

## PROMOTING HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING AMONG NIGERIA YOUTH AT TERTIARY LEVEL THROUGH PRACTICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

*The necessity of human capacity building cannot be over emphasis especially among the youth who are the backbone of any society. Nigerian youth have been bedeviled by unemployment sager after graduation from tertiary institution. This has been attributed to lack of qualitative education that will make the student acquire skills that will make them job creators after graduation. Entrepreneurship education has been introduced as a general study course in Nigerian higher institutions to make students acquire skills that will make them self-reliant in order to reduce the rate of unemployment. The laudable effort of introducing Entrepreneurship education is commendable though it is only being taught at theoretical level. The theoretical Entrepreneurship education is not making Nigerian youth to get the basic Entrepreneurship skills that will built their capacity to become job creators. It is in line with this trend that this paper advocates practical Entrepreneurship education at tertiary level. The paper also reviewed the concept of Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship education, Entrepreneurship skills, practical Entrepreneurship education, human capacity building and how Entrepreneurship education promote human capacity building among Nigerian youth. It is recommended that government should incorporate practical/field training skill in the existing mandatory Entrepreneurship curriculum of tertiary institution in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Promoting, Human Capacity Building, Nigeria Youth, Tertiary Level, Practical Entrepreneurship Education.

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### Introduction

Stakeholders in education have expressed with dismay, the unfortunate trend in which our tertiary institutions annually turn out graduates who roam the streets daily in search of non-existing jobs and have placed this ugly phenomenon on the door step of a dysfunctional education system that has structurally failed to capture the dynamic nature of education as agent of transformation and a catalyst for individual

and societal self – reliance (Ogueri, 2013). In a positive reaction to this development Federal Government in 2007 revised the curriculum of universities to include entrepreneurship education. In 2006, the presidency directed all Nigerian higher education institutions to include entrepreneurship education as a compulsory course for all students with effect from the 2007/2008 academic session. Consequently the National University Commission (NUC) also recently introduced entrepreneurship studies as a compulsory subject for all university undergraduates in Nigeria, (Okeke & Edikpa, 2014). The laudable effort of introducing Entrepreneurship education is commendable though it is only being taught at theoretical level. The theoretical Entrepreneurship education is not making Nigerian youth to get the basic entrepreneurship skills that will built their capacity to become job creators. It is in line with this trend that this paper advocates practical Entrepreneurship education at tertiary level.

### **Concept of Entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship is the bedrock of industrial development throughout the world (Ogar, Nkanu and Eyo, 2014) and is a solution to the employment saga globally (Akani, 2014). According to United Nation report in Iyoha (2011), a staggering figure of 1.5 billion people of the world working age population are either unemployed, or underemployed. A survey from Zambia indicates that 25 percent of the population is self – employed (Chigunta, 2011). Also, in South, Africa entrepreneurship stimulates high rate of self employment among the youth of different age brackets (Chigunta, 2001). Developed Nations like Japan and American also utilized entrepreneurship as means of their development. According to Akpan and Charles (2014), entrepreneurship means making a living by working for yourself. It involves the ability to set up a business. Akpan and Charles (2014), went on to say that entrepreneurship is the process of discovery, evaluating and exploiting opportunities which will eventually transform into the willingness and ability of an individual to develops a new venture or a new approach to an old business or idea; or a unique way of giving the market place a product or service by using resources in new way under condition of risk. Igbo (2004), defined entrepreneurship as a clear manifestation of affective manipulation of human intelligence as demonstrated in creative performance. Entrepreneurship involves risk taking of financial materials and human resources in a way of creating a new business concept or opportunity, within an existing firm. It also involves creating and building something of values and benefits to individuals, groups and society.

An entrepreneur according to Ogueri (2013), is a person who chooses risks, identifies business opportunities, gathers resources, initiates action and establishes an organization or enterprise to meet such demands or market Opportunities. Entrepreneur maximize his potentials through discovery of new and existing business ideas as he used proven principles in managing small, medium and sometimes large

scale businesses and in turn help in building and developing the Nation. Okeke and Edikpa (2014), opined that entrepreneurs uses strategies for idea generation, manages risks, translates problems into opportunities and applies principles of human relation management.

