
**INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA:
THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**

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Abstract

The paper addressed issues of creative and innovative tertiary institutions Nigeria. It sees creative and innovative persons to be energetic, flexible, and fluent, is risk takers and is often motivated by challenges. The paper has introduction, conceptual framework, and objectives of entrepreneurship education, how entrepreneurship education could help in job creation in Nigeria, innovation, creativity and inclusive development and concluding remarks. The has some recommendations such as the government of Nigeria should allocate at least 26% of its federal allocation to education, as against the token been disbursed to the sector. Also, the Nigerian government should invest at least 1% of her GDP on R&D activities. This would set the pace at which factors such as creativity and innovation leans on, also, the federal government of Nigeria could constitute a special committee to ensure that the allocations made to education and R&D is optimally utilized. This committee is to be deployed all over schools across all levels in Nigeria to discover creative

minds, and to nurture them for national consumption. While this is akin to the 'catch them young' idea, this special committee will enforce the intended objective the government sets to achieve from the education and R&D sector, the government is enjoined to develop a Science, Technology, and Innovation policy that is coherent with the national policy on development. In achieving this, the government of the country should ensure that persons, irrespective of their social and economic statuses, in the country are given equal opportunities in all ramifications, regular review of school curricula by the government, private sector and the community (Public-Private-Community Partnership) should be encouraged to ensure a fit-for-purpose curriculum for the emerging economy of Nigeria. This triangulated partnership will help strike a balance between practical's and theories in the education sector, well motivated teaching staffs are to be adequately supplied to schools at all levels and appraised on their job. This will identify knowledge gap, with the aim of breaching it for national consumption through knowledge passed to their pupils/students and the government should properly implement and evaluate the planned conditional cash-transfer programme, which includes a free education scheme for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), where tuition would be paid for about 100,000 STEM students in tertiary institutions in the country among others.

Key words: Innovation, Creativity, Tertiary, Institution and Entrepreneurship Education

Education goes beyond literacy alone because for an individual, education means the provision of opportunity for him to realize his potentials, goals, and abilities in life. Education includes the acquisition of functional skills, moral identity, and ambition to succeed in life and thereby improve the society. Eunice and Zita, (2013), see education as having two ideas implicit in the world. One is that leading out into new knowledge and experience, the other is that of feeding and thereby growing and developing. Education is the fulcrum that propels meaningful development to any nation. There is no nation that can achieve any development when the type of education given to the people at all levels especially at the higher level is that which makes the individual become a nuisance not only to him but also to the society. This is because education is seen as the key factor for national development and empowering the citizens to master their environment in order to compete for survival, (Mbachu, 2013). Mbachu (2013) agrees that education has to be a powerful instrument and of good quality to enable the recipient grow into a functional member of his family and of his nation. It is obvious that several third world countries are enmeshed in poverty, disease infestation, unemployment, and harsh economic conditions. Therefore,

skills and knowledge acquisition through entrepreneurship are indispensable in ameliorating the aforementioned problems, (Ideh, 2013).

Innovation is adoption of old ideas or materials for new uses, which may invariably lead to positive changes. Hernández and González-Romá (2016), saw innovations as new ideas, new methods or interventions aimed at improvement of a programme or venture. This is to avoid state of obsolescence, especially in educational establishments. That is, innovation is the transformation of ideas into marketable products and process. This means that innovation comes with new changes that enhance the state and standard of the products or processes. This is in agreement with Amidon (2001) in Agogo (2009), described innovation as the creation, evolution, exchange and application of new ideas into marketable decision making, providing feedback, negotiation, self-esteem and risk management. Innovative practices therefore involve bringing changes in the practical management of an establishment or organization. Innovation implies the process of translating an idea or invention into goods and services that create value for people concerned. Management entails the way, means and direction a line of communication is handled and translated to useful purposes.

Creativity is the kind of thinking that leads to new insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives, and whole new ways of understanding and conceiving of things. The productions of creative thought include some obvious things like music, poetry, dance, dramatic literature, inventions and technical innovations. But there are some not so obvious examples as well, such as ways of conceiving of relationships that challenge presuppositions and lead one to see the world in imaginative and different ways (Balzac, 2006).

