unemployment problems when people learned a trade through traditional African apprenticeship programme. Most people engaged either as masters or apprentices. Nigeria gets into unemployment as a result of an educational system that produced workers for paid employment as a result of colonialist concept and massive unemployment and underemployment are more of the 21st Century problem. National Policy on education mentioned technical and vocational education and Training (TVET) to help provide a skilled workforce ready for entrepreneurship. The government has problem of implementation since we have about 366 approved institutions as at January 2014 responsible for TVET across the nation but unfortunately the research has shown that even graduates of technical colleges are also job seekers, which they suggest they lacked entrepreneurial skills and were compelled to explore alternative solutions. In the situation, the idea is to borrow from the successful traditional apprentice scheme to incorporate into mainstream education (Agina-Obu, 2016).

The Nigerian government announced the introduction of Entrepreneurship Education (EE) as Entrepreneurship studies in 2006. EE was to be integrated into the higher education curriculum as a compulsory course for students, irrespective of the area of specialization. Effectively, the implementation started in 2007/2008 academic session under the supervision of the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC). The NUC's Policy Proclamation that entrepreneurship course was to be taken by student in all

disciplines has done little to diffuse the situation, if not exacerbated, by not going further to ensure that infrastructure is in place to enable a more successful outcome (Agina-Obu, 2016).

Contemporary Issues of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

The introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria's tertiary education institutions has been appreciated as a step in the right direction. Nevertheless, it is being devilled with certain issues that include the following:

- 1. Poor Curriculum Implementation across Tertiary Institutions:** This unpleasant state of affairs has made the goals of the entrepreneurship intervention in Nigeria very illusive. It is common in the Nigerian education landscape that objectives of specialized education are not often translated into practical realities during the process of policy implementation. Most of the tertiary institutions offer EE as an elective course or as a GST course (Akinbami, 2011).
- 2. Teaching Strategies:** Teaching of entrepreneurship education across the tertiary institutions in Nigeria has particularly been flawed because of too much emphasis on rudiments of writing of business plan in groups of 10 to 15 students. Entrepreneurship education is better imparted through Industrial tours, professional talks from successful business owners and real executive of business projects while in schools. The focus is more on theoretical instructions and mentoring. It is absence of standard text-books and other useful learning materials on entrepreneurship education. Most available text-books around are deficient and do not address the peculiar nature of the Nigerian business environment (Osuala, 2010).
- 3. Lack of Infrastructure:** It is a universal belief that certain basic infrastructural facilities aid the development of the mind and body and assist productivity in any environment. These facilities have been identified as good roads, good water supply, constant power, access to information and communication technology and other tools of trade. A case where these are lacking in a country, the growth of the economy will be adversely affected. In Nigeria, these basic working tools as well as the enabling environment is lacking. This state of affairs has frustrated a lot of young people with bright ideas and the corresponding spirit to effect a change in some areas of our national life. **Inadequacy of Infrastructural Facilities and Equipment:** The infrastructural facilities and equipment in Nigeria's educational institutions are grossly inadequate while the available ones are in poor and deplorable state thereby making the delivery of entrepreneurship education difficult. These infrastructural facilities and equipment include, among others, the fixed and mobile structures and materials in the school such as the classroom building, offices, laboratories and laboratory equipment, the school furniture, the chalkboards, tools and machines, the chalk, audio and visual aids which are used to enhance teaching and learning processes (Agina-Obu, 2016).
- 4. Low Standard of Education:** There is no gain saying the fact that education is the key to knowledge and that it plays a strong role in forming the burgeoning entrepreneur. Year after year, the quality of education in the Nigerian institutions has gradually been on the decline, due to mass exodus of quality of teachers. Those stuck in the system are there due to unavailability of alternative jobs. Government policy or lack of one has been a major bane of education in Nigeria. The schools are not adequately funded, equipped,

regulated and managed to bring out their optimum potentials. Most times students are home due to strikes. Most people in government send their ward abroad for their education thereby preventing the will to address the urgent need for the sector. The result is a half-baked workforce who are lacking in personal confidence and desire to look within and make a mark in an area of human endeavor (Agina-Obu, 2016).

5. **Insecurity:** Another critical factor is the lack of adequate security for lives and property and the helplessness urgent and constant security challenges over the years. Enterprises serious about doing business have to put in place their own security structures. The process of employing these private security personnel puts a big hole in the pockets of the business entrepreneur. It is believed that the heavy costs expended on these vital services have made entrepreneurship quite challenging in Nigeria. All these put together have made entrepreneurial activities cost intensive, unprofitable and uninteresting thereby dissuading the youths from assuming entrepreneurial leadership positions, simply because the money they are using for the business is not theirs hence they are just training to survive as profit is his prime motive and not loss. Nigeria has a porous security, where lives and property are not safe and thereby leaving the citizens to live in perpetual fear. In recent time this insecurity took a different turn, with the advent of Kidnap of foreigners now followed by indigene with the bid to get ransom paid to them (Kidnappers). Theft, stealing and broad day light robbery is on the increase (Akinbami, 2011).
6. **Lack of political:** Lack of political will on the side of our political leaders have been a more hindrance to entrepreneurship development and reduction of unemployment in Nigeria. The neglect of vocational and technical education has been robbing the nation of the potential contributions of its graduates to national growth and economic development, the inability of policy makers to make both rational and educated decisions continue. Research has it that the underdevelopment status of Nigeria could be linked to the neglect of its educational institutions. Although science and technology has been a part of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPE). Like every other public policy, implementations have always been the major problem. Consequently, the society lacks competent bricklayers, carpenter, printers, auto mechanics, laboratory and pharmacy technicians, vocational nurses (Agina-Obu, 2016).
7. **Insufficient Funds:** Nigeria's tertiary institutions lack sufficient funds to carry out their entrepreneurship education programmes. The Federal Government of Nigeria should commence entrepreneurship education programmes were not matched by increased funding of the institutions. Consequently, the funds available to these institutions are insufficient to carry out their entrepreneurship education programmes effectively and efficiently (Akinbami, 2011).
8. **Lack of proper Planning:** Proper planning is fundamental to the successful implementation of any educational programme. This is true of the fact that planning is the systematic and intelligent preparation for realizing the identified goals any educational programme. Indeed, it is planning that provides guidance and direction for the effective implementation of educational programme regrettably, there were no well thought out plans and strategies for implementing entrepreneurship education programmes in Nigeria's tertiary education institutions. This means that the objective of this

