

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: KEY TO BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES' SURVIVAL IN NIGERIA

Adegbenjo, Abimbola Olunike

Abstract

With the rate of unemployment soaring high, the hope of survival left for graduates of any discipline is self-employment, which is made possible by entrepreneurship education. Against this background, this paper examines the opportunities open to Business Education graduates in Nigeria; Business Education graduates can establish business like Business centre, private vocational school and so on. The paper recommends that Business Education students should be encouraged to participate in SIWES programme, since work experience is expected to stimulate desirable attitudes towards work and that Entrepreneurship Education' should be infused into Business Education curriculum in order to inculcate necessary knowledge, skills and abilities in students.

Introduction

Business Education is one of the educational programmes which prepares an individual for employment in business related occupation and self-employment. It is therefore, necessary to develop and restructure our Business Education curriculum to include Entrepreneurship Education so that Business Education products (graduates) can gain employment, establish vocational business outfit or combine both.

The philosophy behind Business Education is to prepare its graduates for work to earn their living and for the development of the society. The National Policy on Education (2004), stated as one of the national education goals; "the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society". The National Council for Colleges of Education also, stated that the objective of Business Education "is to equip graduates with the right skills to engage in a life of work in the office as well as self-employment".

Makeri (1990) defined Business Education as educational programme that prepares students not only for entry into and advancement in job within the business, but also prepares individuals to handle their own business affairs and to function intelligently as consumers and citizens. Olufokunbi (1995) described Entrepreneurship as a function of production, the possession and utilization of those attributes that enable one to first of all recognize a need and the opportunities to gain from meeting the need and then assemble the other factors of production, raise the necessary money, organize the management, make the basic business policy decisions, and reap the gains of success or the losses of failure. Tucker, in Kautz (1999), stated the following as the characteristics of entrepreneur: Self-confident, Independent, Flexible, Creative, Knowledgeable, Versatile and Diligent. Bechard and Toulouse (1998) said that entrepreneurship education is a collection of formalized teachings that informs, trains, and educates anyone interested in participating in socioeconomic development through a project to promote entrepreneurship awareness, business creation, or small business development. Against the above backdrop, this paper will examine the following

- ❖ Objectives of Business Education
- ❖ Entrepreneurship in Business Education
- ❖ Job opportunities for Business Education graduates

- ❖ Benefit of Entrepreneurship
- ❖ Conclusion
- ❖ Recommendations

Objectives of Business Education

- Osuala (2002) stated the following as the objectives of Business Education:
- To enable students to explore and learn about the world of work and the relevant interest and

- career areas of their choices.
- To help every student to become an intelligent consumer of goods and services.
- To provide the students with the necessary occupational information to enable them to understand the various occupations found in the world of work.
- To enable students to acquire skills in the fields of their choices.
- To enable students prepare for, choose, enter into and progress in occupation of their choice.
- To enable the students to realize the business courses within their University preparatory programmes.

Entrepreneurship in Business Education

Business Education as a component of Vocational Education has the role of preparing people for the enterprise as employees, Entrepreneurs/employers and/or self-employed. Business Education involves training in skills and competences, which are very necessary for gainful employment in the world of work.

Entrepreneurship education which is an aspect of Business Education involves the identification of persons with entrepreneurial skills and developing such skills in them. The rationale of Entrepreneurship Education is to prepare Business Education graduates with quality and number of entrepreneurial knowledge, competence and skill needed to lead the future. It offers students an incentive for thinking creatively about an industry and broadens their understanding of the career opportunities in industry. It also serves a complementary role of developing the occupational knowledge, job skills and work experience which Business Education provides; and more importantly, it offers opportunities to students for job experience and for earning, saving and investing money at an early stage in life than one's peers.

Uwameiye (1994), opined that it has been the traditional role of Vocational Education (which Business Education is an integral part) is to prepare students in occupational knowledge, job skills and experience. The purpose of Vocational Education is gainful employment. It can then be said that the purpose of education is defeated if the graduates after acquiring the necessary skills for employment cannot be gainfully employed and neither can the training be said to be successful if the graduates are only temporarily employed in jobs which lack job satisfaction.

Therefore, Business Education graduates are properly trained on how to be self-sufficient or reliance through entrepreneurship education, which can greatly reduce unemployment in our society.

Job Opportunities for Business Education Graduates

Business Education can be seen as both General and Specialized Education, and the philosophy behind Business Education is to prepare its graduates for work, which will earn them their living, and for the development of the society. There are several job opportunities open to Business Education graduates for their survival because Vocational training and knowledge can be utilized for successful business ventures. Any of the following vocational oriented jobs can be undertaken by Business Education graduates.

Office Work or Paid Employment

Teaching, Cashier, Secretary, Bank Officer, Receptionist, Marketer, Computer Operator, Bank Clerk, Mail Carrier, Account Clerk, Postal Clerk, Purchasing Agent, Telephone Operator, Manager, Public Relation Officer, Insurance Agent Typist, Bank Cashier, Accountant, Bank Manager, Sales Manager, Administrative Manager, Administrator, Salesman.

Self Employment

Establishment of Business Centres: Business Education graduates can establish business centres by their training in order to earn a living. Since Business Educators are trained on how to use modern machines like Typewriters, Computers, Photocopiers, Duplicating machines and so on; it is very easy for them to establish business centres instead of looking for a paid job and at the same time they can be employers of labour because they may need to employ operators that will be working for them. Through this they have contributed to the development of the country economically.