Creativity is an effective resource that resides in all people and within all organizations. Creativity can be nurtured and enhanced through the use of deliberate tools, techniques and strategies. Creativity is a way of brainstorming and editing the thoughts and bringing it out through a wide actions and activities to the benefit of one or all in a society. This requires that the methods and material should be creatively woven together to generate desirable situation to produce the relevant actions (Vandervert, Schimpf, and Liu, (2007)). One useful principle of creativity is to aim for an effective balance of searching to find old ideas and imaging to invent new ideas so as to combine the best of old and new ideas. It also shares useful perspectives on guided generation with a creative generation of ideas stimulated and guided by critical evaluation and free invention, search for “invent” to find creative-and-critical invention of ideas. Creativity is a drive that propels people toward realizing their fullest potentials. This leads to self-actualization, and self-actualized people are accurate in their self-perceptions and are able to find rich sources of enjoyment and stimulation in their everyday activities, (James and Lubasa, 2012:185). Creativity can arise

from a combination of conscious thinking and the unconscious thinking that occurs during a non-working period of incubation. During this period, man's thinking are wide and developing the thoughts become intense. So if these thoughts go into action, it brings out perfect products (Jeffery, 2005).

Creative language education, functional literacy and self-actualization are concepts of great significance globally. These concepts assured relevance especially in the third world countries such as Nigeria which colonial created and considered it as a new nation state, striving to move from "backwardness" to modernity progress and development (Uwani, 2009:4).

Entrepreneurship implies the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully base on identified opportunities. The mind-set of most educated elites is shaped to seek and secure paid employment in the public sector of the economy. The average Nigerian undergraduate consider employment in the private sector as a waiting-strategy. Patrick and Felix (2013) stated that before the year 2000, self-employment was held in ridicule. A self-employed graduate was considered to be a mark of frustration not minding the profit derived from such ventures. Such graduates are often considered very inferior in the midst of other colleagues. This picture was so because higher education did not emphasize education for self-reliance but rather prepared their products to meet the needs of the public service (Ochigbo, Chiakyor, and Beetseh, 2017).

The word "entrepreneur" is widely used, both in everyday conversation and as a technical term in management and economics. Its origin lies, in the seventeenth century France, where an "entrepreneur" was an individual commissioned to undertake a particular commercial project by someone with money to invest. In its earliest stages this usually meant an overseas trading project. Such projects were risky, both for the investor (who could lose money) and for the navigator-entrepreneur (who could lose a lot of money). The intertwining of the notions of entrepreneur, investors, and risk is evident from the start. A number of concepts have been derived from the idea of the entrepreneur such as entrepreneurial entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial process. The idea that the entrepreneurial is someone who undertakes certain projects offers and opening to developing and understanding of the nature of entrepreneurship, (John, 2015 and Beetseh & Ahima, 2012). Undertaking a particular project, demands that particular tasks be engaged in with the objectives of achieving specific outcome and that an individual take charge of the project. Entrepreneurship is then, what the entrepreneur does. Entrepreneurial is an adjective describing how the entrepreneur undertakes what they do. The fact that the adjective suggests that there is a particular style to what entrepreneurs do. The entrepreneurial process

is what the entrepreneur engages. It is the means through which new value is created as a result of the project the entrepreneurial venture, (John, 2015).

Entrepreneurship education is a programme or part of the programme that prepares individuals to undertake the formation of acquisition of small business. Entrepreneurship education is a planned, systematic and sustained effort at inculcating and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among Nigerians so as to produce a pool of willing, able and successful entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial education is a purposeful intervention by an adult (the teacher) in the life of qualities and skills to enable the learner to survive in the world of business (Chorun, Beetseh and Ameh (2015) and Patrick and Felix, 2013). Oleabhie Ugbelor, Oleabhie and Utebor (2014) opines that graduates are the worst hit by the spate of unemployment in our society today due to the fact that most of them lack the specific entrepreneurial skill that will enable them to be self-employed instead of waiting for the government to provide paid employment.

Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is oriented towards different ways of realizing opportunities. This is what makes entrepreneurship education distinctive in its focus on realization of opportunity, whereas management education is focused on the best way to operate existing hierarchies. Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Entrepreneurship education according to Paul (2005) is structured to achieve the following objectives.

1. To offer functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self employed and self-reliant.
2. Provide the youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
3. To serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
4. Offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management, to make certain bearing feasible.
5. To reduce high rate of poverty.
6. Create employment generation.
7. Reduction in rural – urban migration.
8. Provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium sized businesses.
9. To inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the youths and adults which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on.

