

ENTREPRENEURIAL, LIFELONG EDUCATION AND SCIENCE EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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Abstract

This paper examined the meaning of entrepreneurial, lifelong education, different variations of entrepreneurial, lifelong education, effects of science and technology on learning, the contributions of different bodies like United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), National Teachers' Institute (NTI), and National Open University of Nigeria noun on improving entrepreneurial, lifelong education in Nigeria. The challenges of lifelong learning in Nigeria and the way forward.

Entrepreneurship education is the education that seeks to provide student with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Lifelong education like entrepreneurship education is an ongoing, voluntary, and self pursuit of knowledge, Lifelong, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. Therefore, both not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also self-sustainability, as well as competitiveness and employability.

Variations of entrepreneurial, lifelong education are offered at all levels of schooling from primary to secondary schools through university programs. Kale-Ere, (2015) stated that Nigeria tertiary institutions are on the increase which produces an average of eighty thousand graduates each year thereby making the employment situation more critical. Entrepreneurial, lifelong education can salvage such situation of unemployment if properly articulated and implemented. This is because it is structured in such a way to illuminate the enterprising youths, men and woman to create a world of their own by providing for themselves, the family and the nation at large. Entrepreneurial education can be oriented towards different ways of realizing opportunities e.g

- Opening a new organization: majority of university program teach entrepreneurship in a similar way to other business degrees. However, the UK higher education system makes distinction between the creativity and innovation aspects,

which it sees as a precursor to new venture development. Here enterprise is defined as an ability to develop multiple ideas and opportunities that can be made real, and entrepreneurship defined as the development of business acumen that can realize the full potential.

This enables any discipline that is subject to the U.K higher Education's Quality Assurance Agency for higher education's guidance, to offer subject-based entrepreneurial curriculum.

- Again, is Venture Creation Programmes (VCP) in these programs the student launch a new business as an integral part of the learning process. The most comprehensive VCP programs therefore also run a business incubator on site and operate over a long time period e.g (1-2 years).

- Another approach is to promote innovation or introduce new products or services or markets in existing firms. This approach is called corporate entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship and was made popular by Gifford Pinchot (2000)

- A recent approach involves creating charitable organization designed to be self – supporting, the same time doing good works. part of public sector entrepreneurship has now come into being in the government sector with a mandate on innovation and customer service. This started in the policies of the united kingdom under Margaret Thatcher and the united states with Ronald Reagan.

- Entrepreneurial is also seen as a way of developing skills such as risk taking and problem solving which facilitates achievement of both life and education goals.

Variations of lifelong learning include:

- Home schooling which involves learning to learn or the development of informal learning patterns.

- Adult education or the acquisition of formal qualifications or work and leisure skills later in life.

- Continuing education which often describes extension or not for credit. Courses offered by higher education institutions

- Knowledge work which include professional development and on-the-job learning.

- Personal learning environment or self directed learning using a range of sources and tools including online applications.

- E-learning available at most colleges and universities or to individuals learning independently. There are also online courses being offered for free by many institutions.

Source: Lifelong learning-Wikipedia

One new 2008 and beyond expression of lifelong learning is the massive open online course (MOOC) in which a teacher offers a syllabus and give directions to the participants. They do not offer “credit “ for courses taken, that is why they are a useful examples of lifelong learning and are very interesting.

Effects of Science and Technology on Learning

During the last fifty years constant scientific and technological innovation and changes has had a profound effect on learning, needs and styles. Learning can no longer be divided into a place and time to acquire knowledge (school) and a place and to apply the knowledge acquired (the Workplace). Instead, learning can be seen as something that take place on an ongoing basis from our daily interactions with others and with the world around us. It can take the form of formal learning or informal learning or self-directed learning “life-long learners created by lesile walkins and used by professor Clint Taylor and Superintendent for the temple city unified school districts mission statement in 1993, the term recognizes that learning is not confined to childhood or the classroom but takes place throughout life and in a range of situations. Allen Tough(1979), Canadian educator and researcher, asserts that almost 70% of learning projects are self-planned.

As technology rapidly changes, individuals must adapt and learn to meet everyday demands. However, throughout life, an individuals functional capabilities changes. Assistive technologies are also important considerations under the umbrella of emerging technology and lifelong learning. Access to informal and formal learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities may be dependent upon low and high tech assistive technology.

Web 2.0 technologies has great potential to support lifelong learning endeavors, allowing informal just-in-time, day to-day learning. Constant changes emerging as the new normal. In order to survive and thrive, organizations and individuals must be able to adjust, and enhance their knowledge and skills to meet evolving needs. Thus, means the most important thing someone can learn is how to learn. An understanding of web 2.0 tools is critical to keeping up with a changing world and the information explosion.

The professions in particular are recognizing the importance of developing practitioner to be lifelong learners. Nowadays, formal training is only a beginning: knowledge is accumulated at such a fast rate that one must continue to learn to be effective (William 2001) indeed, most professions mandate that their members continue learning in order to maintain their license to practice (Mirrian, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007).

Characteristics or Skills of a Lifelong Learner

Reflective learning and critical thinking can help a learner to become more self-reliant through learning how to learn, thus, making them better, able to direct, manage and control their own learning process. Candy, (1909) and Sipe (1995) studied experimentally “open teachers” and found that they valued self- directed learning collaboration, reflection, and challenge, risk taking in their learning was seen as an opportunity not a threat, Dunlop and Grabinger (2003) make the case that in order to prepare students in higher education to be lifelong Learners ,we must develop their

capacity for self-direction, meta cognition awareness and a disposition towards learning (Merriam Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007).

