

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A STRATEGY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Education is a crucial catalyst and instrument for a country socio- economic development in its entire ramification as well as bases for entrepreneurs development which in turn result in peace and National development through an effective educational system. This paper examined the concept of entrepreneurship, highlights the roles of tertiary institutions in entrepreneurship development, suggest strategies for re-designing the Nigerian tertiary institution for peace, entrepreneurship and National development.

Keywords: Institution Entrepreneurship, peace, National development.

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education also referred to as third stage, third level, and post-secondary education, is the education level following the completion of a school providing a secondary education, such as a high school. Secondly is taken to include undergraduate and postgraduate education, while vocational education and training beyond secondary education is known as further education in the United Kingdom, or continuing education in the United States. Alade (2006) explains that the end and purposes of education include the cognitive development, the development of deeper intellectual skills, the acquisition of mechanical skills and character training concerned with the appreciations, feelings and values of those educated.

Education thus restores to mankind its humanity. It is globally a very vital element for social development and economic growth all over the world. This explains why nations have expended a lot of resources on education. Education in general and higher education in particular, are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations (Okebukola,1998). Yet the potential of higher education system in developing countries to fulfil this responsibility is frequently thwarted by long standing problems of finance, efficiency, inequality, absence of quality and poor governance, among others. Now, these old challenges have been augmented by new challenges such as the growing role of knowledge in economic development, rapid changes in telecommunication technology, and the globalization of trade and labour markets (Okoh, 2004).

Education is often linked to schooling, and schooling improves productivity and health. It also reduces negative features of life such as child labour as well as unemployment. This is why there has been a lot of emphasis particularly in recent times for all citizens of the world to have access to basic education. Education as a social institution, therefore, could be seen as a great value concerned with imparting knowledge and skills which help an individual to participate in society (Ramon-Yusuf, 2003). At the tertiary level, it is no longer news that university system is a medium through which objective of education are expected to be achieved. In an examination of the concept "University", Adebayo (2005) declares that in the middle ages, the word university meant "an association, a guild, a corporation", just like a guild of craftsmen or traders. The University at the beginning was an association of teachers or scholars. University was a body of persons gathered in a particular place for the dissemination and assimilation of knowledge in advanced fields of study. Today, the university is an institution of higher learning providing facilities for teaching and research and is authorized to grant academic and innovation for the overall socio-economic empowerment of individual and community development (Babalola and Odediran, 1997).

Nigeria is a land of resources (both human and material resources) without productivity. We have large fertile and arable land, yet our Agriculture exportation is only 2% in 2010 against 75% in 1960 when cocoa, groundnut, rubber and other agricultural produce were high on our exportation list. We have land, yet people are homeless. We have minerals resources, yet we don't know how to interpret them to our benefit to create employments for our youths. We have crops and fruits wasting away at various seasons every year, yet we don't know how to preserve them for all seasons as they do in other countries. This calls for entrepreneurship development in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. From the beginning of human society till 1,000 AD, Africa was either developed or at a similar level of entrepreneurship development with Europe. Notable among societies and cultures that had attained outstanding levels of technological and artistic development are Ancient Egypt, Nigeria, etc.

WHAT IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship according to Omolayo (2006) is the act of starting a company, arranging business deals and taking risks in order to make a profit through the education skills acquired. Nwangwu (2007) in the same vein affirms that entrepreneurship is a process of bringing together the factors of production, which include land, labour and capital so as to provide a product or service for public consumption. Arogundade (2011) also defines entrepreneurship education as the willingness and ability of a person or persons to acquire educational skills to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful business enterprise. Entrepreneurship in the language of the economist involves a whole range of aptitude like innovativeness, capacity to take risk and forecast prospect of an enterprise and confidence in one's ability to meet unforeseen adverse situation or

marked use of competencies in business. Thus entrepreneurship is the personal quality that enables people to start a new business or vigorously and innovatively expand an existing one, thereby maintaining and vitalizing the growth of an economic. Odeyemi (2004) defines Entrepreneurship as a process of organizing managing business and assuming the risk of an enterprise. According to Gannah (1998), entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities in an environment, and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. This position could be said to have an economic and managerial perspective.

Entrepreneurship and National Development

The role of entrepreneurship in national development as experienced in many countries of the world, mostly the Asian continent such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan India etc shows that entrepreneurship contributes substantially to national development. In Nigeria, where poverty is on the high side, this actually presents a persuading factor. Industrialization strategy can mostly be a way of inducing entrepreneurship development. Our society is not static; it keeps changing. In the past, graduates in Nigeria had the problem of choosing among the various opportunities waiting for them. Then possession of a good certificate was synonymous with obtaining a very attractive white collar job. But today, it is the survival of the fittest, the story has tremendously changed, there is a high rate of unemployed youths. Those who are lucky to secure one stand the risk of losing the job at any given time. The government on its part has little or no plans for the welfare and security of its workers due to irregular payment of workers salary, underemployment and poor condition of service. All these problems combined have led many citizens to illegal and anti-social business in Nigeria.

