

ENHANCING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper is aimed at facilitating creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship education. This paper discussed that through entrepreneurship, individuals could develop the ability and willingness to be creative and innovative entrepreneurs. This paper further discussed the concepts of creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and business education. It also highlighted the role of business education in fostering creative and innovative entrepreneurship. The principles of creativity as well as elements and forms of innovation are explored. The strategies for enhancing creative and innovative entrepreneurship through business education are stated. Based on this, conclusions and recommendations are made for repositioning business education to train students to develop creative and innovative entrepreneurial behaviours.

The present situation in Nigeria is different from the one witnessed in the sixties. The present generation youths are faced with realities of poverty, unemployment, disease and conflict. Unemployment and unemployable graduates are serious problem to educators, educationists and the Nigerian government (Isaac, 2015). Adegbenjo (2012) affirmed that this phenomenon constitutes a waste of resources in the manpower development of this nation. The type of education

required for self reliance and national development should include general reasoning, creative problem solving, behavioural skills and positive cognitive styles as against the narrow cognitive and occupational skills sought in more directed environment (Chibuzor, 2014). Sequel to this need, FGN (2004) stipulated in the National Policy on Education that, the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies; both mental and physical are pre- requisites for the individual to

live in, and contribute to the development of the society. Based on this fundamental role, entrepreneurship education becomes imperative to assist equip learners with saleable skills needed for self reliance, productive and functional life.

Entrepreneurship education is a kind of education which provides learners with the basic knowledge, skills, attitude and ideas for self reliance (Onu, 2006). Entrepreneurship education helps in career related areas and so launches them into the business world with a view to overcoming the problem of unemployment and over-dependency on white-collar job.

Entrepreneurship skill denote to those skills that would enable individual maximize the resources around him within the limits of his capabilities (Akunnaya, 2012). Entrepreneurship education is a tool necessary for capacity building through creativity. How does business education use in developing creative entrepreneurial skill in learners to enable them become inventive and creative with knowledge and skills acquired?

Creativity and Innovation in Entrepreneurship

Okpara (2007) defined creativity as the ability to create, bring into existence, to invent into a new form, to produce through imaginative skill, to make to bring into existence something new. It is also the ability to generate new ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing ideas (Harris, 1998).

Creativity is an attitude as well as the ability to accept change and newness, a willingness to play with ideas and possibilities, a flexibility of outlook, the habit of enjoying the good, while looking for possible ways to improve it (Harri, 1998 and Okpara, 2012). Creativity is a process in that an individual works hard and continually tries to improve ideas and proposes solutions by making gradual alterations and refinements to his works. The ability to adapt new ideas is what makes an entrepreneur successful. Creativity makes education to be adapted and quantitative at all levels.

Principles of Creativity

1. **Expertise Principle:** It is the embodiment of whatever an individual knows and able to do in his area of work knowledge and technical ability.

2. **Creative thinking Skills Principle:** This is a skill of an individual as he approaches problems and solutions. It involves the capacity to put existing ideas together in new combinations. The skill depends on the personality and on how he thinks and works. These first two principles are the raw material resources for an entrepreneur (Okpara, 2012).

3. **Motivation Principle:** Motivation is the drive and desire to do something, an inner passion and interest. People intrinsically motivated do engage in their work for the challenge and enjoyment of it. Okpara continues to

explain that, people are creative when they feel motivated by the interest, satisfaction and the challenge of the work itself – “the labour of love”, love of the work – “the enjoyment of seeing and searching for an outstanding solution – a break through.

4. Anticipation Principle: It involves a vision of something that will become important in the future before anybody else has it.

5. Commitment Principle: Commitment denotes a belief that keeps one working to realize the vision despite doubt and discouragement.

According to Harris (1998) and Okpara (2006), the entrepreneur is concerned with the development of new products, processes or markets, the ability to bring something new into the market. The entrepreneur indulges into original thinking than any other person thinks. He is able to produce solution that shows in the face of established knowledge. Entrepreneurial activity depends on the process of innovation following creativity.

Innovation, according to Okpara (2007), is the process of bringing the best idea into reality, which triggers a creative idea, which generates a series of innovative event. He further stated that innovation is the process of transforming new value; and turning an idea into value. Innovation works with creativity. An entrepreneur must be innovative. This is because innovation requires a fresh way of looking at things, an

understanding of people, and an entrepreneurial willingness to take risks and to work hard. Chibuzor (2014) held that creativity in entrepreneurship entails innovations, flexibility, resourcefulness, versatility and being knowledgeable. It includes new products and new strategies of production, improving the quality of labour force, the emergence of new skills and improvement in the quality of management. Igbo (1995) and Chibuzor (2014) held that entrepreneurship occurs as an individual creates a new business, a new approach to an old business idea, using resources in a new way under the condition of risk.

Schumpeter in Okpara (2007) described innovation as the use of invention to create a new commercial product or service; it is the key force in creating new demand and thus new wealth. From this, it means that innovation creates new demand when individuals undertake innovative investment in a period of great uncertainty. And the entrepreneurs bring the innovations to the market. Hence, entrepreneurship becomes the key priority area with the potential to stimulate job and create wealth in an innovation and independent way. Entrepreneurship provides individuals with valuable life skills and tools to empower them to build sustainable and prosperous future.

