
Quality Entrepreneurship Education: A Panacea for Job Creation in Nigeria

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Abstract

The progress of a nation is a function of the level of the resourcefulness of the people which to a great extent, relates to the level of quality of the training and purposeful development of education in that nation. Such progress or development could only occur when an individual in the society is gainfully employed and per-capita income is enhanced. This could only be possible when government educational policies are geared towards a functional education that can lead to job creation viz-à-viz self reliance. Quality entrepreneurship education is a means through which government could attain such development in the society. Therefore, this paper examines how quality entrepreneurship education could help in job creation in Nigeria. The challenges of quality entrepreneurship education were also discussed. Finally, the paper advanced some suggestions on how to overcome the challenges so as to reduce unemployment and enhances job creation in Nigeria.

Education is the key to national development. This is because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people; empowers and equips individuals in society to participate in, and benefit from their national economy; facilitates economic development and provides the basis for transformation. Education is the essential tool for sustainability. The present global economic crises suggest that the entire world is in

a war between financial/qualitative education and catastrophe. (Aluwong, 2010)

Entrepreneurship education as part of the total educational system is the type of education that involves the acquisition of skills, ideas and management abilities necessary for job creation. An entrepreneur promotes employment rather than seeking for an employment. Therefore, there is a need to embrace this type of education and provide all the necessary resources needed to make functional. Quality entrepreneurship education could be used as a tool for fighting the war against poverty and unemployment in Nigeria.

Education is said to be qualitative when the input such as students, teachers, finance, facilities and equipment and all these are converted through teaching and learning (theory and practical) and produce a desirable output. The output is better equipped to serve themselves and the society. The quality of input influences to a large extent the quality of output. In other words, the quality of the input of entrepreneurship education such as teachers, students and infrastructural facilities will influence greatly, the input of the output (Olorunmolu, 2010).

Therefore, quality entrepreneurship education will enhance job creation which will subsequently reduce unemployment, poverty and social vices in Nigeria. This will also help to improve the standard of living; hence promote social economic and political development in Nigeria which is the cardinal objective of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Also, for the recipient of entrepreneurship education to be a job creator rather than job-seeker, he might acquire essential basic skills and attitudes which will enable him to function as an entrepreneur.

However, there are some challenges militating against the production of quality entrepreneur in Nigeria. These may come from the government, parents or even from certain unpredictable environmental forces which are external. Unless these problems are looked into, the realization of the aim and objectives of quality entrepreneurship education in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria will be a mirage. It is therefore, against this background that this paper examines quality entrepreneurship education: A panacea for job creation in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

In Nigeria and the whole world at large entrepreneurship is being seen as a key to economic and developmental process. When people are exposed to entrepreneurship, it is evident that they would be opened to opportunities that will enable them to become creative and productive. This will enhance job creation and improve the standard of living of an individual in the society.

Entrepreneurship education is an indispensable ingredient for job creation. Sanda(2010) asserted that Nigeria and other countries of the world are seeking to increase the entrepreneurship capacities of their citizens with the understanding that it will contribute to economic growth and development. Therefore, there is a need for quality entrepreneurship education if the recipient is to acquire appropriate knowledge, attitude, abilities and skills that would make them to be job creators instead of job seekers.

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Quality according to Hornby (2000) is the standard of something when it is compared to other things like it. That is to make the standard better so as to meet the targeted goals. The recipient should be able to acquire the essential knowledge and experience needed to meet life challenges.

Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people particularly the youths: to be responsible, enterprising individual who became entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by immersing them in real life learning experience whereby they can take risks, manage result and learn from the outcome (Suleiman2010).

Entrepreneurship education is teaching people that they can either take or create a job. This will enable them to be self-employed and not relying on other job security. Often, it creates new job for others at the same time. Entrepreneurship education training could be given to interested individuals both adults and students through workshops, classes, and conferences thereby learning basic ideas of starting their own businesses and keeping it running.

Entrepreneurial education is a specialized training given to students of vocational and technical education to acquire the skills, ideas and managerial abilities and capacities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay.

Osuala (2010) defined entrepreneurship education as a programme or part of a programme that prepares individuals to undertake the formation and or operation of small business enterprises which also includes franchise operations for the purpose of performing all business functions relating to a product or service with emphasis on social responsibilities, legal requirement and risks for the sake of profit involved in the conduct of private business enterprises.

From the above definition, it is evident that entrepreneurship education could turn around the economic fortune of Nigeria by providing jobs and reduce the unemployment rate in Nigeria hence reducing the poverty level of Nigerians. It could also help an individual to identify investment opportunities and help them to harness untapped natural resources in Nigeria in order to produce the goods and services needed in the country. These will no doubt reduce or eliminate poverty and help to increase per capital income in the country which is one of the cardinal points of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education

The objectives of entrepreneurship education clearly show that it is concerned with the development and survival of both the individual and society. Infact, it is a tool through which social, economic and political development could be achieved. If it is properly planned, funded and implemented. The objectives of entrepreneurship education are spelt out by Osuala (2010) as

1. To provide meaningful education for youth which could make them self-reliance and subsequently encourage them to drive profit and be self-independent
2. To provide graduate with the training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size business.

3. To provide graduates with training skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society.
4. To provide graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.
5. To stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed area.
6. To provide graduate enough training leer will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities.
7. To provide small and medium sized companies with the opportunity to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to management of the business centre.

From the above objectives, it is evident that this type of education if it is given all it deserves and properly implemented will produce quality graduates that will foster job creation and reduce or eliminate poverty in Nigeria. This could be realized when the graduates are self-reliant by establishing their own business small/medium scale enterprises.

