
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A PANACEA TO RISE OF MILITIA TENSION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Militia unrest and its increased up-rise is a frequent occurrence in most Africa countries and other underdeveloped and developing countries of the world. Nigeria as a country in the category is currently experiencing her share of this negative social vice in the form of militancy, violent crime, kidnappings, restiveness and other youth related social delinquent behaviour. The attendant security challenges of this scourge have permeated the economic, social and political sectors and (even) every nationalities and tribes within the country. The focus of this paper is to carry out an empirical study of the impact of entrepreneurship education on graduates, under graduate and intending recipients of entrepreneurship education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics and vocation institutions, on their attitude towards militia behaviour or activities, entrepreneurship practice and attitudinal change after exposure to entrepreneurship education at the expense of militia involvement. The methodology adopted in the course of the study include survey of related literatures on the causes, impact and solutions to the scourge and also questionnaires were administered on the sample, while Chi-square method

was used in analyzing the data gathered. It was found and concluded that the place of entrepreneurship education can not be over-emphasized in guiding the youth towards self reliance, adding value to their society and eradicating poverty and its resultant militia tendency.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship education, Panacea, Militancy.

Entrepreneurship education as a tool for self reliance and societal end to poverty predates the coming of colonial masters, then described as indigenous education; in which individuals engage in trade which are synonymous to their family or relative and or even their community. Fafunwa (1991) expressed this fact when he stated that “learning a craft often began with personal service to the master. Young boys would become house servants to a close relative, who would feed and clothe them, and after some years of promising usefulness they would then gradually be introduced to the craft of the guardian. Crafts varied according to the area an individual finds him/herself, but include mat-making, carving of doors and of figures for shrines, building of house, leather work, blacksmith and goldsmith, making masquerades, weaving, pot-making” etc. The Nigeria’s National Policy on Education (Federal Government of Nigeria, FRN 2004) emphasized the role of entrepreneurship education in National development by stating that education is the most important instrument for propelling change, as no fundamental change can occur in any society except through educational revolution that impact on the intellect.

The system of education inherited from the colonial masters is however a departure from the traditional Indigenous Education, as product of this system of colonial education are targeted to be job-seekers instead of creators. Akhuemonkha, Raimu and Sofoluwe (2013) quoting Aladekomo (2004:75) asserted that the colonial educational policy centered on the production of literate nationals who were required to man positions, which would strengthen the colonial administration. Thus our educational institutions, few as they were, remained factories for producing clerks, interpreters, forest guards and sanitary inspectors as no special professional nor entrepreneurial skill was envisaged in the educational system”.

The dysfunctional education that is devoid of entrepreneurial skill acquisition has laid the foundation of militia agitation as unemployment dominates national discourse in almost every fora. The Tell News Magazine in its November 2012 edition painted a clearer picture of the relativity between entrepreneurship education, unemployment and militancy when it posited that the high unemployment rate remains one of the greatest challenges of the nation. For instance, as at December 2011, the figure of unemployed Nigerian stood at 23.9percent, up from 21.1percent in 2010 and 19.7percent in 2009, according to figures obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics, NBS. According to the NBS, the incidence of unemployment was highest

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among youths between the ages of 15 and 24, and 25 and 44 and the problem is more pronounced in the rural areas. Indeed, there is every cause to worry. Already, the rising unemployment rate in the last couple of years, particularly among graduates, is believed to be largely responsible for the rising violent crimes and the widespread feeling of insecurity in the country. Today, kidnapping, advance fee fraud, otherwise called 419, armed robbery, prostitution, cultism, drug and child trafficking among others, have become the order of the day. The magazine further provide the link among the issues; unemployment, militancy and entrepreneurial skill, in its March 2012 publication: “students graduate with no practical skills, are compelled to join the unemployment market because they lack the requisite skills for the jobs that are available... it is not that the jobs are not available out there, but the people who are seeking them are unemployable”.

