

# ENTREPRENEUR AND FUNCTIONAL METALWORK TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF VISION 2020 IN NIGERIA

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## **Abstract**

Vision 2020 is a project designed to place Nigeria among the first twenty developed countries of the world by the year 2020. This could be a reality by the time educational system become fully functional. This functionality is achievable only if the system goes hand-in-hand with equipping the students with tool of enterprises. The paper looks at the way out by bringing the entrepreneurial benefit of metalwork as a means of producing students with skills and potentialities of improving the economy through the establishment of small and medium scale enterprises in metalwork. At the end, the paper sees industrial attachment as a means of attaining the entrepreneurial and functional metalwork education in Nigeria.

## **Introduction**

The intention of federal government can not be more than making education fully functional by introducing entrepreneurship as a course in our tertiary institutions on one hand and universal Basic education (UBE) at primary and junior secondary level on the other. By this, students are exposed to marketability of our abundant recourses for them to explore. It is believed that most people especially graduates restrict their thought of survival to their acquired qualifications, rather than exploring other means or avenues. Another reason for taking this approach is to bring changes from the believe that government is the only source of employment especially to graduates.

## **What is Entrepreneurship?**

According to wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2010) entrepreneurship is “the act of being entrepreneur”. This word entrepreneur which originated from French in late 19<sup>th</sup> century is interpreted as “one who undertake innovations into economic goals”. Historically “entrepreneurship reaches back to the work of Richard Camitillon and Adam smith in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century” (wikipedia, 2010). Putting innovation into practice could “either be starting new business or revitalizing mature organization in response to a perceived opportunity” (wikipedia) 2010. Therefore, entrepreneurship is a tool toward the development of a nations economy. Most of the advanced countries developed their economy through entrepreneurship. It is through this avenue which their people are engaged especially those who are at the age of retirement as observed by Global entrepreneurship monitors, 2010 that by the time they reach their retirement age years half of all working men in United States probably have a period of self-employment of one or more years, one in four may have engaged in self-employment for six or more years.

Audvetsch, an American Economist and one time director of the Research Unit of Entrepreneurship Growth and Public, Max planok Institute of Economic Jenave, Gevmay affirmed that “such activities are the major driver of economic growth in both the United State and Western Europe” (wikipedia, 2010). Also Joseph Schumpeter an Austrian Economist stressed that “the innovation and technological change of a nation comes from the entrepreneurs”, because he believed

that “these people make things work in the economy of the country” (wikipedia, 2010). With this, issues of economic development in Nigeria rest with our seriousness towards the development of entrepreneurship education and practical engagement and commitment of government in financing entrepreneurial activities and to avoid political statement.

### **Entrepreneurship and Education**

In the industrialized economics of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, giant corporations and conglomerated have largely replaced the individual owner-operator, but there is still place for the entrepreneur. Because in small business as well as in the developing economics like that of Nigeria and other third world nations, by integrating entrepreneurship into education system as asserted by Tony Blair (former British Prime minister) at a public lecture to the Fabian society, London that “entrepreneurship will become a core skill which all our young people will need to exploit the opportunities emerging from science and technology” (Encarta, 2009).

Redirecting the world economy towards sustainable development through entrepreneurship as a viable means, Nigeria must face it in order to develop young entrepreneurs; and join the rest of the world toward economic development and stability as other nations have done.

Though Nigeria has established Business Technology Incubation Centres, this is not enough; there is need for entrepreneurial forums, meant for discussing issues purely on entrepreneurship like many countries that have such forums. Examples of such are the following:-

- ❖ The Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development Canada (CEED)
- ❖ Centre for Entrepreneurship Education in Portugal (CEEP).
- ❖ Swedish foundation for Small Business Research.
- ❖ Demark Dynamic Business Plan. Com
- ❖ Enterprises Olympics, Canada.
- ❖ Let’s Make Company, Japan.

