

The Role of Entrepreneurship Education in National Development (A Case Study of Nasarawa State)

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship education is an important issue in National Development. The paper therefore examines the roles of entrepreneurship education in National Development. It focuses on the role of entrepreneurship education on undergraduate students in the national development. Structure entrepreneurship readiness questionnaire was used to elicit responses from respondents who were undergraduates. Hypothesis was stated and with the aid of test of proportion, it was found that Entrepreneurship Education imparts entrepreneurship skills and attitudes to students as well as disposes them towards establishing their own business. By so doing, it will empower them to contribute immensely and positively towards economic development. The paper recommends that government should provide a starting financial support to complement this initiative of entrepreneurship education. Stakeholders, non-governmental organizations and well established entrepreneurs and others are to come together in networks to create an enabling environment for job opportunities in which entrepreneurship can flourish.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Economic Development, Financial Support.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria in conjunction with the most of the developing countries of the world is faced with challenges such as unemployment, poverty, diseases among others. This situation calls for training of entrepreneurship education. Information by the National Universities Commission (NUC) (2010) reiterates the massive unemployment of Nigeria graduate in the country. This problem is being attributed to the disequilibrium between labour market requirements and lack of essential employment skills by the graduate (Diejonah and Orimilade, 2011; Dabalan, Oni and Adekola, 2010). The terms “entrepreneurship” and “entrepreneur” are used extensively today. According to Nickles, MuHugh and McHuge (2008) “An entrepreneurship is someone who focuses on finding opportunity instead of accepting security, getting result instead of following routines, earning a profit instead of earning a payback, trying new ideas instead of avoiding mistakes and creating a long term vision instead of seeking a short term pay off (Meusic 2007). Entrepreneurship is something that all national governments are keen to cultivate and increasingly being encouraged to become more entrepreneurial. It is seen as a fundamentally important part of modern economic and social life. We often make the distinction between the terms “entrepreneurship” and “owner manager”, they are often used interchangeably to describe somebody who engaged in the management

of a small business. Very often, anyone who starts up in business is labeled an entrepreneur, and entrepreneurship is inextricably linked to small business management. Thus, entrepreneurship is an integrated concept that permeates an individual's business in an innovative manner (Reynolds 2012). According to Drucker (2013) the "entrepreneur always searches for the change, responds to it and exploits it as an opportunity". The entrepreneur has been considered as the person who starts a new business, has a high level of achievement and is naturally endowed with the qualities of enthusiasm, idealism, sense of purpose and independence of thought and action.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To examine the contribution of entrepreneurship education to job creation, youth empowerment, improvement in the standard of living through innovation, reduction in rural-urban drift, and development of local technological base.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

Ho: Entrepreneurship Education does not impart entrepreneurship skills to students and disposes them towards establishing their own businesses.

Hi: Entrepreneurship education imparts entrepreneurial skills to students as well as disposes them toward establishing their own businesses.

Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition and National Poverty Eradication Programme

The government of Nigeria has since initiated different programmes to aid entrepreneurship development in Nigeria as follows:

- Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES): This programme has been basically initiated for school leavers, house wives and non skilled people generally. They are trained on computer vocational skills acquisition programmes like carpentry, shoe-making, computer literacy, hair dressing, zobo and kunu making etc. The scheme also assist with funds or interest free loans for them to pursue vocations and become self reliant.
- Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP): This programme is initiated for skilled and certified persons or graduates with HNDs and degrees. This programme is basically akin to the NYSC programmes in the sense that beneficiaries are posted to areas relevant to their qualifications for on the job training and are paid a monthly stipend of ₦10, 000: 00 per participant.
- Farmer's Empowerment Programme (FEP): Basically the rural farmers are the target with a view to enhancing their farming activities through free loans. Sometimes the farmers are assisted with inputs as well as equipment at subsidized rates.
- Multipurpose Micro-finance (MP-MF) schemes: In this programme, soft loans are given to farmers with 8% interest rate. The beneficiaries are mostly businessmen and women, artisans etc; the loans are given to boost their business activities for the betterment of the economy.

Factors Hindering Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria

Despite the fact that several attempts have been made to encourage entrepreneurship development in the country, certain and specific problems still plague the Nigerian entrepreneurs (Olagunju, 2014). These among others include:

- Unrestricted and unguided importation of goods into Nigeria
- Corruption
- Shortage and inadequacy of infrastructural facilities
- Lack of trust
- Unavailability of funds to start up
- Lack of entrepreneurship teachers, materials as well as equipment
- Poor knowledge, biased economy and low spirit of competition.