The importances of small-scale business differ from one type of business to another. Small-scale business cannot be fully explained without analyzing the major areas of business activities involvement, product manufacturing, and various types of product distribution and service to be rendered for accomplishing the activities. The existence of large manufacturing provides small manufacturers the opportunities, but mass production processes normally depend on the small production plant for the supplies and components, for example, motor vehicles, airplanes, refrigerators, radio T.V etc. The local manufacturing firms like printing press, bakeries, bottling, plants, etc are present in every community which provide the needed products for local consumption. The growth and expansion of community depends on the opportunities derive from local manufacturers. The middlemen in the channel of distribution sell products to the retailers. Mass production system depends on the small specialized manufacturing plant which, in turn, depends on small merchant and retail dealers to handle several thousand of different units of production from large manufacturers.

Consumer goods reach the last stage of distribution through wholesalers.

Majority of which are small business, that is large producers buys from numerous small and mostly local establishment, wealth of production to her people for immediate use, service businesses like bank, insurance, estate survey or provides several types of service to consumers, governmental agencies etc. Service business are organized in small employment with requirements of small initial investment depended on personal supervision for example the barber, watch repairer, cobbler shops have not achieved mass production.

In Nigeria, small business accounts for local and national economic growth; it cares for 60 percent of all private employment and about 20 percent of the nation's total output of goods and services (Ogundare, 2010) The Federal Government has spent money on the populace to discourage them from depending on white collar jobs by motivating small-scale businesses to function in the country. By this motivation, new jobs were created from small (labour intensive) companies. Hence, the vital economic importance of these small business units

Business Interdependence: All business activities life is based on interdependence. No modern business can stand alone; it must depend on other firms and sell either to different business owners or to customers in competition with many other businesses. This is to say that there is a place for individual that has something to offer and is able to offer it effectively. The establishment of small business has enabled large-scale firms to concentrate effectively on activities where their efforts are needed. A number of small wholesalers, retailers, industrial distributors etc transferred the finished goods to the last consumers. Without their middlemen within the states as sales representatives for big firm's warehouse, mass distribution of mass production would not be possible.

Furthermore, the producers of automobile, electronic gadgets etc which are of great importance to the world or society depend on hundreds of small independent services, establishments for the repair, up keep and maintenance of these products. Small firms perform also a wide variety of professional, technical and electrical services both for big business and other customers in need of their specialized skills and knowledge. Large-scale business and small-scale business work hand in hand during manufacturing process in some goods production procedure. Besides, it provides most component parts to feed large assembly lines including a wide variety of industrial supplies. Small-scale enterprises are also essential users of many products from big firms. Thus, big business cannot prosper without small business supplying its needs and buying its products.

Competitive Maintainability: Small-scale enterprises compete with big firms to cater for or ensure the system of free independent enterprise in order to avoid dominance by big firms over small firms. Different laws and edicts were promulgated in Nigeria in recent years. The aims and objectives were to avoid or prevent monopoly and except this is done, the security and well - being of the small-scale firms cannot be realized. Competition is a vehicle of change through innovation or improvement. Business competition can be in terms of price, credit terms, service product

improvement, etc. The existence of independent enterprises is necessary if any nation is to maintain free competition of business activities.

Innovation: Ideas and inventions were normally provided by individuals and small-scale business through personal contribution to research and development. In most cases, small-scale business managed by their owners appear more innovative than large-scale firms publicly managed because people are able to discover new ideas relating to gain and profit in more direct way of motivation. Large businesses concentrate on products having steady or predictable demand but risky items are left for small operators. It can therefore be concluded that larger scale business support innovation when small independent enterprise has developed conducive markets for product sales. There are thousands of enterprises in Nigeria, which fall into the category of small-scale businesses. These include carpentry, pottery and ceramics, weaving, farming, fishing, piggery and animal husbandry, poultry, ceramics and metal work, retail trade, tailoring, dress making, mechanics, repair workshops, brick and block making, transportation etc. The bulk of Nigeria small-scale enterprise is in the commercial sector. The trend is now towards service industries. For example in 1980, the registered companies in the commercial sector totalled 2,080, representing about 38 percent of the total figure of 5,455 for that year.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

It has been earlier stated that no country in the world has met the required development in all ramifications except with proper function and efficiency of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship will definitely bring about national development, if the following are put into consideration

Education for sustainable development: Arogundade (2011) states that education for sustainable development seeks to equip the people towards creating a sustainable future. UNESCO (2000) in the same vein asserts that the way each nation cultural group and individual view sustainable development will depend on their own values. Hence, government policy should enhance education which will cut across all sectors and specialize in skill and development of talent rather than theory.

