Entrepreneurship Education, a Lead to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) For Sustainability

By

EMMANUEL CHIMAOBI NOSIKE
Department of Social Sciences,
Federal Polytechnic, Nekede,
Owerri.

Abstract
Nigeria, a country richly endowed with both human and Natural resources is still facing object poverty as a result of unemployment of her active members of the population. Various independent estimates put the unemployment rate at more than 30 percent of the labour force indicating a higher percentage among graduates from tertiary institutions. Entrepreneurship education as believed by many scholars is a way of inculcating into students on how to own a corporate ladder rather than to climb on them. This paper therefore exposes some strategies for inculcating entrepreneurship skills in students and on how to develop our local contents for sustainability.

Nigeria is richly endowed with human and natural resources. The 2006 National population puts the Nations population at about 140 million people (NPC, 2006). This figure is nearly one quarter of sub-Saharan Africans population. Not Withstanding, the rich endowment of natural and human resources, most Nigerians still live below the poverty line. The NPC (2004) stated that out of every ten Nigerian, Seven lives on less than one dollar per day. Poverty manifests in many dimension which include unemployment, armed robbery, prostitution, political thuggery and all forms of evil. Poverty and unemployment with their attendant social ills have become monsters of the society. No nation has ever survived successive high rate of unemployment because of the attendant waste of human resources which it breeds (Igbo 2006). Nigeria’s future prosperity depends on breeding youths who are well equipped to take their place in tomorrow’s society. However, though successive governments in Nigeria have put in place various programmes and policies in order to solve these problems, there is still need to revise the National curriculum for schools to empower students with techniques that will enable them to measure, assess and have a
change in attitudes and behaviour. This involves an educational system that will equip students with skills and saleable ideas that will enable them become self-employed after graduation.

This paper is therefore divided into introduction, statement of problems, Theoretical framework, strategies for inculcating Entrepreneurship in students, small business opportunities and local content, problems of SMEs and the roles of government and conclusion.

Statement of Problems
Entrepreneurship education is presently neglected in Nigeria schools, yet this aspect of education is critical for economic development. Nigerians need to acquire skills in entrepreneurship so that they can become self-reliant. Though it is a well-known fact that entrepreneurial ability is very rare in the developed world but rarer in the under developed and developing nations like Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education has been grossly neglected by conventional institutions to the detriment of the product of these institutions. Students are taught on how to be good employers of labour. They are taught on how to climb a corporate ladder instead of how to own the ladder; how to excel in recruitment interviews and not how to interview people for recruitment. Thus, schools turn out graduates who cannot establish and become self-reliant. Consequently, many people who had the opportunity of earning a good income in their working days retire into abject or near abject poverty because they lack entrepreneurial ability. This is why you see highly educated person who lack entrepreneurial ability depending on pensions and gratuities that hardly come these days, and even if they are paid cannot afford the basic necessities of life as a result of the rising the cost of living and increased family and social responsibilities. Hence, you may have academic giants that are financially dwarfs. The converse is also true. There are people with limited formal education but who are adepts in skills and entrepreneurial ability. They are multi-millionaires but with limited formal education. The difference is the acquisition of skills and utilization of entrepreneurial capabilities. A good formal education combined with acquisition of skills and entrepreneurial ability is a sure way to financial freedom.

Theoretical Framework
Concept of Entrepreneurship
The term entrepreneurship is derived from a French word “entrepreneur” meaning one who undertakes tasks in production process. The word entrepreneur may be defined in terms of specific functions which the entrepreneur performs or terms of characteristics or activities generally associated with the entrepreneur. The concepts of entrepreneur have been explained by various authors in various ways. However, in all, the basic issue remains constant. For instance, entrepreneur has been defined by (Gana, 2001) as the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run the enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. According to Hisrich and Pelers (2002) an entrepreneur means different things to different people. To an economist, an entrepreneur is one who brings resources, labour, materials and other assets into
combination that makes their value greater than before and also introduces changes, innovations and a new order. To a psychologist an entrepreneur is a person typically driven by certain forces to obtain or attain something to experiment, to accomplish, or perhaps escape the authority of others. To a businessman, an entrepreneur appears as a threat, an aggressive competitor to another entrepreneur. He may be an ally, a source of supply, a customer or someone who creates wealth for others, as well as finds better way to utilize resources, reduce waste or produce jobs that others are glad to get (Vesper, 1980). An entrepreneur has been described variously. Some see them through the prism of words (Passion, leadership, tunnel vision, clarity of mind, focused etc). Others view it a as an inherited trait, while other insist that it is acquired. Gerber (2005), observed that all successful entrepreneurs posses the ability to perceive the world as a system and so an entrepreneur is a “system thinker” A system thinker is one who initiates and sees the whole of a thing, the entirety of it, the oneness of it, the integrated unity of it, as opposed to merely the sum of its parts. Such a person transcends the world in order to transform it. The entrepreneur is an inventor, sees purpose in everything; sees meaning in everything and if not, perceives everything, until the meaning becomes clearing. He is possessed by the meaning of things.