educational programmes will hardly be achieved since there is no road-step leading to it and one cannot achieve any worthwhile objective in a state of possesses.

9. **Insufficient Qualified Manpower:** Tertiary education institutions in Nigeria do not have enough qualified lecturers to successfully implement the entrepreneurship education curriculum. The lecturers that impart entrepreneurship knowledge and skills to students were drawn from pre-existing departments and faculty and they were not specially groomed for entrepreneurship education. This inimical situation poses serious challenges to the successful implementation of the new entrepreneurship education curriculum as observed that the success of any innovative programme in the curriculum of any educational institution hinges on the ability of the teachers to implement the innovation (Agina-Obu, 2016).
10. **Faulty Foundation:** Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has been characterized by faulty foundation. This educational programme did not progress through the different levels of Nigeria's educational system which include primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. This means that the programme lacks proper foundation since it is only offered at the tertiary education level where as education is supposed to be a continuous process which progresses through different stages. The far-reaching implication of this is that entrepreneurship education cannot be provided to the majority of Nigerians who do not have access to tertiary education.

Conclusion

The introduction of entrepreneurship education programme in Nigeria's tertiary education institutions is a step in the right direction in view of the fact that poverty and unemployment have reached alarming proportions in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education equips people with the knowledge and skills with which they can establish and run their businesses or ventures effectively and efficiently thereby creating employment and reducing poverty. However, entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is faced with some issues. This paper has examined these issues and also recommended strategies that will help to reposition entrepreneurship education in Nigeria for positive results. The contemporary issues in entrepreneurship education curriculum highlighted in this study reflect the evolving nature of the business landscape. By addressing these issues, entrepreneurship education can equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to succeed in today's dynamic environment.

Suggestions

Having analyzed the issues of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. The Nigeria government should increase its funding on tertiary educational institutions to enable them implement entrepreneurship education programmes.
2. Entrepreneurship education programmes should be properly planned so as to have clear guidance and direction to their successful implementation.
3. The lecturers who are responsible for implementing the entrepreneurship education curriculum should be well trained and professionals equipped with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills which they can successfully impart to students.

4. There should be adequate provision and maintenance of the infrastructural facilities and equipment required for the effective and official implementation of entrepreneurship education programme.
5. The entrepreneurship education programme should be provided at all level of Nigeria's educational system so as to give majority of Nigerians access to this job creation, self-reliance and poverty alleviation imitative.
6. Currents methods of teaching EE in Universities must be re-examined. The methods should be more practical and internship and apprenticeship should be factored into teaching to gain meaningful experience with locally sourced enterprises and successful alumni within a more extended time frame than the current token period of internship.
7. Centers of entrepreneurship education must be mandatory established in all institutions in all institutions to engage people through seminars and workshops seriously.

References

- Agina-Obu, T (2016). *Fundamentals of curriculum theory and development*. Edik Integrated Services.
- Akinbami, C.A. (2011). *Preliminary issues in entrepreneurship education development- Nigeria Context*. Ile-Ife, Centre For Industrial Research and Development, Obafemi Awolowo University.
- Akpatse, F. A. (2012). Driving entrepreneurship education in Nigeria issues and challenges. *International Journal of Business and Management Review*, 1, 88-90.
- Aladekomo, F.O. (2004). Nigeria educational policy and entrepreneurship. *Journal of Social Science*, 9(2), 75-83.
- Arvanites, D. A. Glasgo, T.M & Stumps, S.A (2009). *Entrepreneurship education: An imperative for sustainable development*. www.jeleraps.schoarlinkresearch.org
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National policy on education*. NERDC Press.
- Ihugba, O.A., Odii, A. & Njoku, A.C. (2013). Challenges and prospects of Entrepreneurship in Nigeria. *Academic Journal of Entrepreneurship Studies*, 2(5), 15 – 26.
- Ojeifo, S. A. (2012). *A handbook on entrepreneurial development in Nigeria*. Emmasco Printers.
- Onwuegbuzie, H. (2017). Learning from the past: Entrepreneurship through apprenticeship for more successful outcomes. *Advances in Economics and Business*, 5, 280-287.
- Osuala, E.C. (2010). *Foundation of Vocational Education*. Nsukka Fullard Publishing Company.

- Pattarawat, J. (2013). Current issues on vocational and technical education in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 3(1), 1-12.
- Steedman, H. (2012). *Overview of apprenticeship system and issues: ILO contribution to the G20 task force on employment*. London School of Economics.
- Suleiman, H. (2010). Youth entrepreneurship education for national development. *International Journal of Education Studies*, 1, 47-50.
- Yahaya, U. (2011). *Why we set up entrepreneurship studies in universities-F.G.*
[Http://Www.TheNigerianvoice.Com/Nvnews/45849/1/Why-We-Set-Up-Entrepreneurship-Studies-In-Varsitie.Html](http://www.thenigerianvoice.com/nvnews/45849/1/Why-We-Set-Up-Entrepreneurship-Studies-In-Varsitie.html)