It is very important to draw our attention at this point by realizing how far back Nigeria is in terms of development of entrepreneurship education with reference to the above and the following quotations made by international scholars and industrial chief executives, that:-

1. “Education is the clearest path to individual opportunity and societal growth, and entrepreneurship education is especially vital to fueling a more robust global economy”.  
Dirk Meyer, President and CEO, AMD.  
World Economic Forum, 2010.
2. Preparing today’s students for success and eventual leadership in the new global market place is one of the most important responsibilities in education today.....  
Entrepreneurship education is an important tool to achieving these objectives”  
Stephen Bell-Rose, President Goldman Sachs foundation and Thomas, W. Dayzant, Harvard Graduate School of education.  
Source:- World Economic Forum, 2010.
3. “Both public and private sectors have important roles to play in advancing entrepreneurship around the world, including through enabling effective entrepreneurship education” .  
Craig R. Bavett, Chairman of the Board, Intel Corporation.  
Source:- World Education Forum, 2010.

4. “Entrepreneurship has become and need to be sustained as a social movement we need new ways of thinking about education to entrepreneurship for social inclusion..... evidence and examples urge action to advance entrepreneurship education globally”.  
Dr. Shailendua Vyakarnam, Director, Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning, University of Cambridge.  
Source:- World Economic Forum, 2010

The statements above are self explanatory in the sense that the message is clear. Vividly one can see the relationship between educational development, economic development and society sustainability through entrepreneurial and entrepreneurship education. There are also indicators which show entrepreneurship education as most effective means of producing strong and sustainable economic drivers globally. There is also world view and believed that entrepreneurship education as universal learning programme that is applicable and befitting in all human Endeavour. It is along this line in its mission statement, the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education affirmed that “to incorporate entrepreneurship education within all disciplines, to infuse students with the entrepreneurial midget and encourage our members to work together to create educational opportunities to meet the demand of global economy”.

### **Nigeria Vision 2020**

Nigeria vision 2020 is a programme initiated by the late President of Nigeria Umar Musa Yar’adua as part of his government policy in an attempt to develop Nigeria as a country. The mission statement of the programme as given by the minister of Economic Planning Dr. Shamsudden Usman “by 2020, Nigeria will be one of the 20 largest economies in the world, able to consolidate its leadership role in Africa establish itself as a significant player in the global economic and political arena”. To attain to this level, means that so many vital sectors have to be not only involved but actively made functional as much as possible. The programme include areas as given by Voice of Nigeria, thus that document on vision 2020 on course covering twenty-nine thematic areas prepared by National Technical working groups (NTWG) which include agriculture, foreign policy, mineral and metals, health, education, water and sanitation, culture and television, business environment and employment.

In its comment. The Guardian observed that the programme “anchored on two specific targets. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of not less than \$900 billion and national per capital income of not less than \$4,000 by the year 2020”.

According to Business Support Group (BSG) a vision 2020 subcommittee headed by Alhaji (Dr.) Umar Mutallab, vision 2020 has the following thematic areas:- capital market development agricultural and agro-allied, power and energy, manufacturing, banking, financial services, transportation, education, tourism and culture, oil and gas (up stream and down stream), construction, employment, information technology, insurance, telecommunication, SME and entrepreneurial development and urban and regional development.

**Source:-** Vision 2020 BSG subcommittee.

From the listed areas, one will believe that this forum is addressing two areas which are the backbone of all the remaining, that is education and entrepreneurial development. It is worth mentioning at this point that vision 2020 is achievable only if government would address youth

empowerment through patriotism, even though many of our people are still pessimistic and skeptical about our ability to attain our vision 2020. The reason for this skepticism by experts who follow events is not unconnected with Nigerian factors based on past events as reported by Daily Independent that “our stand is on the fact that even as we aspire to become one of the top 20 in the world, recent data on governance by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation shows that Nigeria is at present number 35 in Africa”.

