

ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AS MEANS OF ACHIEVING THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF VISION 2020 IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper presents some contributory roles of academic libraries to achieving the national objectives of vision 2020 in Nigeria. Some of the roles include provision of information resources at the grassroots level that will compliment academic activities within the parent organizations of the libraries, acquiring entrepreneurial education and improving the living standard of some Nigerians through the technical section of the academic libraries.

Introduction

The individual's capability to earn a decent living tells a lot about him as a person. Infact, it is another way of showing how successful an individual can be in his or her life time. Therefore, every reasonable human being tries hard to see that he provides all his needs and that of those he is responsible for their up keep. This definitely helps an individual to earn the society's respect, confidence and trust. But it could only be achieved through an individual's hard work or group concerted efforts with the high need for achievement, motivation and common sense.

On the other hand, total reliance on government at whatever level to provide jobs and welfare for the citizenry had been a serious obstacle to nation building because people become unaware of the economic opportunities, business environment, preparation for business plan, improving motivation for achieving self development techniques as well as self confidence to become self reliant. This lack of awareness on these important areas of nation building has created serious unemployment problem for Nigeria as a country and other developing nation, and has also been a major set back to economic growth. It is therefore common knowledge that government of developed and developing nations cannot provide for all in terms of jobs and social amenities. Alternatively, the citizens in collaboration with the government, have to device means for self employment and self reliance. One of such available means is through the acquisition of entrepreneurial education which is internationally recognized as an alternative to salaried employment.

It is therefore the belief of the writer that entrepreneurial education and functional Academic Libraries' services can serve as a very strong strategy for achieving the National objectives for vision 2020 in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship and Vision 2020

The available literatures on entrepreneurship within the reach of the writer have clearly indicated that; Entrepreneurship is about having feelings that one could take charge of his future in terms of self reliance and improving the society through economic growth. It is also about having the zeal, confidence and motivation to start a business irrespective of one's background and the society where he comes from. This is why Knight (1921) and Drunker (1970) as cited in Entrepreneurship (yrs) believe that:

Entrepreneurship is about taking risk. The behaviour of the entrepreneur reflects a kind of person willing to put his or her career and financial

security on the line and take risks in the name of an idea, spending much time as well as capital on an uncertain venture

Onuaha (2007) cited in the same publication described entrepreneurship as “the practice of starting new organizations or revitalizing mature organizations, particularly new business generally in response to identified opportunities”.

Entrepreneurship can also be seen as a means of making serious impact on one’s neighbours and his community for positive development as opined by Mariotti (2009: 29) thus “Entrepreneurship is about having a positive impact on immediate community and society in general”.

Consequent upon a careful analysis of the definitions so far cited, one can easily understand that entrepreneurship and Vision 2020 have so many things in common. The main objectives of entrepreneurship are to provide economic freedom to an individual by way of creating a fulfilling work life for oneself and to arm the youth with the basic knowledge of starting a business or revitalizing the existing ones so as to have sense of importance and seriousness of purpose. Similarly, Vision 2020 in Nigeria has similar packages which could be translated as its national objective set to be achieved by year 2020.

To support this, Shehu (2009): 17) opined that:

Vision 2020 as expressed through its nine challenges (Mahathir,(yrs) 404-405) as cited in Leong and Teir-Fouch (2000) has an economic agenda is about standard of living and the social agenda is about quality of life. Standard of living, measured by per capital income is what money can buy and is rather straight forward.

Also, Vision 2020, according to Maslow (1952) cited in Shehu (2009: 17) may be interpreted as:

The vision for the year 2020, or better still as a formulation of prefect Vision. Maslow postulated that people have a hierarchy of five needs, namely; physical security, status, autonomy and self-actualization needs to which ecology needs may be added.

Shehu further added that Inderison (2001) defined the ideal vision as “transforming the present disgruntled society into a happy one in which one and all are empowered to enjoy all six Maslow needs”

Entrepreneurship Education, Academic Library Services and Vision 2020 National Objectives

Obinyan (1999:126) cited in Kumar (2009) observed that: “A library is a collection of human culture and intellectual works in diverse language and formats preserved, organized and interpreted to meet broad and varying needs of individuals for information, knowledge, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment”. Academic Libraries are the types of libraries established in an academic environment to cater for the academic information needs of the users. Therefore, for the growth and development of a modern society, communication of knowledge has become increasingly important.

Also the knowledge is becoming increasingly complex and the same is true about the means of communication of knowledge. Entrepreneurial education which has been introduced into standard academic curricula is being taught as either a regular or general course in the institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the role of academic libraries in this regard cannot be over emphasized. It is

because of the powerful relationship between libraries and entrepreneurship, that a writer of book called “the young entrepreneur’s guide to starting and running a business” (Steve Mariotti) acknowledged the honour done to this book by a New York public library by naming the first edition of the book one of the top ten books in its field for young people in America.

Kumar (2009: 4) observed that:

A modern library with a few exceptions is regarded as a service institution, its aim being to enable the use of the resources and services of the libraries. This type of library acquires material, processes it and makes it available for use and provides services to its users.