Establishment of Private Vocational Schools: There are people in other fields that are interested in acquiring secretarial skills like Shorthand, Keyboarding, Information technology and so on because Business Educators that are competent in these areas are in the best position to impart the knowledge

and develop the skills into the lives of interested individuals. Private vocational schools can later develop to commercial schools if the teaching can be handled by competent and qualified personnel in a situation where there is need to employ workers.

Consultancy: Business Education graduates can become consultants by giving expert advice to people on how to establish a business or register a business. They can also provide professional advice or career guidance on various professions academic, skill and personal requirements or challenges.

Supplying and Distribution: A Business Educator can become a supplier and distributor of goods and services through the knowledge acquired in business courses instead of looking for a paid job; a Business Educator can start business on his own by supplying and distributing goods in large or small quantities.

Product Advertising and Promotion Services: Business Education graduate can engage himself in advertising and promotion services instead of looking for a paid job.

Estate Agent: A Business Education graduate can become an estate agent through the knowledge acquired in business courses. He can serve as an agent to the land or houses owners that want to sell or lease out their properties and any other activities that estate agent can engage in. As an estate agent Business Education graduate do not need to look for paid employment but instead he becomes an employer of labour because this type of service cannot be rendered by a single person.

Petty Trading: A Business Education graduate can become a petty trader by selling different kinds of goods. If this business can be managed effectively, the owner can become a wholesaler or manufacturer in the future.

Stationery Shop: Business Education graduate can have a stationery shop by selling stationery like book, pen, ruler and so on. Efficient and effective management of this type of business can make the owner become a wholesaler or manufacturer in the future; and this will make the owner contribute to the economic development of our nation.

GSM Business: Business Education graduate can engage in GSM business like having a phone call centre, sales of GSM starters pack, sales of handset and repairs and maintenance of handset. The owner of this business can become an employer of labour instead of looking for paid employment and still contribute to the economic development of Nigeria.

Sales of Office Machines and Equipment: Business Education graduate can make use of knowledge acquired in Office Practice, Secretarial Duties, Accounting, Communication and other courses by engaging in sales and distribution of office machines and equipment. If this business can be managed effectively, there will be no need for paid employment.

Benefits of Entrepreneurship

A lot of benefits emanate from entrepreneurship; they are:

1. **Economic Growth:** One of the important benefits of entrepreneurship is economic-growth. Entrepreneur cannot do the work all alone, he certainly need the services of other people for him to be successful in the business, because of this, he will need to employ workers. As an entrepreneur (the owner of the business) and employer of labour, he has contributed to the economic growth of the country.
2. **Self Reliance:** Self-reliance is the ability to rely on one's effort. Entrepreneur as the sole owner of the business does not need to rely on anybody to earn a living but rely on himself for his survival. Since he is the owner of the business, he has the joy of being the sole ownership of the business; the success or the failure of the business is determined by his effectiveness on the job. He does not need to look for job but instead he becomes an employer of labour.
3. **Satisfaction of Maslow Hierarchy of Need:** An Entrepreneur has the joy of satisfying the highest level of Maslow hierarchy of need which is self-actualization, that is, realization of one's potential for continued self-development. He is highly motivated being an employer of labour instead of employee under somebody.
4. **It Reduces Youth Delinquency:** Since an idle hand is a devil's workshop, youth delinquency will be reduced drastically because graduates will not need to look for paid employment but instead they will establish business on their own. This will certainly reduce unemployment rate in Nigeria and there will be availability of both skilled and

- unskilled labour.
5. Serves as a training ground for an entrepreneur that will venture into bigger business in the future. If entrepreneur can manage small business effectively and efficiently, it will encourage him to venture into large-scale business in the future.
 6. Stabilization of the economy of the country by creating wealth through proceeds from the foreign exchange from the international trade.
 7. Stabilization of the economy of the country by creating wealth e.g. the profit made on the goods and services is re-invested back into the economy.
 8. **It Gives Room for Creativity and Self-Development:** Creative is the ability to create things in an imaginative way. Entrepreneur must be creative, by being creative it will make entrepreneur to venture into any kind of business especially business that is quite different from the one that has been in existence in that environment; at the same time it will enable the entrepreneur to diversify into a new line of business when there is need for it. Also, entrepreneur needs to develop himself by embarking on market research to enable him to know the need of the customers for him to have large market shares.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Entrepreneurship Education should be integrated into Business Education curriculum in order to inculcate necessary knowledge, skills and abilities in students.
2. The learning environment should be made a replica of the work environment. Students should be provided with the machines and equipment for proper skill acquisition.
3. The teaching and learning of Business Education should be strengthened and made more sensitive to changes in the modern office.
4. Business Education students should be encouraged to participate in SIWES programme, since work experience is expected to stimulate desirable attitudes towards work.
5. Business Education teachers should be properly oriented and involved in related entrepreneurial ventures so that they can serve as models for the students to emulate.
6. Government should provide loans to Business Education graduates to establish their own ventures instead of roaming about the street as a result of unemployment.
7. Nigerians should be encouraged to buy or promote locally produced goods instead of relying on foreign goods, to ensure markets for goods produced by entrepreneurs.
8. Only qualified Business Educators should be employed to teach Business Education and they should be re-trained from time to time in order to meet the demands of the changing office.

Conclusion

The growth rate of unemployment in the country today is very alarming and disheartening. This is confirmed by the numerous numbers of our graduates roaming the streets of our cities looking for jobs and the incessant retrenchment of able-bodied, productive and young people by the various employers because of the prevailing economic recession.

Graduates are therefore, expected to assess their own peculiar aptitudes, abilities and skills that will help them to discover or rediscover their peculiar gifts. Having done this, Business Education graduates will overcome the problem of unemployment and will be able to survive if the knowledge, skill and abilities acquired can be put into productive use.

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