

# TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

By

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## **Abstract**

*Nigeria as a developing nation is struggling to keep to the trend of events in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The struggle to sustain social developments, including economic stability by engaging the youth into viable business through skill acquisition programmes. Countries like Singapore, India, Australia, and the Europe have gone far in the development of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) hand-in-hand with entrepreneurship education as means of imparting the skills and capacity building to develop business. Building the necessary skill and knowledge in business setting are the prerequisites for successful economic development. This success can be achieved through proper training in TVET and entrepreneurship education and the practical approach towards industry. While our institutions of higher learning have their mandate of training the youth the pedagogies on one hand, the industries should provide the real life situation through lectures and visit. In this respect, the paper studied the success of countries with similar approach for Nigeria to emulate and to redress her effort towards grooming the youth by involving the industries and other stakeholders in solid business foundation for proper and sustainable*

*economic development. Successful entrepreneurs and industrialists should be part of TVET and entrepreneurship curriculum development.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Education, TVET, Training, Youth, Development

Knowledge is a developmental tool for human beings by attending educational institutions leading to or causing changes to make life comfortable. The environment causes man to think on how to alter its scenario by improving both natural and man-made features suits his needs. These changes initiate use of tools and equipment to simplify the tasks involved. The idea of tools and equipment led to the development of technical and vocational programmes for the purpose of acquiring skills and technical knowhow. In the same vein acquiring the skills and knowledge means creating jobs whereby opportunities in employment and economic development are put in place. In this respect, vocational education is defined by Okoro in Ojimba (2012) as “any form of education whose primary purpose is to prepare persons for employment in recognized occupations, and technical education rested with production of skilled technicians to be able to understand the technologies in today’s world of industrial work”. The definition of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) forwarded by the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (NPE) 2013 is that “aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, 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”.

The expected out come of this training is technical knowledge of skilled personnel needed to work effectively in related field, “making one more of self-employed and participate in the economic as self-employment is a powerful tool to create work and to boost the economy” (Polzin, 2015). By doing so, the thought of joblessness is eliminated rather more opportunities of creating jobs not only to oneself but also to others will be available.

The dwindling economy across the globe became glaring in 21<sup>st</sup> century and Nigeria is not exceptional to the crisis, which doom the life of the youth and the country in general. This situation necessitates the need for paradigm-shift from theoretical to practical business development. This idea will go ahead the need for approach that will change the perception of economic development by creating effective platform to that regard. This could be realized if the market or business is created, sustained and developed based on technical skill that is having the entrepreneurial capabilities. This assertion goes in the same vein with Afolabi (2015) that “the hypothesis that entrepreneurship is linked to economic growth finds its most immediate foundation in simple intuition, common sense and pure economic observation: activities to convert

ideas into economic opportunities lie at the very heart of entrepreneurship.

On the other hand skill acquisition will not be enough to mobilize the skilled personnel to establish and run business successfully. This is where entrepreneurship education surfaces to wipe out the deficiency in business development and the mindset incompetency especially among the graduates. Considering their number across the three categories of tertiary institutions, i.e. Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education, which according to Christian (2011) is rated to 12.4%. This rise in unemployment within this class is associated to the lack of needed skills offered by technical schools on hand and the lack of entrepreneurship education to have the skill and the mindset in running desired business. By offering such technical skill, the country will be paving her way to “self-reliance and sustainability”, as suggested by Uwaifor in Ojimba, (2012). Consequently, where there is self-reliance and sustainability, there emerges economic and social changes positively because technical education serves as change agents not only for technical system but also for many other societal changes (Ojimba, 2012). While lack of entrepreneurship skills impede people to think of initiating or the perseverance to carry on with business despite the risk involved. Bukola (2011) upheld that “the problem is the fear of failure by the people to take risk on entrepreneurial activities”. the fear of failure contribute to the inability of the graduates to initiate business which is cause by lack of entrepreneurial mindset provided by entrepreneurship education and opted for non-business or related jobs, or office appointments. This short coming is connected to Comfort (2012)’s observation that “the education reforms/policies of 1970s and 1980s which focused more on the acquisition of certificates instead of the needed vocational skills have caused many Nigerian youths and adults to move into the education industry in pursuit of certificates”. Additionally, Bukola, (2011) posited that “tertiary education has not been properly including philosophy of self-reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment that will promote pride in primitive work and self-discipline....” Nwangwu in Bukola (2011) supported that “this opinion put the tertiary education in a position of inability to graduate youth with focal in business initiatives and ended wastage in terms of both human and natural resources”. The factors hindering entrepreneurship in Nigeria educationally according to Ayodele in Bukola (2011) are education that is bookish, theoretic and white-collar job oriented. To address this, it is necessary and possible to position Nigerian education system to stimulate economic growth by developing skills and mindset through entrepreneurship education to produce entrepreneurial graduates.