10. Create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy.

How Entrepreneurship Education Could Help in Job Creation

Quality Entrepreneurship Education plays a vital role in the social, political and economic development of any Nation. This is possible when jobs are created for the citizenry by establishing a lot of businesses that will accommodate the unemployed youth in Nigeria. A qualified graduate of entrepreneurship education would have acquired enough skills relevant to management of small business centre.

- Creation of self-employment. An entrepreneur provides job for himself by establishing small business centre. This, according to Aiyeduso in Olorunmolu (2008) helps to reduce the problem of unemployment and other social vices in Nigeria. The entrepreneur does not only provide jobs/employment for himself alone, but provides for others too. This in turn helps the individual to increase per capital income hence improve standard living.

- The Entrepreneur determines or identifies the specific wants of the people and the type of goods and services that will fulfill those wants most comfortable. Emeruwa (2005) asserted that the entrepreneur does not only identifies but mobilizes and organizes the resources to tap the opportunities by assisting men, materials, money and machines to explore the opportunity.

- Production of goods and services that is important to the well-being, comfort and happiness of individuals in the society at large.

- Entrepreneurship stimulates rural, economic and industrial development. They contribute to the development of rural areas. They do this by establishing their small/medium scale enterprise in such areas by discouraging rural migration.

- They provide ample job opportunities to the rural/urban dwellers. They also provide goods and services, which could be found in an urban area and sometimes provide infrastructural facilities.

- The entrepreneurs are usually motivated in their activities not only by the need for material contributions to the welfare of the communities but also desire to make profit. This uplifts the dignity of labour.

- Through entrepreneurship education, utilization of local resources is made possible. The graduates of this specialized education set up their small/medium scale business, which will enable them to utilize the local resources available in their vicinity. The uses of local raw materials are discarded by products of large firms as primary input in their production processes. Owualah in Olorunmolu (2008) asserted that in terms of their economic benefits small firms can be said to be greater in local resources maximizes than their large counterparts. The provision of raw materials for the big firms help them to increase their

production hence employ more personnel thereby creating jobs for unemployed youth in the country.

- Through entrepreneurship education, A pool of potential entrepreneurs who are well equipped with skills and technical know how to manage small/medium scale industries are produced. This will equally help in job creation. Through quality entrepreneurship education, Nigeria could produce a lot of entrepreneurs who could establish and manage businesses on their own. Based on the above merits, it is no doubt that entrepreneurship education could be used as major weapon in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by empowering the individual in the society to be self- reliant. This will help reducing poverty in Nigeria.

Innovation, Creativity and Inclusive Development

Unsworth (2003) described innovation as the process of engaging in behaviours designed to implement new ideas, processes, products, and services. Put differently, it is seen as the commercial exploitation of new ideas (Fagerberg, 2005). However, innovation may be alternatively viewed as a process of taking ideas to market. It describes the process of adding value to creative ideas (Oluwadare, 2015). Similarly, Lucke and Katz (2003) asserted that innovation from an organization perspective is the successful introduction of a new thing or method. Innovation is the embodiment, combination or synthesis of knowledge in original, relevant, valued new products, process or services. Innovation is the process of turning new ideas into practical reality. Innovation is the process that combines ideas and knowledge into new value. Without innovation an enterprise and what it provides quickly become obsolete (Okpara, 2007). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, innovation is regarded as all activities that entail implementing and commercializing new ideas.

Authors have erroneously used the concept of creativity and innovation synonymously. However, the purpose of this section is to differentiate and identify the relationship between the concepts. On this note, creativity is the ability and power to develop new ideas, however, innovation on the other hand usually implies the use of these ideas (Oluwadare, 2015). To Anderson, Potočnik and Zhou, (2014:2), creativity and innovation is a “process, outcomes, and products of attempts to develop and introduce new and improved ways of doing things. Specifically, the creativity stage of this process refers to idea generation, while innovation refers to the subsequent stage of implementing ideas toward better procedures, practices, or products. Creativity and innovation can occur at the level of the individual, work team, organization, or at more than one of these levels combined but will invariably result in identifiable benefits at one or more of these levels of analysis. Therefore, one could say that creativity and innovation are complementary activities since

creativity generates the basis of innovation, which, in its development, raises difficulties that must be solved. It is not possible to conceive innovation without creative ideas, as these are the starting point (European Commission 2015).

