
GLOBAL CHALLENGES OF TEACHING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By

Nmodu Idris

*Kogi State College of Education (Technical),
Kabba,
Kogi State.*

Abstract

Teaching is an act of transmitting knowledge, skills and values from the teacher to the learner. Teaching is complete only when it achieves the desired set goals. That is, knowledge and skills acquired by the learner must have impact on the individual and society. If these skills are properly utilized education takes its root. It is only then entrepreneurship can emerge from a vacuum (an empty man) so, education is a key in the process. Most often the curriculum designed for the Nigerian education system over-emphasized cognitive development with little attention to pragmatic approach or skill and value orientation to make education functional. This has been a global challenge acknowledged by several scholars who had studied and proffered strategies to this trend. This paper looks at entrepreneurship education globally and attempts made by different nations at making education functional and implications for Nigeria as a nation. The paper recommends among others curriculum review at all educational levels to teach entrepreneurship in early school life.

The ultimate aim of teaching is to achieve learning process which means positive change in the totality of man's experience, knowledge and value system. Through learning the individual acquires new ideas, skills and behaviours to apply to his environment. The process of learning is complete when the learner utilizes the acquired knowledge and experiences in the solution of given problems. According to Tanko (2011) this kind of education provides knowledge, skills, values and other forms of behaviour that will make individuals useful to themselves and the society in which they live.

Thus, the country needed to explore and expand her educational system to meet her needs to accommodate emerging challenges (Ojerinde, 1998). An educational system that is not dynamic can hardly cope with functionality and relevance to development issues. It is the concern of this paper therefore to conceptualize entrepreneurship, overview various attempts adopted by different countries of the world

to impart entrepreneurship and the challenges. Finally, X-ray its implications for Nigeria as a nation.

Conceptualization of Entrepreneurship Education

The development of any nation is greatly dependent on the level of educational attainment of its citizens and progress in science and technology among other variables. The education policy on technical and vocational education in Nigeria is made to identify and develop skills in individuals and to help them harness and develop talents in them into valuable development strategies. In the study by Vayin (2011), to achieve a viable economy for the benefit of the nation, members of the society must be knowledgeable and skilled enough to face the challenges of development. In addition, proper teaching of science, technical and vocational subjects is a prerequisite for the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (NPE, 2004).

In view of the massive unemployment among youths and graduands and its resultant effects on society, there are calls from government, individuals and organizations for entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship is the process of creating a business enterprise capable of entering new or established markets. While entrepreneurs are people who have the ability to see and evaluate business opportunities; to gather the necessary resources to take advantage of them and to initiate appropriate action to ensure success (Erikanselu and Oyende, 2009). Generally, it is the ability of individuals or group to function in specific manner coordinating other factors of production – land, labour, capital to produce goods or services for societal development.

Entrepreneurship education is therefore perceived differently by scholars from primary school to tertiary level, depending on the acquired skills and knowledge and the expected outcomes.

Aims and Objectives of Teaching Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is mainly concerned with the inculcation of entrepreneurship knowledge and skills for self – reliance. Aspects of entrepreneurship education include technical and vocational education which involves the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (NPE, 2004). The National Policy on Education (2004:30) stated that it would achieve its goals for technical and vocational education through understanding it as:

- an integral part of general education;*
- a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work;*
- an aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship;*

Global Challenges of Teaching Entrepreneurship...

*an instrument for promoting environmentally sound sustainable development;
a method of alleviating poverty.*

The objectives of entrepreneurship education according to Dana (1992) in Osuala (2002) presented as adopted by Durham University Business School, England to include:

1. Providing meaningful education for the youths which could make them self – reliant and subsequently encourages them to desire profit and be self – independent.
2. Providing small and medium size companies with opportunities to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to management of the small business centre.
3. Providing graduates with training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size in skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society.
4. Providing graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy, stimulating industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed areas and
5. Providing graduates with enough training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities.

In their study Lee and Wong (2002) viewed the objectives of entrepreneurship education as an attempt to increase awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option and enhance the understanding of the process involved in initiating and managing a new business enterprise. To achieve these objectives aspect of the entrepreneurship education to be taught to enable one to be viable for self reliance must include the following topics among others as noted by (Osuala, 2002).

1. Starting a new business,
2. Source of finance to start a small business, knowledge of the basic business environment, innovations in information processing and small scale business, risks management, location of small scale business, record keeping in small scale business. As part of renewal subjects as agricultural science, veterinary medicine, fine and applied arts, mechanical/electronic engineering, food science technology, carpentry, home management are areas of interest to incorporate into the school curriculum. The teaching of this kind of education must shift from the paradigm of cognitive (knowledge) development to inculcating proper skills, values and knowledge to having the ability to think creativity, to work in team, to manage risk and handle uncertainty (OECD, 2009). This aspect of education according to the body can be delivered at different levels of educational systems primary, junior and senior secondary schools and the tertiary institutions and private and non – government organisations. When the required skills, values and knowledge

are acquired, the individual is adequately empowered to be self – reliant and also provide employment opportunities to others.