Entrepreneurship education is carefully planned process that translates into the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies. Education is a set of skills needed by the entrepreneur to avoid future trial and errors (Osuala, 2010). Learning is the stage to make most of the mistakes from which to learn. Entrepreneur education equips the learner with certain skills on decision making, acquisition of new ideas, methods of raising and maintaining conversations and establishing business relations through entrepreneurship education qualitative ability that facilitates computation and record keeping are also learnt. It starts with developing programmes in entrepreneurship centres where people are trained to develop acquired skills.

Entrepreneurship Education and National Development

National programmes have been developed for the purpose of increasing entrepreneurial activity through various reforms, but proved abortive. Despite the importance of entrepreneurs in the economic development of a country, less developed nations such as sub-sahara African countries have not fully developed strategies to capitalize on this resource – (Bawuah, Buame and Hinson, 2006). These countries only have are policies which do not actually reflect the importance of entrepreneurship to the economic development. Owuala (2008), believes that entrepreneurship education is part of the programme that prepares individuals to form and acquire small businesses of their own. Entrepreneurship education is therefore believed to be a planned and sustained effort at inculcating and nurturing the entrepreneurship spirit among the Nigerians a pool of willing, able and successful entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial education is an intervention by an adult to impact entrepreneurial qualities and skills to enable a learner to survive in the business world. Entrepreneurial education or training aims at equipping learners with skills, knowledge and disposition that can help them to develop business plans.

Researches by Hinson, Buame & Bawah (2006), have shown that individuals attending entrepreneurship courses have a higher propensity to start their own businesses at some point in their career than those attending other courses. Owuala and Obokoh (2008) posit that there should be a long term strategy that will focus on developing a set of programmes at different stages of the enterprise education drive. Such enterprise education programmes could offer a progression from increase in awareness to real activities to develop entrepreneurship skills, culminating in a desire to own and run a business. A study by Thomberry (2005) revealed that many managers can indeed be trained to act like entrepreneur and that these actions can result in significant new

value creation. This therefore shows that entrepreneurial training is important for firms that are rarely satisfied with the status quo, firms that are always looking forward to creating new value.

According to Thomberry (2005):

1. Entrepreneurs are creative and innovative. Creativity and innovation are the universal marks of the entrepreneur. Creativity is the thinking process involved in producing an idea or a concept that is new, original, useful and satisfying to its creator or someone else.
2. Entrepreneurs manage risk: They take the risk of nurturing a business with little or no chance of surviving. Without these characteristics, business ideas will never come to limelight. It should be emphasized that entrepreneurs should take 'calculated' and not 'poor' risk
3. Entrepreneurs find resources required to exploit opportunities: they employ resources in a disciplined way to exploit identified opportunities. Often the required resources may not be within the immediate reach of the entrepreneurs but she/he will stop at nothing at getting the resources. They are experts at getting at exploiting contacts and sources, begging, stealing and borrowing when necessary (Stevenson and Jarillo 2007)
4. Entrepreneurs are good networker: as god networks, entrepreneurs know where to find resources, who to get connected to control a business.
5. Entrepreneurs put customers first:" consciously or unconsciously, entrepreneurs put the customers first. They try as much as possible to make the customers the centre of their business. They are best sales people.

METHODOLOGY

The population of the study comprised of 160 undergraduate students in Nasarawa State. 160 questionnaires were administered and 155 were returned and found useable. The set of questionnaires were analyzed using simple percentages while the hypothesis was evaluated through the test of proportions. The questionnaires consisted of ten items which describe the role of entrepreneurship education in national development. The test is carried out at 95% confidence interval or 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom, (df) is calculated using the formula: (R-1) (c-1) the responses were measured along Renisis likert6 four scale of agree (A), Strongly agree (SA), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1

Response	A	SA	D	SD	Total
Entrepreneurship education enhances job creation and reduces crime in the society					
Frequency (o)	100	40	10	5	155
Percentage (%)	74.19		25.81		100

Sources: field survey (2015)

Table one above indicates that 140 respondents representing 90.32% states and agreed that entrepreneurship education enhances job creation and reduces crime. It therefore implies that almost all the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education reduces crime and enhances job creation in our society. 15 respondents (9.68%) disagree with that.

TABLE 2

Response	A	SA	D	SD	Total
Entrepreneurship education helps in youth empowerment					
Frequency (o)	80	35	15	05	155
Percentage (%)	74.19		25.81		100

Source: field survey (2015).

The data presented in table 2 above shows that 115 respondents representing 74.19% agreed that entrepreneurship education helps in youth empowerment while 20 (25.81%) of the respondents disagree with that.