### **Entrepreneurship Education**

Education, training and skills are the vital components for human capacity building. It develops capacity, provide requisite knowledge and skills, broaden sense of awareness, enhances confidence and sense of judgment (OECD, 2008). Through education, one can acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that will make him useful member of the society and also contribute his quota toward the development of his country. Adoption of education as a tool for socio-economic development has always been the policy thrust of Federal Government of Nigeria in most of its national development plans (Sofoluwa, Shokunbi, Raimi and Ajewole, 2013). The above statement is also supported by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2012), which states that; Education will continue to be highly rated in the National Development Plans, because education is the most important instrument of change, as any fundamental change in the intellectual social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an educational revolution. To douse the rising wave of mediocrity in a country, there is need for good and quality education that reduce the risk of unemployment; improve productivity, increases wages, increases technological innovation and economic growth (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008). The type of education that fit the situation is entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship Education by its nature has been found to boost human capacity building through employment generation, assist with the growth of the economy and the overall promotion of sustainable economic growth and development in a number of Nations, (Raimi and Towobola, 2011).

According Okey, Ayang and Ndum (2014) entrepreneurship education is concerned with the acquisition of skills in local crafts and proper technological training for self reliance. It is the basic education that prepared people for organizing, owning and managing a business and becoming self – reliant. Entrepreneurship education deals with the process of undertaking a business initiative as an application of knowledge acquired competently for the purpose of self–reliance, self–sustenance, overall individual and society’s development. Entrepreneurship education eradicates poverty and unemployment while enhancing self determination, capacity building/motivational skills and greater business opportunities for citizens of the states. In Nigeria, the origin of entrepreneurship education is traced to the practice of our traditional/indigenous education in form of farming, goldsmiths, cloth – making, and selling, woodcarving which functionally prepared individuals for the world of work. Oyelola, (2010), describes entrepreneurship education as the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills by undergraduate students as a form of preparation for self –

employment prior to graduation. Therefore, practical entrepreneurship education is the only feasible solution to unemployment in Nigeria.

### **Practical Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurship Skills**

Practical entrepreneurship education according to Ekoja (2014) is the education that is activity based, hands-on type and practical in nature not theoretically based in which the students handle the materials themselves and produces whatever they want to produce. Practical entrepreneurship education makes students to acquire entrepreneurship skills than the theoretical entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship skills are acquired through training that emphasizes on the acquisition and development of appropriate knowledge and skills. Alkamu and Langkuk (2010), observed that appropriate knowledge and skills enable an individual to maximize the resources around him within the limits of his capability. Hornby, (2010), explained skill as having enough ability to do something well usually gained through training or experiences. According Adeyemo (2009), skill is the quality of performance which does not depend solely upon a person's fundamental innate capacities but must be developed through training, practice and experience. Akani (2014), Defined entrepreneurship skills as competences that will enable an individual seek and run an enterprise successfully. Wakili and Gulee (2014), sees entrepreneurship skills as the ability of an individual to exploit an idea and create an enterprise (small or big) not only for personal gain but also for social and development gain. To acquire entrepreneurship skills is through practical work which gives students appropriate opportunities to make observation, seek and identify required aptitudes for optimal performance in a given work.

Akani (2014), also supported this statement by saying that practical approach is the only means of leaning entrepreneurship skills by students and how to apply them in the world of business and is the learning of skills that boost their capacity. Alkamu and Langkuk (2010), had listed examples of entrepreneurship skills as follows:

- i. Identification of investment opportunities.
- ii. Choice of investment opportunities.
- iii. Decision of the form of business enterprise.
- iv. Factor combination and management of fund.
- v. Business: directorship
- vi. Risk bearing.
- vii. Innovations.

Entrepreneurship skills are occupational survival skills and closely related to processes skills on science, technology and mathematics such as observation, classifications, measurement, recording, hypothesis, designing experiments etc. acquisition of entrepreneurship skills will boost human capacity among youths so as

to become successful entrepreneurs that start their business ventures after graduation.