Harding (2007) remarked that in the UK and USA people with more enterprise education in particular are significantly more highly represented among entrepreneurs than others. It implies that creating awareness on entrepreneurship at all levels of formal and informal education will galvanize awareness of its importance. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor study makes a strong case for institutionalizing arrangements which support entrepreneurial education national and internationally. This becomes expedient because people learn to be entrepreneurs through their social context and formal education process and experience (Chell, 2008).

Global Attempts at Teaching Entrepreneurship Education

The concept of entrepreneurship has actually become a global phenomenon and concern, developed and developing countries have come to realize the need to embrace and infuse the concept into their education process as critical panacea to reduce poverty, unemployment, sustain growth and development. Different viewpoints, approaches, strategies and practices emerge to assist the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship.

In Nigeria, the educational institutions where teaching and learning take place are often under funded and ill – equipped to cope with the contemporary challenges. However, experts keep calling for curriculum review in the education sector and paradigm shift towards skill acquisition, value and functional education to reduce youth unemployment, restiveness, poverty and other social tension after graduation. There are moves in Nigeria to identify inherent opportunities which can develop into huge business with a high financial profile. In Nigeria government has directed that Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in collaboration with the African Leadership Forum approach the challenge of poverty and unemployment. Several initiatives such as National Directorate for Employment, National Poverty Eradication Programme, FADAMA, Graduate and non- graduate training in skill acquisition are steps undertaken. All the initiatives focus on skill acquisition and provision for starting up from micro-level to operate a successful business. In his report Ojekunle (2011) stated that an Entrepreneurship Development Centre-Divcon Educational Foundation, Lagos had trained 12,000 Nigerians during the last three years. This implies that by 2013 on sustained and continuous basis 16, 000 Nigerians would have been trained. This paper therefore overviewed approaches in other Countries of the world with the view of establishing its implications for Nigeria’s development.

United States of America

By 2008 the US economy was in mortgage crises with a wider meltdown of the financial sector and global recession. In a survey carried out by the Kauffman

Global Challenges of Teaching Entrepreneurship...

Foundation (2007) it was reported that 70% of Americans embraced and viewed entrepreneurship as key to solving their economic crises.

Germany

GEM (2006) surveyed and reported that cooperative capitalism contributed to relatively low level of entrepreneurship activity. But, a turn around was reported using the specialization of the German model whereby activity is shifted and concentrated around technologically advanced sectors such as engineering, chemicals and motor vehicles (ERAWATCH, 2007). The economy is further driven by the following: close relationship between private business and state authorities, becoming member of chamber of commerce by compulsion, cooperation and setting of cartels in mineral resources, mining – coal, iron and steel, banks display mediating behaviour with financiers to offer credit facilities to propel and drive the economy.

France

The France model of entrepreneurship is founded on a relatively high level skills–base. Engineers, designers and technicians play a key technological and aesthetic role in the national economy. Entrepreneurship reaches its apex in high intellect activities in critical infrastructure sectors and mobilization and care of people towards equipment engineering, which mobilize resources toward national development.

Italy

The general perception of Italians was that entrepreneurs are exploiters, tax evaders operating at the expense of other people. Soon this became replaced with a new perspective of dynamic entrepreneurship heading to economic miracles, build around individual production into industrial districts. These constitute small and medium scale firms in different phases. They relied on social structure, local trading practices, bond of trade between people. This led to diffuse entrepreneurship.

China

Liao and Sohman (2001) reported that entrepreneurship in China took three main approaches:

- i. Small scale enterprise activity (self employment).
- ii. Highly educated individuals who chose to set – up larger businesses.
- iii. Foreign educated individuals who had returned to China to start business.

The hitherto policies and regulations were removed to allow funding, productive labour supply and technology flourish. Later in 2004 Reynolds, Bygrave and Autio, (2004) showed that entrepreneurship is now recognized as an integral element in China's economic advancement.

India

The 1991 new industrial policy allows private sector participation in economic activities came to remedy the state of affairs of India. The abolition of the industrial licensing system paved way for foreign direct investment and private investment in critical areas. The capital markets were well motivated to protect individuals investment. Bagchi and Pal (2003) stated that the development of the industrial sector trickle down, to other sectors bringing all round development and alleviating India's poverty.

Implications and Challenges for National Development

Entrepreneurship world wide was been realized to be an indispensable career option to national development in view of the world economic melt down. There is the urgent need to diversify the economy. Prominent stakeholders in Nigerian economy argued that the two major challenges undermining national development efforts were poverty and unemployment, hence the need to equip the youths with entrepreneurial skills (Ojekunle, 2011).

This paper overviewed attempts and strategies adopted by six countries selected from different parts of the world. As can be observed, the strategies range from sensitization of private and foreign investors including diaspora, adequate funding of industrial and training sectors, access to credit facilitated by government less stringent policy on licensing system (certificate of incorporation), collaboration with non-governmental and international technically based organisations for training.