Academic Libraries are made of two different types libraries namely; School, and tertiary Institutions. All the two types are located within an academic environment. They are also regarded as social institutions which are expected to perform certain functions. A school library for example, is part and parcel to a school set-up. It exists to serve the objective of its parent organization (i.e. the school) A school library plays a very important role in helping the educational system to achieve its goals. Since entrepreneurial education is part of the school curriculum, (Business Education), the school library can acquire information resources on the area, process and disseminate the relevant information to the users which include both teachers and students.

Through this, the users can acquire the knowledge and skills which can enable them to participate fully in entrepreneurial activities. It also encourages and provides facilities for independent learning and self propelled study both within the syllabus and beyond it. To support this, Ibetoh (1998) stated that; “Teaching is an important aspect of learning experiences provided by the school library to pupils and students by storing instructional materials for use in teaching and learning”.

As literature of so many subject areas including entrepreneurship are acquired, processed and organized in the school library for the users, reading habit can actually be developed and it can really play important roles in the development of one’s intellect, skills and modern nation. Absence of it especially at grassroots level (Primary and Secondary schools level) breeds illiteracy which Osunkoya (1985) believed “is the most serious handicap for economic, political, social and individual development”. He however further provided a solution to this through one of the roles of a school library. He stated that; “the use of books for social, economic, political, culturel, spiritual and technological developments can not be disputed and the library is primarily the institution designed to serve this purpose”.

To further explain the relationship between school library, entrepreneurial education and Vision 2020, Opeke (2001) stated that “Textbooks as well as other learning resources in the audio visual formats will need to bring culture, science, technology and reflective thinking effectively into the classroom”.

Commenting also on the same issue Akobi, (2008) believed that:

Libraries play a very significant role in the social and educational development established to encourage good reading habit, promote independent study and make profitable use of its role, they can be said to be crucial centres in the educational development of a person at any level of academic pursuit.

Obviously, all the impressive comments quoted above from different scholars on the ways to achieve the educational, cultural and scientific objective through school library are an indication that the school library could be a gateway to achieving the national objectives of Vision 2020 in Nigeria. This is so because the national objective set to be achieved in Vision 2020 already quoted at the beginning of this write-up are quite similar with the objectives designed to be achieved through the services of a school library. Therefore, it is worthy to note at this point that, the school library as a medium of education is essentially needed as the establishment of the school itself. It is an integral aspect of the educational process that must be considered for the attainment of broad objectives of education which is also an important aspect of the national objectives of Vision 2020.

Tertiary Institutions' Libraries

These are the types of libraries established in the tertiary institutions of learning. They are also established to serve as supportive arm of the academic activities of the parent organizations. They serve as disseminators of knowledge of various kinds. It will be very difficult to have excellent academic programme in any tertiary institution without a functional library. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002: 47) believed that "Libraries of Colleges, Polytechnics, Schools and Universities are not adjuncts to their parent institutions but parts of them, and should be perceived as the hubs from which all intellectual activities should radiate to all academic and research programmes". This indicates that the libraries in the tertiary institutions play significant roles in the field of education by way of acquiring the relevant information resources for all the courses offered, organize and disseminate the information to the users. University library in particular, helps to update the curricular contents of the courses offered in various disciplines, enlivens and enriches the teaching and "to the extent the students get involved in University research, it broadens their outlook and raises them from the level of passive listeners to that of active participants in the learning process" (Aguolu and Aguolu 2002: 48).

Furthermore, economic agenda is one of the objectives of Vision 202 which in other words is meant to improve the living standard of the citizens. This could also be achieved through the academic libraries in tertiary institutions. Most of the libraries in the institutions of higher learning have bindery and automation units, in bindery section; a lot of occupational activities like binding, book mending and photocopying services do take place. Many youths have become professionals in this regard and secured loans to open their private bindery sections and photocopying centres. Many were also recruited to handle such centres. Many have also been engaged at the automation units or virtual library sections making economic business. This, no doubt has greatly assisted in the realization of the national objectives of Vision 2020 in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurial education, functional academic Libraries and vision 2020 are tripartite strategy for nation building. The dividends designed to be achieved by the teaming youths under entrepreneurship programme coupled with the national objectives of Vision 2020 set to be achieved can hardly be realized unless supported by some complementary agencies like the academic libraries.

Recommendations

In consideration of the above points, the writer recommends as follows.

1. The federal government should as a matter of policy, involve the tertiary institution's libraries in the sensitization campaign on the national objectives of Vision 2020. This is based on the

consideration that these academic libraries have large number of users who are mostly youths and therefore, the potential beneficiaries of the packages in Vision 2020. Available literature on entrepreneurial education and Vision 2020 should be provided into the tertiary institution's libraries for knowledge dissemination to the teeming users.

2. Academic Libraries should be well funded by the Government so that they can acquire the relevant literature and also equip their technical service units like binding and Virtual/Electronic Libraries so as to render consultancy services.

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