### **Human Capacity Building**

Whether you like it or not, the human being remains the centre of creation. This is regardless of the advancement in science and technology. At one point or the other you still need a human touch to make things work. The 2003 UNDP human development report found out that despite being the world's sixth largest exporter of petroleum, Nigeria ranks extremely low in terms of human development making it impossible to attend the benefit of globalization. (Ikharehon, 2007). Capacity is the power/ability of something—a system, an organization, a person to perform and produce properly. Capacity building is a comprehensive methodology which aimed to provide a sustainable outcome through assessing and addressing a whole range of relevant issues and their interrelationships (Denmark, 2003). Capacity building is closely related to education, training and human resource development. Groots and Van der Molen (2000) adopted the following definition on capacity building "The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes in individuals and group of people relevant in design, development management and maintenance of institutional and operational infrastructures and processes that are locally meaningful". Human capacity building is a programme designed by individual, firm and government for human resources under their jurisdiction for the purpose of achieving cost-effectiveness in the use of resources and productive performance on the job. According to UNESCO (2006) human capacity building is the process of equipping individuals with understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively. Human capacity building enhancement through quality education is a critical factor that is responsible for the massive economic growth and development in East Africa, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008).

### **How Practical Entrepreneurship Education will Promote Human Capacity Building among the Youths at Tertiary Level**

The major aim of education is the acquisition of competencies necessary for self – reliance, self – sustenance, self – employment and self – development. Any educational system, whose aim is not to boost human capacity among its adherents, is faulty in this century. Tertiary level of education is the only avenue where you find youths studying different courses and is the only level of education that produce quality and quantity human resources required for economic growth using the right mix of inputs. According to National Policy on Education (FRN, 2012), Tertiary level of education in Nigeria is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics including those institutions offering corresponding courses. Tertiary level of education is the best place to accumulate human capital in the form of relevant manpower training for abilities,

skills, attitude and knowledge. Regrettably, graduates of higher institution face the problem of un-employment, so there must be a type of education that will make the student at tertiary level to be self-reliant after graduation. Quality practical entrepreneurship education in tertiary institution among the youths will promote their capacity to become self-reliant. According to Okey, Ayang and Ndum (2012) self – reliance is a vital key to self – actualization, better human relationship, national efficiency as well as social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress. A self – reliant individual is the one who possesses great creative ability, one who is functional, one who has acquired some values and skills to improve not just himself, but people around him/her; a resourceful person. Since, the introduction of entrepreneurship education course into the university curriculum by the National University Commission, my interaction with undergraduate students from different universities revealed that entrepreneurship education is being taught theoretically and even in the course outlines of GST 311 (introduction to entrepreneurship skill) course introduced by (NUC,2007) is theoretically based and not pragmatic. Also, studies carried by Okeke, and Edikpa (2014), with the students of Nnamdi Azikwe University revealed that entrepreneurship education is only taught theoretically instead of practically. Theoretically entrepreneurship education is not making the youth in tertiary institution to master the entrepreneurship skills.

According to (Ekoja, 2014) practical entrepreneurship education is the education that is activity based, and hands-on type where the students handle the materials themselves and produces whatever they want to produce. Practical entrepreneurship education will make the students developed entrepreneurship skills and the skills they acquire will boost their capacity to establish business/trade that will make them job creators. This is because practical knowledge is more permanent than theoretical. According to National Policy on Education (FRN, 2012), auto-body repair and spraying/painting, auto-electrical work, salesmanship, marketing, fisheries, animal husbandry, mining, tourism, photography, GSM maintenance, book keeping, store keeping, data processing, pot making, detergent production, table water production, fruit canning, food processing, shorthand, keyboarding, printing. Craft practices, dyeing and bleaching, and textile trade are entrepreneurship trades that student can promote capacities of students to be self – employed after graduation. Other trade student can learn as practical entrepreneurship trades are soap making, body cream, barbing, candle making, hair cream, making gum, light production and tailoring. If a student at least masters one of the above trades, he can be job creator after graduation and this will reduce the rate of unemployment in Nigeria and foster national development.

### **Conclusion**

Practical entrepreneurship education is activity based and not theoretical therefore, offers students the basic entrepreneurship skills that boost students capacity needed

for self – reliance after graduation. Thus, human capacity is more enhanced with practical entrepreneurship education than the theoretical. The paper also reviewed the concept of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship skills, human capacity building and how practical entrepreneurship will boost human capacity among youths at tertiary institutions.

### Recommendations

Based on the foregone discussion the paper recommends the following:

- Government should incorporate practical/field training scheme in the existing mandatory entrepreneurship education curriculum of tertiary institution in Nigeria.
- Government should also provide enough facilities and equipments for practical entrepreneurship education.
- Adequate funds should also be provided by the government for purchase of chemicals, materials to be used for learning.
- Teachers teaching the course should be trained on the practical aspect of entrepreneurship education instead of being theoretical all the time.

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