### **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Entrepreneurship Education**

Education is key to shaping people’s attitudes, inculcates skills and culture. To achieve these, it means to prepare the minds of the targeted group much earlier. Hence, it is vital that technical and vocational education and entrepreneurship education are addressed from earlier age. The Quality Assurance Agency (2012) defined enterprise

education as “the process of equipping students (or graduates) with an enhanced capacity to generate ideas and the skills to make them happen”. Entrepreneurship education is essential in building the mindsets among the young people and also to provide the skills and knowledge that are central to developing an entrepreneurial culture.

Based on this believe, in 2006 Oslo Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education in Europe accorded by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (2012) called for “better integration across subject areas, improved practice-based pedagogical tools, and better approaches to teamwork, whether internal or external (through collaboration with industry and business)”. For this, entrepreneurship is a process of bringing together all factors for creative and innovative ideas coupling with management and organizational skills fused people, money and resources to meet an identified need and wealth creation. The technical enterprising nature of technical and vocational education cannot be over emphasized. In 2011 Christian opined that “technical and vocational education and training (TVET) also performs a social function by empowering people to participate actively in civil society processes”. Similarly, Glangchai (2013) observed that “becoming a successful business owner is a long arduous process and providing youth with entrepreneurial tools at a young age can help them realize their dreams”. Further more he added that to become an entrepreneur, one needs certain qualities, which include self-confidence, autonomy, a strong work ethic, ambition, empathy, and “an internal locus of control” and entrepreneurship education is an effective tool for instilling these particular qualities. To this end, he deduces entrepreneurship programmes will

*Reduce apathy in participants and increase their motivation to achieve success, which plays a significant role in motivating people to become entrepreneurs, particularly young women. These educational exercises give students a greater sense of self-control and higher self-esteem, and when programs utilize hands-on, experiential learning techniques they can also increase innovative thinking skills.*

In a report by U. S. Census Bureau (2002) “Entrepreneurship education offers a solution. It seeks to prepare people; particularly youth, to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by immersing them in real life learning experiences where they can take risks, manage the results, and learn from the outcomes.” Result from survey by the bureau carried out among school children shows that occupation aspiration increased by 44% and leadership behavior increase by 8.5%. This is an indication that entrepreneurship education has the impact of changing and reorienting youth towards self actualization among younger ages.

D.C. Children and Youth Investment Corporation, U.S. in 2001 carried out a survey titled “*Logic Models and Outcomes for Youth Entrepreneurship Programs*” and result indicates that there is an:

- i. Improved academic performance, school attendance; and educational attainment;

- ii. Increased problem-solving and decision-making abilities;
- iii. Improved interpersonal relationships, teamwork, money management, and public speaking skills.

### **Teaching Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education equips students with the additional knowledge, attributes and capabilities required to apply them in the context of setting up a new venture or business. All of these are prerequisites for entrepreneurial effectiveness, that is, the ability to function effectively as an entrepreneur or in an entrepreneurial environment. To acquire these skills, institutions of learning must have qualified teachers to effectively impart the knowledge. This is achievable if the schools are entrepreneurially oriented and are capable of creating the suitable platform for the students to explore and discover the entrepreneurial opportunities. Therefore there is need according to Aronsson and Birch in Sirelkhatim and Gangi (2015) for the institutions to have “entrepreneurship education (EE) programmes that are able to contribute to the challenge of codifying entrepreneurial skills like selling, managing people and product development into a teachable curriculum”. To successfully run entrepreneurship programme, Jones in Sirelkhatim and Gangi (2015) is of the opinion that entrepreneurship curriculum should reflect “learner-centred programmes that better engage students rather than teacher-centred ones”. Attaining this learner-centered approach is teaching students the mechanisms of running business and the content should provide a portfolio of skills that will encourage entrepreneurship qualities such as opportunity recognition, business planning, and creativity, adapting to change and expecting and embracing failure among others.

Vecsenyi (2016) observed that “entrepreneurship education became trendy in higher education and he further outline the need to teach entrepreneurship in our schools, which among them are

1. More and more students become entrepreneurs through self-employment as new venture creators, and intrapreneurs as product or service developers (hackers), managers (hustlers), marketers (hipsters), finance guys, sales people, etc.
2. Through education less privileged people can become successful entrepreneurs and develop the skills, knowledge and mind-set needed in today’s world of work.
3. Higher education institutions should actively support the future careers of their students and entrepreneurship education addresses this by teaching skills for employability and fostering a start-up culture.