Theories of Entrepreneurship

Although there have been a lot of arguments as to whether entrepreneurs are born with it or they acquire it, Kurato (2003) believe that an entrepreneurship perspective can be developed in an individual. According to this author, it is becoming clear that entrepreneurship or certain facet of it can be taught.

David McClellan (1961), Everett Hagen (1962) also developed theories which relate entrepreneurship to society. While contends that a society with a generally high need of achievements may produce energetic entrepreneurs who will bring about rapid economic growth. Everett Hagen (1962), Buacus and Human (1994) and Metin Cosgel (1996) stressed that societies where children are raised democratically, encouraged to take initiative and be self reliant might produce entrepreneurs. These scholars point of convergence is that entrepreneurial response should vary systematically among ethnic or cultural groups, according to their environment, ethnic structure and child rearing values. They also argued that entrepreneurs can be trained to succeed.

Establishment and Management of Small and Medium Scale Business Enterprises (SMEs)

What constitutes small business is indeed very hard to define, however, the number of employees and minimal scales must be taken into consideration when explaining the meaning of small scale business.

A small scale business is any business that is owned, managed and controlled by a sole proprietor or partners of about two persons, (N 4,000,000.00) and relatively small share of the market and does not have more than fifty employees (Osuala, 2004). Babangida (1990) also referred to small-scale business as those who do not employ more than fifty people and have initial capital equipment of N600, 000.00. The context of small scale business is ever changing base on time. Osuala (1993) state that small
scale business is any manufacturing service, or processing outfit that has capital of one hundred and fifty thousand naira (N150,000.00). The third National development plan (1975-1980) considers a small scale business as one with N600,000 contentment in machinery and equipment and employing not less than ten people.

The world Bank in 1988 classified small and medium enterprise as an enterprise whose total fixed assets excluding land, plus working capital that does not exceed ten million naira (Ilyembe 2000). The National Economic reconstruction fund (NERFUND) pegs the ceiling for small business firms at N10 million plus cost of new investment excluding land.

SMEs are either sole proprietorship. Some are incorporated as limited liability companies but this is hardly reflected in their operations. Most SMEs have centralized management. They have limited access to long and short-term capital. They are largely dependent on local raw materials. They also operates with modest technology, which are often locally sourced.

**Strategies for Inculcating Entrepreneurship in Students**

Although there have been a lot of arguments as to whether entrepreneurs are born with it or they can acquire it. Kurato (2008) believe that an entrepreneurship perspective can be developed in an individual. According to this author, it is becoming clear that entrepreneurs or certain facet of it can be taught. Base on these prepositions, we will review different methods of inculcating entrepreneurship in students. Davis (2003) suggested that educators should use market oriented methods in educating youths in entrepreneurial skills.

Schammberger (1987) suggests the use of small business owners in educating the youths. Butler (1987) stipulates the use of junior executive games. This paper advocates the change of mindset of the students. This can be affected through the teachers, parents and the general public. it is generally believed that graduates are expected to search for work. But this perception can be changed by changing the mindset of the student that they can be self employed. The general public is expected to change their question of “where do you work” to “what do you do” if this syndrome is changed, it will redirect the mindset of the students that they can be job creators rather than job seekers. This system requires complete re-orientation of the students, parents and the general public. A change of this syndrome will help to inculcate the “spirit” of entrepreneurship in our student if they are assured that they are not expected to seek for job rather to create a job.

**Small Business Opportunities’ and Local Contents**

The fact is that with general education, interest, experience, acquisition of entrepreneur skills and managerial skill, any one can successfully invest in almost any area of small business. However, ones area of specialization and experience may offer some advantages that may be useful for successful investment in SMEs. The ventures that we are about mentioning are largely dependent on local raw materials. They also operate with modest technology, which are often locally sourced. With education and
training in related areas, one may have an advantage in investing in the following business areas, which are full of bright prospects for success.

i. Textile and clothing business such as fashion designing, tailoring, laundry and dry cleaning, fabric mechanizing etc.

ii. Hospitality outfits - Hotels, restaurants, fast foods, food processing, catering servicing, confectionaries etc.

iii. Production and sale of assorted crafts

iv. Crop and life stock farming, including fish and snail farming

v. Establishment of private school - Nursery, Primary, secondary etc.

vi. Various forms of consultancy services, institutional house keeping, day care centers.