Improved vocational and technical education: Ojomoh (2002) opines that vocational and technical education is that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills and basic scientific knowledge. Vocational and technical education is an instrument to a buoyant modern economy as it is required for rapid growth and development and skilled manpower in all ramification of life. The education programme of every institution must be geared toward the achievement of the objectives of the National Policy on Education because the policy is a documented evidence of what the country wants her educational system to achieve. The goals of tertiary education, as contained in the National Policy on Education, (FRN, 2004 36) are as here under stated:

- (a) Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
- (b) Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and the society;
- (c) Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- (d) Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- (e) Promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
- (f) Forge and cement nation unity; and
- (g) Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

It is the belief that these goals are set out after fruitful deliberations by experts on the educational needs of Nigeria. Goal No. 59 (a) desires graduates of our tertiary institution to contribute to our national development after acquiring a high level relevant manpower training. Goal No. 59 (b) requires graduates to develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and the society. Goal No. 59 (c) expects graduates to develop the intellectual capacity of the individual to understand and appreciate their local and external environments. These and other goals stated above are important and relevant to the needs of our society. But how far these goals are being realized is an important question.

Realizing the Goals of the National Policy on Education for Tertiary Education

A true assessment of the situation confirms that a lot still needs to be achieved in the effort of Nigeria to achieve the goals of National Policy on Education. Can we validly claim that the graduates of our tertiary institution have acquired the high level relevant manpower training and are contributing to the national development? Any answer in the affirmative may be wrong because the facts are obvious from the sciences to the arts. What can our institution boast of?

Do we need statistics of inadequate facilities, unpaid wages, school closures, strikes, increasing poor teacher education, etc? In Nigeria, for example, which of the educational sectors has been viable in the past decades - Primary, Secondary or Tertiary? These questions should be answered with serious concern. It is not just enough to design a paper, beautifully articulated document called National Policy on Education without realistic efforts by the government towards its realization. "Most commentaries now lament the present uncertainties regarding the quality of education and educational standard". "Education in Africa is reduced to the substandard in which little or no learning is taking place, occasioned by: lack of classrooms, laboratories, libraries, workshops, desks, books, etc". These are no bogus claims. Let us reflect our minds to what the situation was in the past, what is on ground as of today and what the future will likely be if nothing is done. We should appreciate the past so that we can understand the present, and probably use the knowledge of today to plan for the future. In the 1970s an undergraduate in a Nigerian

university system could comfortably have a good laboratory to perform his practical tests even outside the lecture time because the materials were there.

Today, only few universities can afford laboratory experiments for their science practical and even where this happens the laboratory materials are in such small quantities that can only be managed when the lecturer is in the class teaching. Immediately he is out of classroom, everything is packed up. Then there were enough spaces for students to practice on their own. Why would student not join cults when the university does not have enough challenging works for them? The Engineering field is ever-changing. Technological advancements make instruments change and many of our polytechnics and universities, especially state owned one do not have the required machinery as the existing ones are obsolete. The same thing applies to the Arts Department. The older universities that managed to acquire books in the "olden days have books that are obsolete. Universities can no longer boast of having current journals and periodicals for research. Students cannot read wide because they have limited photocopied materials and monographs.

Arlam (2007) argues that human capital theory has power influence on the analysis of labour market thus investment in education and training produce benefits both to the individual and to society as a whole . The return on investment for society will be a skilled workforce that will enable global competitiveness and economic growth, while the return on individual will be a better career path, increased earning and a better quality of life. The World Bank policy paper on TVE (1991) says "that to get the maximum benefit to national development from TVE, certain factors must be considered.

- * Well - timed modern course linked to local and global demand
- * Relevant and up-to-date TVE courses need to develop.
- * Proper justification in respect of individual country at which level of schooling is best in offering TVE courses and
- * Wide range of TVE couriers need to be developed in terms of demand and cost effectiveness. .

It has been noted that vocational education is designed to offer training to improve individual general proficiency, especially in relation to their present or future occupations. But in Nigeria many of the vocational and technical education are also in theory, not in practice. Moreso, for Nigeria to experience a constant national development, government should also embark on youth empowerment programmes which will touch the masses in rural areas. There is need for governmental policy on entrepreneurship development to allow constant monitoring, evaluation and feed back for corrective measure. The school curricular should inculcate and give enough time for practical which in turn will help in developing the skills and talents of citizens. Government should equip schools with quality laboratory and workshops for practicals. Governments and organizations should embark on constant training and development programme for workers. Another important point is that continuity, in Nigerian educational system has been politicized. Without continuity of a policy,

Nigeria cannot get to her level of sustainable development. Finally, one of the problems of entrepreneurship in Nigeria is lack of capital; government should encourage Nigerians by giving loan to graduates to put into practice the knowledge they acquired in school.

CONCLUSION

Various sound economic programmes have been instituted by the Federal Government primarily to reduce poverty, unemployment and encourage entrepreneurship in Nigeria in the last three decades, yet none has worked. The real solution is mostly in our leaders and partly in the followers. We shall get result when we all think right, act right and take up challenge to develop entrepreneurship which, in turn, will lead to national development. Nigerian graduates should be encouraged that it is better to be a small head than to be a big tail, hence, to be an employer of people is better than to be a servant, whether civil or modernized servant. A servant is a servant and has little to offer in national development.

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