He also forwards ways to effectively teach entrepreneurship education in our school for better result. These include

1. Through more learning-by-doing programmes that provide practical information and introduces real-life experiences. Programmes should focus the theories of what entrepreneurship is all about, and more on how to start and manage new and growing businesses or creating and implementing new initiatives.

2. By focusing on attitude, skills and knowledge, or heart, hand and mind.
3. More learning from case studies or internship or guest-speaking entrepreneurs, company visits, and more through experience (from self-started new venture projects), less of traditional lecturing.
4. Supported by the entrepreneurship ecosystem (practice field incubators, accelerators, mentoring, and coaching, consulting, financing, and apprenticeship training in local businesses) and on the other side by technology (e.g. distance-learning, webinars etc).
5. Combination of ‘push and pull’: school-driven and student-driven learning initiatives in course design and actions.

In today’s economy there is need for entrepreneurship education to which Cooney (2016) opined that “for much of the past decade the European Commission has held the view that entrepreneurship must be embedded into the education system”. Entrepreneurship education has real impact on the success of start-ups and business ownership. By doing so, entrepreneurship programmes can help transform teenagers into successful young professionals. Developing entrepreneurial competence in adolescence increases the likelihood that individuals will be successful as adults, and cultivating entrepreneurial qualities will helps them across every profession. With this, new approach in content delivery at school level needs to change. This is the argument forwarded by Dzoga in 2016 “effective teaching of these skills however, requires a completely new approach to the classroom, student evaluations and programme bases.”

### **Entrepreneurship Education and Nigerian Youth**

In Nigeria today, leaders will be making important contributions in reducing unemployment and underemployment by taking holistic steps in the teaching of entrepreneurship in our schools through changing the teaching methodology. This is because “countries which succeed in changing their approach to school, both its content and form, will win the innovation battle and end up on the top of the future socio-economic ladder” (Dzoga, 2016). Along this line, countries like Norway, Finland and Denmark have acknowledged the benefits of entrepreneurship education and strategically by ensuring entrepreneurship education is offered during formal schooling years. These countries have clear strategies in terms of entrepreneurship education (Cooney, 2016) towards achieving the objectives in business promotion. For example it is acknowledged that Norway was the first country to formulate a national strategy for entrepreneurship in education and training. This was achieved by involving three key establishments responsible for economic and social development; these establishments include the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development to carry out the entrepreneurship project in 2004. After four years, in 2008 the project was evaluated. The result “indicated among other things a marked increase in the number of pupils and students that have taken part in different types of entrepreneurship training, especially in

primary and secondary education” (Norway, 2008). The results are indicators and a pointer to the importance of entrepreneurship education beginning from lower level i.e. the primary and secondary schools level and are clearance towards enhancing the market economy and entrepreneurial environment.

To improve the pathway to the economy, earlier Kuratko in 2005 highlighted two contributions by entrepreneurial firms to the market economy, these are

- i. They are an integral part of the renewal process that pervades and defines market economies. Entrepreneurial firms play a crucial role in the innovations that lead to technological change and productivity growth.
- ii. Entrepreneurial firms are the essential mechanism by which millions enter the economic mainstream.

He also observed that “the younger generation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is becoming the most entrepreneurial generation since the Industrial Revolution. As many as 5.6 million Americans younger than age 34 are actively trying to start their own businesses today.” Similarly, Tulga in Kuratko (2005) reported that “one third of new entrepreneurs is younger than age 30, more than 60% of 18 to 29- year-olds say they want to own their own businesses, and nearly 80% of would-be entrepreneurs in the U.S. are between the ages 18 and 34”.

### **Conclusion**

TVET provide the practical skill for industrial education and skill acquisition while entrepreneurship education inculcate the knowledge and mindset to courageously embark in establishing and developing business or economic venture confidently minding the risk it may be carrying. Therefore TVET and entrepreneurship education are two components in boosting the economy by providing the technical skill and know-how for self employment and professional mindset to effectively and successfully run own business after school. It is apparent that TVET and entrepreneurship will bring about transformation in carrying out business start-up and management. It is as a result of this development in TVET and entrepreneurship that more and more young entrepreneurs will emerge.

### **Suggestions**

Considering the importance of both TVET and entrepreneurship education in business initiating, development and economic growth, the following suggestions will pave way for improvement.

- Establishing links between schools and industries through visits and excursions.
- Inviting experts from industrial sector to deliver lectures and share life experiences to students especially final year students in entrepreneurship development.
- Higher institutions should consider research in entrepreneurship education curriculum and entrepreneurial development.

- Establish partnership between institutions and private organizations to collaborate in entrepreneurship education.
- Establishing private entrepreneurship development centers to augment government's effort towards improving knowledge acquisition like with the case of vocational training centers.
- Involving other sectors having relationship with social and economic development to participate in promoting entrepreneurship programmes, similar to Norway approach.

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