vii. Interior decoration.

viii. **Mining and Agriculture:** these enterprises engage themselves in mineral deposits which they extract and put into use. They include quarry works, pot makers, farmers, orange growers, poultry farmers etc.

ix. **Manufacturing:** There are small manufactures such as printers, furniture makers, steel fabricators, boat builders, sawmill operators, weavers, leather workers, bakers and shoe makers.

x. **Wholesaling:** This serves as a critical link in the chain between producers and ultimate consumers, wholesalers perform a variety of vital functions in the economy. Generally, wholesalers make the channels of distribution of goods more efficient. Small wholesalers assist in the distribution of motor parts, food stuffs, hard ware, sporting foods, jewelleries, pharmaceuticals, electrical parts etc.

xi. **Retailing:** Retailers are also middlemen in the channels of distribution. The basic purpose of the small retailer is that, it is the purchasing agent for the customer rather than a distributing agent for the manufacturers. Many small retailers operate successfully in Nigeria and in other parts of the world. Examples of small retailing operations are plentiful: supermarkets, furniture stores, drugstores, petrol stations, shops, ice cream parlors, Mobile shops and others.

### Problems of SMEs in Nigeria and the Roles of Government

In almost every developing nation like Nigerian, action is being taken to establish, promote and revitalize existing SMEs either in a government sponsored or on private sponsored basis. In most developing Nations, the problems encountered in establishing these SMEs appear to be very similar. This paper is intended to focus attention on some of the basic problems of establishing SMES and to suggest the kind of social and economic climate which should prevail for a smooth operation under the following (a) Skills (b) finances, (c) Marketing

**Skills:** In Nigerian, certain traditional industries exist and therefore the necessary skills would be family or community with which the industry is associated. The problem therefore is the possibility of training the people so that they increase their output and quality of their products
Finance: This is an important aspect of the SMEs. The general problem of finance in relation to medium, small scale industries is enormous. The methods of financing different forms of small scale industries are by personal savings, through financial houses and favourable government agencies like the Nigeria Bank for commerce and industry (NDC) Industrial Development Centers (NDC) Nigeria Economic and Reconstruction fund (NERFUND) The Nigeria cooperative and commerce Banks (NACB), Small scale industries credit Scheme (SSICS), Small and medium enterprises development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN).

Market: The situation here comprises of several competitors and alterations in prices which are being frequently resorted to in order to attract customers. Price fluctuations are inevitable and there is uncertainty regarding the availability of savings for future investment. The small manufacturer is unable to gauge at which trends in both sales and the rate at which he should invest in order to continue in production.

The prevailing norms of lending by banks are normally strict and conservative and the small producers will not be able to obtain capital for takeoff because of inability to meet the bank requirements.

To a small unit, the biggest component under capital is working capital which is said to be always above 75% of the total capital. This is because small industries are usually labour intensive and the wage bill in expenditure would always go high therefore working capital is very important to the small entrepreneur. It is therefore easy to understand why adequate finances are necessary to the small entrepreneur and why special treatment is required. The returns to the rural farmer and smallness of his income must be looked into when giving credit. Credits are supposed to be given at reasonable rate of interest. If reasonable rate of interest is not available to the small manufacturers, they must have to borrow especially from traditional source like the money lenders whose rate of interest is traditionally exorbitant. As the rate of interest is high in most of our commercial banks, inability to repay or delay often results in marketing his personnel belongings to obtain further credit and this goes on till increasing debts leads to ultimate bankruptcy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the challenge to drive away poverty and unemployment is enormous. The economic growth of the Nation must receive a boost. The people must be empowered to revitalize our weakened social pillar. The educational system in Nigeria, at the tertiary level has a part to play. Tertiary education graduates must acquire sufficient entrepreneurial skills, and knowledge to be self employed and become wealth creators. Tertiary institutions must be equal to the task. Entrepreneurial education can be of immense help to everybody at every time irrespective of his or her educational attainment and background. This is because there is a world of difference between general academics and entrepreneurial education. It is pertinent to look inwards and utilize our local raw materials instead of exporting them in form of cash.
crops to the developed world. Our local raw materials can be utilized meaningfully with modest technology.

**Recommendations**

This paper recommends the following:

I. There is need to revise the national curriculum for schools to empower students with techniques and skills with saleable ideas that will enable them become self employed after graduation.

II. There is need to introduce entrepreneurship education in school curriculum which must be taught by experienced and educated business men (resource persons) who have made it in their various fields not actually academic giants because there is a great difference between academics and entrepreneurial skills.

III. Students should be taught on how to use local contents which operates with modest technology for self reliance.

IV. Educators, families and general public should help to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship on students by changing their normal question of where do you work? To what do you do?

**References**