Literature Review

The establishment of Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB), Bank of Industry (BOI), Industrial Development Centre (IDC), Federal Institute for Industrial Research, Oshodi (FIIRO) among other government institutions are with the objectives of exploring opportunities in area of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMES) and particularly towards promoting entrepreneurial skills. According to Osuagwu (2001), the Federal and State Governments in Nigeria, have both contributed to the growth and development of entrepreneurship and small-scale industries in Nigeria, especially in the rural areas of the Nigerian economy. The policy measures have been in the areas of financial support, training of self-sufficiency and local sourcing of raw materials in order to reduce dependence of local Nigerian small business companies on foreign materials and products for their business operations. In addition to government support in establishment of various agencies and formulation of policies geared towards imbuing entrepreneurship skills and its development, entrepreneurial courses are now being taught in Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities, as a compliment of these policies and agencies.

Entrepreneurship

Falkiang and Albenti (2000) defined entrepreneur as people with entrepreneurial skill. They are likely to have knowledge and skill requirement which make them unique and different from other kinds of businessmen; while (Olaleye, 2010) defined entrepreneurship as the willingness and ability of a person to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful enterprise.

Militancy

Operationally, this paper described militancy as those pervasive activities of insecurity to life and property, aggravated by armed robbery, assassinations, kidnapping, ethnic and religious struggle of domination which are pre-dominantly

rooted in idleness and unemployment. Militancy according to Free Dictionary is a state or condition of being combative or disposed to fight. The word militancy generally refers to non-state military groups pursuing an ideological programme (Coombs, 2010). In the words of Aminu (2013) militancy involve multi-pronged violent tendency and action, taking violent and rebellious actions against the constituted authorities.

In Nigeria, militancy is not restricted to a particular tribe or religion, but more associated with the youth who cut across geopolitical zones and religious affiliation. Tell (2012) opined that, the return to democracy in 1999 acted like the catalyst for the release of pent-up feelings by the people who seized the opportunity to express themselves more freely and forcefully in some instance, thus, ethnic violence increased sharply as militant ethnic and nationalist minded militias emerged in different parts of the country and started flexing their muscles within their domains.

Militant Groups in Nigeria	Area of Operation
Egbesu Boys	Niger Delta
Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF)	Niger Delta
Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND)	Niger Delta
Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB)	South East
Bakassi Boys	South East
Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC)	South West
Arewa Peoples Congress (APC)	North
Maitatsine	North
Boko Haram	North

Source: Tell

Causes of Militancy in Nigeria

Obviously, the agitation by the people of the Niger Delta for the fair share of the wealth generated in the region and the deprivation and neglect of the region by the government had caused and fuelled the militancy (Aminu, 2013) Relatively, Malina (2011) observed that, although its tremendous resource wealth should make the Delta one of western African's most prosperous regions, decades of neglect by the Nigerian government, widespread corruption, and the environmental damage caused by the Multi-National Companies (MNCs) operating in the region has alienated and marginalized the local population and allowed armed group to proliferate. Possibly, the most pernicious rot that assailed the state in the post colonial era was the failure of leadership, which not only exposed it to economic plunder, but also turned it into a theater of instability as coups and counter-coups, ethnic violence, civil war and

agitations for autonomy etc. became a recurrent decimal of our national fare. This no doubt, led groups to withdraw their support for public processes and institutions, resulting in their alienation from the state and its custodians. While inter-ethnic rivalries festered in the competition for the resources of the state, those who were handed the short end of the stick in this struggle retreated into their primordial enclaves, and the state was considered an enemy to be cheated, attacked and subverted at every availing instance (Fayemi, 2012). The configuration of social relationships among the people of Nigeria has been characterized by instability arising from distorted production and reward system, where the various social groups feel marginalized and cheated in the appropriation of available resources, thus raising stringent agitation for autonomy or a more equitable share of the nation's resources by the various ethnic groups through several scheme such as the activities of militia... which have seriously... threatened the corporate existence of the nation (Etinosa, 2007: 74)

The Place of Entrepreneurship Education

“In an age when ideas and images can travel the globe in an instance, our response to terrorism can't depend on military or law enforcement alone. We need all elements of national power to win a battle of wills, battle of ideas... and we must help countries modernize economies, upgrade education and encourage entrepreneurship” Obama (2013).