This added weight to the fact that “at the moment Nigeria GDO is about \$315 billion which makes it 41<sup>st</sup> largest economy in the world by purchasing power parity; National per capital income is less than \$1,400; the country generates less than 2,800mw of electricity; and has a population of about 149 million..... this is against the backdrop of the country’s woeful performance in the implementation of past policies, Including National Rolling Plans, National Development Plans and National Budgets”.

The paper further stated.

Despite these lapses, it is a matter of serious commitment and not political slogan or “at best an awesome ambition”, Nigeria can achieve but not necessarily 2020.

Therefore it is the utmost believe of this paper that Nigeria will succeed in the vision 2020 programme especially by marrying it with entrepreneurial and entrepreneurship education. Nigeria is not the only country to have vision programmes as the visioning process also seems to have recently become popular with many countries. India, for instance, has a vision 2020, which it is using to pursue its target of becoming one of the first four global economies. Also 2020 could not be mandatory because other countries have projected more years for example while China vision 2050 with objectives of eradicating poverty, establishing the country as a world power in science and lifting the average lifespan of its citizen to 80 years; both korea and indovesia have equally visioned 2030.

With this, Nigeria need only to commit all administration to a common development roadmap to attain to its vision 2020.

### **Metalwork Technology Education and Vision 2020**

Education in general terms is to bring changes not only in the behaviour but also in “mental, social and environmental development” (fagge, 2009) such objectives can be obtainable with function curriculum which will give birth to entrepreneurial environment.

To attain to the focused objectives is to redirect the training content toward functional education by incorporating into the teaching and learning techniques the entrepreneurial avenues of Metalwork Technology via the entrepreneurship context.

The course content of Metalwork Technology education which is more of practical is made up of two parts, namely fitting or benchwork and Machining (fagge, 2009). The 2004 Nigeria Certificate in Education minimum standard has specified apart from the core technical courses, entrepreneurship education courses at 200 and 300 levels with the objectives of imparting the required knowledge in formation and establishment of enterprises.

The above courses have the objectives of preparing the minds of the students toward self-reliance after graduation. This is to enable the graduates have foresight in their future and to build in them the spirit of self struggle. Taking metalwork Technology into consideration constituted many areas of specialization which generally falls into two categories as mention earlier that is fitting and machining. Within these two catteries specialist or trained personnel which could either be craftsmen, technicians and technologists. This is in line with the objectives of technical and vocational education

as contained in the national Policy on education (2004) which among them is “to give training and impart the necessary skill to the individual who shall be self-reliant economically”.

It is apparent to mention at this juncture that since among the objectives of technical education self reliance “this implies that curriculum at all level of education should include ideas of how to start a business” (Sambo, 2005). To achieve this entails that for “metalwork technology education graduates to become successful entrepreneurs, they must pass through rigorous training in their trade course and entrepreneurship course” (Bodmus and Titus, 2009).

### **Conclusion**

By the foregoing, it can be concluded that Nigeria vision 2020 is achievable by full commitment of federal government in making education functional through the development of entrepreneurial processes and enhance the institutions. This means that Nigeria will be having people in metalwork technology with high level of practical skills and entrepreneurial initiatives.

### **Suggestions**

1. Federal government should review the vision 2020 and change it to vision 2030 due to the lapses identified.
2. Federal and states government should establish entrepreneurial centres for discussion issues and formulating programmes purely on entrepreneurship like that of Canada, Denmark, Sweden etc.
3. Metalwork technology students should be posted to metal industries for their industrial attachment similar to other technical and engineering fields.
4. Technical education graduates in general should made to produce feasibility report for establishing businesses in their area of specialization as part of their final year project.
5. Federal ministry of education should come up with a course on entrepreneurship to be offered at both university, polytechnics and colleges of education like what is happening in Malaysia.
6. Banks that are charged with financing SME should soften their conditions for obtaining loans to prospective entrepreneurs.

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