Lifelong learning is being recognized by traditional colleges and universities as valid in addition to degree attainment. Some learning is accomplished in segments or interest categories and can still be valuable to the individual and community. The economic impact of educational institutions at all level will continue to be significant into the future as formal courses of study continue and interest-based subjects are pursued.

The institutions produce educated citizens who buy goods and services in the communities and the education facilities and personnel generate economic activity during the operations and institutional activities. Similar to health facilities, educational institutions are among the top employers in many cities and towns of the world. Whether brick and mortar institutions or online schools, there is a great economic impact world-wide from learning, including lifelong learning, for all age groups. The lifelong learning learners including persons with academic or professional credentials tend to find higher paying occupations, leaving monetary, cultural and entrepreneurial impressions on communities according to educator Cassandra Whyte (2002).

In India and elsewhere, the “University of the Third Age (U3A) provides an examples of the most spontaneous emergence of autonomous learning groups accessing the expertise of their own members in the pursuit of knowledge and shared experience. No prior qualifications and no-subsequent certificates feature in approach to learning for its own sake and as participants testify, engagement in this type of learning in later life can indeed prolong active life.

Sometimes lifelong learning aims to provide educational opportunities outside standard educational systems which can be cost prohibitive, if it is available at all. On the other hand, formal administrative units devoted to this disciplines exist in a number of universities. For example, the academy of lifelong learning is an administrative unit within the university wide professional and continuing studies unit at the university of Delaware in Newark, US, Jagiellonian University Extension- one of the most comprehensive polish centres for lifelong learning.

Open and distance learning (ODL) is playing a vital role in lifelong learning. Bangladesh Open University (BOU) is a great example of that. BOU has 6 schools and is offering 23 formal and 19 non-formal programmes and students’ number is 378,382 (according to 2010-11 enrolment number). Most of the course of BOU are for professional development and most of the students are professional people who are getting scope of study in flexible hours. From BOU profile, Bangladesh open university is the only public institution in the country that impacts education in distance mode. In place of campus based teaching, this university uses technology including electronic devices to reach people in different corners of the country.

A learner can think and learn at his own will, at his own place and at anytime whenever he/she feels free to learn.

Challenges of Lifelong Learning in Nigeria

Nigeria an example of developing country is promoting lifelong learning to its citizens through higher education e.g distance education according to (Yusuf 2006). The provision of lifelong learning in Nigeria is not an easy thing with the government and the higher education institutions. This is because of lack of infrastructure and other challenges limiting the access. According to (Awe 2012) many studies have shown that it is extremely difficult to meet the demand of lifelong learning in higher education, because of the traditional system of education (UNESCO 2005, Yusuf 2006, and Noun 2012) As a result, the ideas of distance education have risen in prominence (Ogunleye, 2013).

The federal Government of Nigeria (2004) has over the years recognized the place of open and distance learning in achieving lifelong education and affirms that lifelong education should be the basis of the nation's education policy. United Nations Educational, Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as an international organization plays an important role in education and training across Nigeria (Okebukola, 2013). The organization has a great influence in promotion of lifelong learning in higher education. (Omoyemi and Ajaji, 2012). The general aim is to ensure free access to education to all citizens. UNESCO assisted the distance learning institution to undertake research for the development of lifelong learning, as well as funding relevant projects and programmes such as training the trainers and reflective programmes, to assist Nigeria in achieving its objectives for lifelong learning development in the country (NOUN,2012). Among the other contributions of UNESCO in the promotion of lifelong learning in human resource development in Nigeria in collaboration with National Teacher's Institutions (NTI), National open university of Nigeria (NOUN) and the other institution in the country (Abdurrahman & Danaher, 2010).

UNESCO has considered distance education providers as a primary engine in maintenance of the economic standard of living and to improve human capital development (Ajayi,2010) others include: improving practice in building a body of organized education to develop learners abilities and to enrich their knowledge, mobilizing stronger and sustainable support to literacy programmes through effective advocacy, making changes in the selection of students in the secondary schools, avoiding segregation and inequalities in schools through funding strategies that schools needs so as to design a comprehensive system of education, introducing new initiatives in education which implies expansion of learning opportunities, qualitative changes in the existing educational system, different learning activities, settings and changes in the timing of learning activities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the study of meta cognition originally, gave education psychologists insights into what differentiated successful peers, it is increasingly being

used to inform teaching that aims to make students more aware of their learning processes, and show them how to regulate those processes for more effective learning throughout their lives.

Higher education educators can employ Cognitive Strategy Instruction (CSI) as a means to help learners develop their metacognition. As entrepreneurial, lifelong learning is lifelong, lifewide, voluntary, and self motivated learning to learn, meta cognition is an essential step in improving and developing both entrepreneurial and lifelong education.

The Way Forward

- Developing countries like Nigeria need focused and good leaders who will aggressively conquer the educational problems and put us on education geared towards entrepreneurial, lifelong development and industrial development.
- Engaging professionals: knowledge transfer by engaging educational professionals from the developed nations will fasten entrepreneurial, lifelong growth and development in the developing countries.
- Good planning, organization and co-ordination.
- Good planning backed up with proper organization and co-ordination in the execution of educational programmes with high level of consistency and commitment from every governing unit of the county will prosper entrepreneurial, lifelong education in the developing countries.

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