Fiona Fitzpatric according to Okpara (2007) identified the following elements of innovation: challenge, customer focus, creativity, communication, collaboration

completion, contemplation, culture and context.

The following forms of innovation are identified:

- i. Innovation in process
- ii. Innovation in products or services
- iii. Innovation in management and work organization, and the exploitation of human resources, together with the capacity to anticipate techniques.

Entrepreneurship education should endeavour to empower recipients with creative and innovative entrepreneurial intentions, skills and abilities.

Business Education and Entrepreneurship

Business education is an aspect of vocational education programme in institutions of learning that trains people for gainful employment through the acquisition of skills and knowledge that affects the business world. It trains individuals who will have competencies of being employed or being self-reliant. Business education, according to Anao (1986), is the sum total of the knowledge, skills and attributes that are required for successful promoting and administering of a business enterprise. Therefore, it means that business education trains people for acquisition of appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for gainful employment and independent productivity. Business education is the peoples' profession because it is a multidiscipline functional delivery system. It is a field of study

with various marketable skills that can ensure self reliance and employment. Business education is concerned with strengthening individual and societal life by providing functional knowledge and skills. Business education equips students with necessary skills needed to perform specific office functions. It provides manpower that possesses the requisite knowledge, skill and attitude for harnessing resources and bringing them into co-operative relationship yielding the goods and services demanded by the society for satisfaction of their wants and needs.

Business education can be seen, therefore, as the solution to the many problems facing individuals, communities and entrepreneurial organizations in Nigeria particularly in the areas of skill acquisition, inter business relationship, resource management, poverty reduction and job creation.

Chibuzor (2014) said that time and trends have envolved over the years with regards to what functional and creative education should be. The present competitive global business world and emergence of knowledge economy, business education is apt to train graduates of institutions of learning who can connect the body of knowledge, the practices of business education and the contemporary competitive global market.

In consonance with the spirit of entrepreneurship, Onyido (2011) and Chibuzor (2014) have reported that the Federal Government of Nigeria had

mandatorily ordered the inclusion and establishment of entrepreneurship centres in the higher institutions of learning in order to enhance entrepreneurship education. These centres are to be funded by the tertiary institution's trust fund. Students are expected to direct the knowledge and skills acquired at devising creative and innovative strategies and learning skills to function as entrepreneurs.

Business education and entrepreneurship however, are two sides of a coin. Business education is a key player in entrepreneurship development process. It therefore, has role to play in an attempt to reduce unemployment and poverty among youths. The integration of entrepreneurship in business education curriculum helps learners bring out creative and innovative ideas and combine them with managerial and organizational skills to create wealth now and in the future. It teaches how to recognize and evaluate business opportunities, business organization and management, financial planning and credit management, proper record keeping and marketing (Isaac, 2015). It is business education that must be evolving to be in tune with the present world business changes and challenges.

Strategies for Enhancing Creative and Innovative in Entrepreneurship through Business Education

The following strategies are suggested for the proper enhancement of creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship through effective

teaching and learning of Business Education in higher institutions in Nigeria. They include:

1. Integrating entrepreneurship contents in Business Education will enhance the functionality of the course to the benefits of the learners. These content areas include small scale business, managing business opportunity, world market, business plan, market analysis, risk management and record keeping in business (Nwabuona, 2005).

2. Re-branding Business Education will help it achieve professional goals renewing what is taught, teaching strategies applied to teach to make sure that whatever is taught is transferable and is valuable for the present.

3. Business Education teachers should strive to improve and acquaint themselves with concepts and ideas in the area of entrepreneurship education because it is a new concept in business education. Workshops, seminars, private studies and other relevant activities could be used for improvement reasons.

4. The use of mentorship: mentors would provide practical guide to self employment as a way through which students can acquire creative entrepreneurship skills. It is business education which can provide opportunities for students to have mentorship.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship is the vehicle that drives creativity and innovation. Innovation creates new demand and entrepreneurship brings the innovation to the market. The value of creativity and innovation is to provide a gateway for astute entrepreneurship. This paper therefore, concludes that creative and innovative entrepreneurship can be developed through Business Education. Business Education is a vocational course in Nigerian higher institutions of learning; it is a key in promoting content of instruction, teaching methods that will enhance creative and innovative entrepreneurship capabilities in Business Education graduates.

Recommendations

For the purpose of enhancing creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship through Business Education, the following recommendations are made:

1. Business Education teachers should encourage creativity, originality and innovation in students while discouraging memorization and regurgitation of facts. They should also encourage exploration and experimentation method.
2. Government should ensure that entrepreneurial study centres are set up in every higher institution in Nigeria.

3. Methods of teaching and assessments should encourage creativity and innovation in students.

4. Functional library facilities in Business Education department which will serve as a resource centre should be provided.

5. Each school should provide internet services, make them available and accessible to students to enable them get access to current information on entrepreneurship.

6. Authentic collaboration between institutions of learning and small and medium scale business enterprises which will enable students acquire useful experience in skill acquisition should take place.

7. Successful entrepreneurs should be invited to create awareness on the entrepreneurial activities and opportunities through seminar and excursion.

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