As it has been established that entrepreneurship assumes world affairs, the question is to what extent is the awareness in Nigeria? What strategies are put in place to address under-development vis-à-vis poverty and unemployment through entrepreneurship skill acquisition? The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the African Leadership Forum have come together sometime ago to approach the challenges of poverty and unemployment. The establishment of NDE and NAPEP are initiatives that have been reported ineffective due to negligence to technical skills required to operate.

However, the current FADAMA, youth and women skill impartation and empowerment, graduate and non-graduate skill acquisition training in NYSC Camps and various centres make wealth creation for national development. Again, research and development on topical issues can enhance educational entrepreneurship.

From the forgoing, what is required in Nigeria for effective teaching of entrepreneurship is to re-focus and re-direct our energies to core subjects leading to technical knowledge and skills throughout educational levels. It also requires curriculum renewal and adequate funding. One emerging trend in post secondary

Global Challenges of Teaching Entrepreneurship...

education is to link an entrepreneur minor to a major in specific career such as music, art and craft, technical works, sports, play, information technology, etc.

Again, it is challenging to prepare teachers in entrepreneurship training to identify missing indexes to adequately impart students to reduce rate of attrition, poverty and unemployment after graduation.

Conclusion

From the forgoing entrepreneurial skill acquisition is paramount to fight poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, disease and other social vices under-mining the unity and peaceful co-existence of Nigeria. The contemporary challenge globally is how to acknowledge and encourage massive growth, participation in small and medium enterprises through functional education. This implies an increasing need to teach specific knowledge, skills and values to translate this into realities. Entrepreneurship education is basically an alternative economic tool for human emancipation and national development in developing countries like Nigeria. It imparts the philosophy of do-it-yourself culture. The inspiration of this paper emanated from this backdrop to address key strategies to adopt for a rapid national development.

Recommendations

This paper therefore recommends the following for adoption to bring the desired transformation:

1. Curriculum renewal at all levels of education system to teach entrepreneurship in early school life.
2. Provision of adequate funds, equipment, skilled personnel and facilities.
3. Funding of research in processes of becoming entrepreneur as the case in US and Germany.
4. Memorandum of understanding between government, private investor, as practiced in Germany and China.
5. Mentor – mentee relationship in training teachers, youths and prospective entrepreneurs as observed in Italy, Germany, France and China.
6. De – freezing the capitalist ideology through trade liberalization to permeate distributive and competitive economy as in Germany.
7. Provision of adequate security to lives and property of foreign investors as in India and US.
8. Establishment of more functional skill and vocational / craft centres across the country to check social vices and anti-government activities.

References

- Bagchi, S. & Pal, D. (2003). *Entrepreneurship and Indian economy. Role of government policies in entrepreneurship development.* [http://papers.ssm.com/so/3 papers. Cfm?](http://papers.ssm.com/so/3_papers.Cfm?)
- Chell, E. (2008). *The entrepreneurial personality. A social construction.* 2nd edition. Hove: Routledge.
- Enikanselu, S.A. & Oyende, A.I. (2009). *Entrepreneurship development and management of small scale enterprises.* Lagos: Olas Ventures.
- ERAWATCH (2009). *Country specialization report. Germany European communities.* Europa.eu/erawatch/accessd.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education* (4thed) Abuja: NERDC.
- Harding, R. (2007). *Global entrepreneurship monitor 2006 UK report.* London: Business School and Babgon.
- Kauffman Foundation (2007). *2007 report on the road to an entrepreneurial economy. A research and policy guide Ewing Marion* [http://www.kauffman. Org/pdf/entrepreneurial-roadmap-2pdf](http://www.kauffman.Org/pdf/entrepreneurial-roadmap-2pdf).
- Lee, L. & Wong, P.K. (2006). *Entrepreneurship education. A compendium of related issues.* Lanalee@.nus.edu.ng.
- Liao, D. & Sohman, P. (2001). The development of modern entrepreneurship in China. *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs, spring* (1) 27 – 30.
- OECD (2009). Evaluation of programmes concerning education for entrepreneurship. *Report by the OECD working party on SMES and entrepreneurship, OECD.*
- Ojekunle, A. (2011). *Tackling un-employment through entrepreneurial skills.* <http://www.the.nigeriadaily.com>.
- Ojerinde, D. (1998). Renovative and renewal of education in Nigeria in Badmas, A. & Osiyale A.O. (eds). *Private and community participation in education Nigeria. The Nigerian Academy of Education.* Akoka: JAS publishers.

Global Challenges of Teaching Entrepreneurship...

- Osuola, E.C. (2002). *Principles and methods of business and computer education*. Nsukka: Godjirkson publication.
- Reynolds, P.D., Bygrave, W.D., & Autio, E. (2004). *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report GEM*. Germany: GEM publications.
- Tanko, B.A. (2011). Enforcing discipline in Nigeria school system for the actualization of vision 20:20:20. *The Belt Journal of Education* 2 (2) 143.
- Vayin, N.J. (2011). The challenges of teaching entrepreneurship in Business education in the current Millennium. *The Belt Journal of Education in Nigeria* 1 (1) 139.