Job creation is one of the cardinal objectives of Millennium Development Goals. When an ample job opportunities is created it will invariably help to reduce poverty and enhance better standard of living of an individual in Nigeria. Job creation is an act of making work in which one receive regular payment available to the citizenry. That is creating an enabling environment for ample employment opportunities in the society. This is done by establishing cottage, small/medium scale enterprises in Nigeria.

How Quality Entrepreneurship Education Could Help in Job Creation

Quality Entrepreneurship Education plays a vital role in the social, political and economic development of any Nation. This is possible when jobs are created for the citizenry by establishing a lot of businesses that will accommodate the unemployed youth in Nigeria. A qualified graduate of entrepreneurship education would have acquired enough skills relevant to management of small business centre.

- Creation of self-employment. An entrepreneur provides job for himself by establishing small business centre. This, according to Aiyeduso in Olorunmolu (2008) helps to reduce the problem of unemployment and other social vices in Nigeria. The entrepreneur does not only provide jobs/employment for himself alone, but provides for others too. This in turn helps the individual to increase per capital income hence improve standard living.
- The Entrepreneur determines or identifies the specific wants of the people and the type of goods and services that will fulfill those wants most comfortable. Emeruwa (2005) asserted that the entrepreneur does not only identifies but mobilizes and organizes the resources to tap the opportunities by assisting men, materials, money and machines to explore the opportunity.
- Production of goods and services that is important to the well-being, comfort and happiness of individuals in the society at large.

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- Entrepreneurship stimulates rural, economic and industrial development. They contribute to the development of rural areas. They do this by establishing their small/medium scale enterprise in such areas by discouraging rural migration. They provide ample job opportunities to the rural dwellers. They also provide goods and services, which could be found in an urban area and sometimes provide infrastructural facilities.
- The entrepreneurs are usually motivated in their activities not only by the need for material contributions to the welfare of the communities but also desire to make profit. This uplifts the dignity of labour.
- Through entrepreneurship education, utilization of local resources are made possible. The graduates of this specialized education set up their small/medium scale business, which will enable them to utilize the local resources available in their vicinity. The uses of local raw materials are discarded by products of large firms as primary input in their production processes. Owualah in Olorunmolu (2008) asserted that in terms of their economic benefits small firms can be said to be greater in local resources maximizes than their large counterparts. The provision of raw materials for the big firms help them to increase their production hence employ more personnel thereby creating jobs for unemployed youth in the country.
- Through entrepreneurship education, A pool of potential entrepreneurs who are well equipped with skills and technical know how to manage small/medium scale industries are produced. This will equally help in job creation. Through quality entrepreneurship education, Nigeria could produce a lot of entrepreneurs who could establish and manage businesses on their own.

Based on the above merits, it is no doubt that entrepreneurship education could be used as major weapon in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by empowering the individual in the society to be self- reliant. This will help reducing poverty in Nigeria.

Challenges of Quality Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Quality Entrepreneurship Education could played a vital role in equipping individual with necessary intellectual capacity, skills and right type of work habit and attitude to be able to create jobs for the growth of the Nigeria economy. However, what is quite essential is the extent to which the entrepreneurship Education programme can be implemented to realize these goals. The programme is confronted with a lot of challenges which brought a setback in the attainment of its objectives. These challenges have not enable Nigerian to enjoy the benefits of this programme as expected. This limits the achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs) in Nigeria.

Some of the challenges have been pointed out by eminent scholars such as Gana (2000), Aiyeduso (2004), Osuala (2010) and they include:

- Poor funding by government and Non-governmental organizations.
- Poor or ineffective planning, supervision information and evaluation of the programme across the board.

- Inadequate teaching materials, equipment and infrastructural facilities.
- The challenges posed on globalization, information and communication technology (ICT) have effect on curriculum, methodology, facilities, staff and equipment.
- Inadequate qualified teachers and instructors as well as supporting staff at all level.
- Inadequate motivation for available teaching and non teaching staff which affects staff efficiency, retention, creativity and initiative.
- Emphasis on theoretical Knowledge rather than practical knowledge due to lack of entrepreneurship education centre.
- High level of corruption and very poor maintenance culture in the system.
- Poor enabling business environment, access to credit/ loan, infrastructural decay, mass poverty, inflation, technological infraction, political instability and insecurity of lives and properties which hamper economic and business activities.

Conclusion

This paper has made an exposition on the vitality of entrepreneurship education as a potent tool for equipping beneficiaries to emerge as job creators in the crucial Nigeria's business and economic environment. The paper is however, of the strong opinion that for the programme to attain this very critical objectives the challenges affecting a must be optimally addressed with a view of addressing them.

Recommendations/Suggestions

In view of the foregoing discussion, the following recommendations are put forward as measures to take in handling the situation.

- Streamlines entrepreneurship education curriculum along the lines of practical skills acquisition in tandem with up to date technological innovation in the world of business.
- All institutions of higher learning offering entrepreneurship education should be mandated to establish Entrepreneurship Education Centre. This Centre should be equipped with all the modern facilities which could enrich the students with both theoretical and practical skills acquisition.
- Students Industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) should be enhanced and made more effective.
- Government and Non governmental agencies should provide enabling environment and such environment be sustained for assurance. Such as infrastructural facilities, water supply, modern information technology (ICT) among others.
- The fight against corruption and indiscipline should be continued with vigor at all levels and sectors.
- Effective supervision and evaluation of programme implementation and funding must be ensured on a continuous basis.
- Emphasis must be on practical skills rather than on theoretical because the business world is dynamic and there is a need for constant change. This could be

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done by enhancing more credits to students industrial work experience scheme (SIWES). That is by increasing the period from four months to six months.

- More universities should be made to run entrepreneurship education as a discipline like Accountancy, sociology, psychology etc. This will solve the problem of inadequate qualified staff to teaching the course in our institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

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