The above remarks of President Obama at the National Defense University on 23rd May, 2013, captures the relevance of entrepreneurship education in winning, if there is militia agitation, and preventing the agitation in the future. Entrepreneurship education as a strategy provides economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities; opportunities and frustration. According to Logic Models and Outcomes for Youth Entrepreneurship Programmes (2001), entrepreneurship education gives positive outcomes that includes;

1. Improved academic performance, school attendance, and educational attainment.
2. Increased problem-solving and decision making abilities
3. Improved interpersonal relationships, team-works, money management and public speaking skills.
4. Job readiness
5. Enhanced social psychological development (self-esteem, ego development, self-efficacy), and
6. Perceived improved health status.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the relativity of entrepreneurship education to solving the problem of militia tension like violent crime, kidnapping, restiveness among other youth related social delinquent association with unemployment, and lack of skill.

Methodology

The methodology of this research is purely the use of questionnaires as a source of primary data, which were analyzed using the Chi-square non-parametric techniques.

A total of 100 questionnaires were administered on graduates, undergraduates and intending recipients of entrepreneurship education in colleges of education, polytechnics and universities. The questionnaire is a 4likert scale: SA for strongly Agreed, A for Agreed, SD for Strongly Disagreed and D for Disagreed.

The population of the research is Nigeria, while Lagos state is chosen as a sample. This is as a result of its metropolitan nature in Nigeria.

The instrument used was an 11- items Respondents' Assessment of Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire (RAEEQ) which elicited information about the relative impact of entrepreneurship education on rise of militia tension.

Hypotheses

Ho: Entrepreneurial skill is not significantly associated with employment

H1: Entrepreneurial skill is significantly associated with employment.

Ho: Having entrepreneurial skill can not significantly deter militia activities.

H1: Having entrepreneurial skill can significantly deter militia activities.

Results Presentation

The focal point of this research effort is to establish how entrepreneurship education acts as a remedy to the rise of militia activities. Hence, the questionnaires were administered in four institutions; University of Lagos (UNILAG), Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education (AOCOED) and Kessington Adebukanola Adebutu Vocational Centre (KAAVC), all in Lagos state, Nigeria. The results obtained are presented below;

Table I

Inst.	No of questionnaire Admin	Questionnaire Returned	% of Questionnaire Returned
Unilag	25	23	92
Yabatech	25	25	100
AOCOED	25	25	100
KAAVC	25	21	84
Total	100	94	94

Table I shows that questionnaires were evenly distributed among the institutions used as case study; 25 each. From the total 25 administered in University of Lagos ,23 were returned i.e. 92%, Yaba College of Technology had 100% returned rate, similar to

Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, while KAAVC has 21 of the questionnaires returned, which is 84% returned rate. In total 94% of the total administered questionnaires were returned. The questionnaires high return gives a good reliability for the result to be obtained.

Table II
Summary of the χ^2 Computation

Hypo.	No of item	χ^2_{cal}	χ^2_{tab}	Degree of freedom	Significant level	Decision	Remark
H _I	94	10.7869	7.81	3	0.05	Reject H ₀	Entrepreneurial skill is associated with employment
H _{II}	94	9.256	7.81	3	0.05	Reject H ₀	Entrepreneurial skill deters militia activities.

Decision Rule: Reject H₀ is X_C^2 is greater than X_t^2 , otherwise, do not reject H_I.

Table 2 shows the calculated value of the relationship between entrepreneurial skills and employment on one hand (Hypothesis one) and the relationship between entrepreneurship skill and militia activities on the other (Hypothesis two). Both hypothesis show a critical value of 7.81, hence the null hypothesis in both were rejected, as the critical value is lower than the calculated values.