Inclusive development means focusing on the most marginalized in society (such as the poor, vulnerable, disadvantaged, women, and elderly) in a non-discriminatory manner and with the aim of reducing inequalities (Chatterjee, 2005). Lawson (2010) also argued that inclusive development requires a focus on sectors and areas of exclusion. It concept also connotes the redistribution of social benefits including roads, electricity, health care and education (Rodríguez-Pose & Tijmstra 2007; Lawson 2010). Creativity is an attitude, 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 ways to improve it, we are socialized into accepting only a small number of permissible or normal things. It is also a process by which a symbolic domain in the culture is changed. Creativity is the ability to make or otherwise bring into existences something new, whether a new solution to a problem, a new method or device, or a new artistic object or form. Okpara (2007) viewed creativity as new and useful.

Concluding Remarks

It was discovered, among other things, that education and research activities in the country are bedeviled with certain challenges. On one hand, the problems of education in Nigeria include inadequate funding, negative perception of the people on vocational education, political, institutional, and human resources challenges, to mention but few. On the other hand, research activities are faced with problems such as low number of researchers in the country, poor investment on R&D, the challenge of adoption of research findings, infrastructure-related challenges, policy-related challenges, and attitude-related challenges, and incoherence between STI policies and other development policies. These set of challenges are reflected in the total patent applications made by various African countries within which Nigeria's total patent applications for five years was recorded by Morocco in 2015 only.

Nigeria's ambitious aspiration to become one of the world's top 20 economies may not be achievable if the country fails to develop its huge resources through education and R&D activities. This is because the country faces a number of challenges that can only be met if it has creative, well-educated citizens who, whatever their walk of life, have the spirit and inquisitiveness to think in new ways, and the courage to meet and adapt to the challenges facing them. Hence, this paper has argued that structural transformation through the contribution of education and research are crucial for achieving development and that

promoting technological innovation is necessary to address both challenges of low structural transformation and inclusive development in Nigeria. A crucial question, therefore, is how can Nigeria effectively promote creativity and innovation through education and research so as to foster transformation and achieve better development outcomes than in the past?

Recommendations

The section below highlighted some recommendations that can be adopted for this purpose.

1. The government of Nigeria should allocate at least 26% of its federal allocation to education, as against the token been disbursed to the sector. Also, the Nigerian government should invest at least 1% of her GDP on R&D activities. This would set the pace at which factors such as creativity and innovation leans on.
2. Also, the federal government of Nigeria could constitute a special committee to ensure that the allocations made to education and R&D is optimally utilized. This committee is to be deployed all over schools across all levels in Nigeria to discover creative minds, and to nurture them for national consumption. While this is akin to the 'catch them young' idea, this special committee will enforce the intended objective the government sets to achieve from the education and R&D sector.
3. The government is enjoined to develop a Science, Technology, and Innovation policy that is coherent with the national policy on development. In achieving this, the government of the country should ensure that persons, irrespective of their social and economic statuses, in the country are given equal opportunities in all ramifications.
4. Regular review of school curricula by the government, private sector and the community (Public-Private-Community Partnership) should be encouraged to ensure a fit-for-purpose curriculum for the emerging economy of Nigeria. This triangulated partnership will help strike a balance between practical's and theories in the education sector.

Well motivated teaching staffs are to be adequately supplied to schools at all levels and appraised on their job. This will identify knowledge gap, with the aim of breaching it for national consumption through knowledge passed to their pupils/students.

The government should properly implement and evaluate the planned conditional cash-transfer programme, which includes a free education scheme for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), where tuition would be paid for about 100,000 STEM students in tertiary institutions in the country. This should be effectively allocated to students on merit basis.

Research findings made in the country should be accessible by all and sundry. In achieving this all tertiary institutions in Nigeria should have a section in their respective libraries which ~~should comprise of the research findings made by students at all levels.~~ *The Intuition* Findings should also be communicated to external parties such as communities and local entrepreneurs in order to foster innovation. Therefore, lecturers should enjoin students to make quality research findings in order to add to the body of existing knowledge.

Parents should ensure that their child (ren) is adding value to themselves through education and research by encouraging them to actively participate in creative activities. This will contribute to talent nurturing at the micro level which may metamorphose to the micro level.

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