TABLE 3

Response	A	SA	D	SD	Total
Entrepreneurship education gives room for small business enterprises					
Frequency (o)	80	50	05	10	155
Percentage (%)	83.87		16.13		100

Source: field survey (2015)

The above table shows that 75 respondents representing (48.39%) were of the opinion that entrepreneurship education helps in the utilization of local resources, while 80 respondents representing (51.61%) disagree that entrepreneurship education does not help in the use of local resources.

TABLE 4

Response	A	SA	D	SD	Total
Entrepreneurship education helps in the utilization of local resources					
Frequency (o)	80	50	05	10	155
Percentage (%)	83.87		16.13		100

Source: field survey (2015)

The data in table 4 above indicates that 130 respondents (83.85%) agreed that entrepreneurship education gives room for small business enterprises in Nigeria while 15 respondents representing (16.13%) degree with the opinion/ assertion.

TABLE 5

Response	A	SA	D	SD	Total
Entrepreneurship education exposes youth to learning new techniques					
Frequency (0)	76	51	16	12	155
Percentage (%)	81.94		18.06		100

Source: field survey (2015)

The data 5 above shows that 127 (81.94%) of the respondents that entrepreneurship education exposes the youths new techniques of learning, while 28 (18.06) responded that entrepreneurship does not expose them in learning techniques.

TABLE 6

Response	A	SA	D	SD	Total
Entrepreneurship education bring about practical training					
Frequency (0)	26	67	34	28	155
Percentage (%)	60.0		40		100

Source: field survey (2015)

The table above shows that 93 (60.0%) respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education brings about practical training, while 62 respondents 605 of the respondents disagree with the assertion or opinion.

TABLE: 7 SHOWS THE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE MAJOR DETERMINANTS, TOWARDS THE IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Variables	Strongly agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	strongly Disagree (SD)	Total
Table1	100	40	10	5	155
Table 2	80	35	15	5	155
Table 4	90	50	5	10	155
Total	270	125	30	20	465

Source: field survey (2015)-

To calculate expected frequency, $e = \frac{T_{RX} T_{Cj}}{T_g}$ and $df = (r-1)(c-1)$

TABLE 8: CONTINGENCY

O	E	o-e	(o-e) ²	(o-e) ²
100	90	10	100	1.00
40	41.67	-1.67	2.79	0.070
10	10	00	0.00	00
5	6.67	-1.67	2.79	0.56
80	90	-10	100	1.25
35	41.67	-6.67	44.49	1.27
15	10.0	5	25	1.67
5	6.67	-1.67	2.79	0.56
90	90	00	00	00
50	41.67	8.33	69.39	1.39
5	10	-5	25	5.00
10	6.67	3.33	11.09	1.11
				X²=13.879

From the table, the calculated chi square (X^2) is greater than the tabulated chi squared X^2 (12.592). We therefore reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Which states that entrepreneurship education impact entrepreneurial skills to student and also dispose them toward the establishment of own business. Entrepreneurship education brings about or instigates youth empowerment and job creation and helps in exposing the youth to gainful employment which would further help in national development. By so doing it also reduces the rural-urban migration.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The development of entrepreneurship education will also boost productivity, increase competition, innovation, create employment opportunity for the unemployed. It is also believed that when students are exposed to the intricacies, concepts, principles and theories of entrepreneurship, their entrepreneurship spirits will be high and they will be automatically gingered up to start to think of how to create jobs even for others instead of seeking for jobs. The entrepreneurial education will also serve as eye opener to the entrepreneurship education students. The course will enable them to spot and exploit business opportunities available to them. The study encourages the tertiary institutions to demonstrate high level of commitment to entrepreneurship education. The study also reveals the need for all stakeholders in education to understand the relationship between empowering the youth for National Development and entrepreneurship education. The findings of the study will also provide an empirical basis for supporting the mandatory entrepreneurship education for students in tertiary institutions.

On the basis of the results of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Government should start up financial support and venture capital should be provided through micro finance banks and other specialized agencies to adequately empower young entrepreneur.
- Stakeholders, non-profit organization, well established entrepreneurship and other are to come together in networks to create an enabling environment for job opportunity in which entrepreneurship can flourish.

- Policy makers, entrepreneurs, educators, sponsors need to come together on a large scale to raise standards, increase volume of participation and find regional and national solutions so that entrepreneurship education can have a positive impact at the grassroots.
- The income levels of the people working in organizations are not sufficient to lift people above poverty line. People need the knowledge, skills and mindsets to take advantage of these entrepreneurship opportunities in order to make up.

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Biographical Notes

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