The implication of this finding is that entrepreneurial skill – in addition to good education – is needed to aid gainful employment and bring down militancy in Nigeria. Besides, the study reveals that there is a significant relationship between education and entrepreneurship as a double-pronged approach to finding solutions to both the scourge of militancy and unemployment. This position is further supported by Oghojafor, Kuye, Suliamon and Okonji (2009) in Ojeaga and Owolabi (2011) as it is posited that entrepreneurship programme in vocational business education will impact the requisite skills and knowledge needed to successfully launch and grow a business. Therefore, we cannot underestimate the effectiveness of education, combine with entrepreneurial skill, in reducing not only unemployment but also in militating the attendant consequences of militants' destructive activities on the economy.

Conclusion

The study reveals that a holistic new approach is required to combines skill acquisition with higher education in order to produce not just academically qualified

youths, but those with skills that can go into entrepreneurship as an alternative to paid employment or a preference for the former. This appears to be the panacea to militancy, unemployment and other social ills that unemployed youth tend to gravitate towards. Both educationists and government would have to collaborate to achieve this goal because the wherewithal for the young men and women to start small or medium enterprises has to be available to the youths without which it will be difficult, perhaps impossible, for them to make a success of their skills and education.

Recommendations

The government has significant duties to the citizenry to ensure that militancy is eradicated in the lexicon of our national life.

In the words of recently released abducted Mike Ozekhome (SAN) while recounting his ordeal; “One of them said he had graduated six years ago but has no job, they said that they are going to show their real colour to the politicians by 2015”, while describing his experience during his kidnapping, on August 23, this year; 2013 (Punch, 2013). This is a clear evidence that education alone does not guarantee a job in the circumstances where very few exist and the applicant does not have the requisite skill needed for the job. Nothing proves the appropriateness of the double-pronged approach to job security that is being canvassed in this paper than this confession of the militant, because if he had a skill, he would rather have spent the better part of his six years out of job as an entrepreneur and the thought of becoming a violent militant would most unlikely have occurred to him in the first instance.

Furthermore, supporting the call for amnesty in form of scholarship for gaining entrepreneurial skills, in management, engineering, science and technology and other functional skills; is now stronger. Relatively, Ozekhome in Punch 17th September 2013 publication said “I call on the federal government to constitute an amnesty programme to these very volatile, very angry and desperate youths of Nigeria, who believe rightly or wrongly that they have been short-changed by the nation; that is why they have taken up arms”.

Training of unemployed persons in skill acquisition should be a continuous trend. National Directorate of Employment should expand the scope of training to almost every sector of the economy, as the recent training of 50 jobs seekers in agricultural skills by its Lagos State Chapter is commendable (Punch newspaper, 30th July, 2013).

The Excess Crude Account (ECA) as presently restructured through the Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority Bill, 2010 into Future Generations Fund, Nigerian Infrastructure Fund and Stabilization Fund, should be religiously managed to ensure that the objectives of the various funds towards stimulating growth and diversification

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of Nigerian economy, attraction of foreign investment and creation of jobs for Nigerians are not mere wishes, but efforts are to be put in place to actualize these objectives. This is where entrepreneurship education comes to bear, which will build on knowledge acquired and transform this knowledge into reality.

More Agricultural skill Acquisition Centre should be opened across the country, (especially in more volatile militancy areas) just as the one recently commissioned in Sokoto state, as this will revive agriculture and re-awaken Entrepreneurial potentials among youths and this will invariably stem the tide of militancy like Boko Haram, and also reduce the increasing number of Almajiris in the North, street urchins called Area Boys, that are easily used for political and social vices in the name of Odua People's Congress (OPC) in the West and Bakassi and Egbesu Boys that cannot be easily dissociated from kidnapping and other vices in the South.

Punch newspaper's 20th September, headline "Sure-P Lacks Money to Pay Beneficiaries – Kolade" (Subsidy Reinvestment Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) a government intervention programme for skill acquisition and alleviation of poverty) is not only a rude shock but a still birth of dreams of 111, 000 youths that the programme engages across the country in vocational and entrepreneurship skill acquisition scheme. The government is advised to analyse the multiplier effect of the failure of this scheme; lack of trust in government and its likely taking up of arms against the state as being witnessed now. Hence, the necessary intervention by government to salvage the scheme should be prompt.

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