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## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FUNCTIONAL NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY AS A MEANS OF ATTAINING VISION 2020 OBJECTIVES IN NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Entrepreneurship is today the most vital instrument of national development in any economy. In this regard, Nigeria is not an exception. For any nation to achieve its national objectives, entrepreneurship must have an important role in its education policy. The link between entrepreneurship and functional education is a necessity, if Nigeria is to realize its objective of becoming one of the 20<sup>th</sup> most developed nations by the year 2020. The paper examines the entrepreneurship content of the nation's education policy, entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and what is required to attain the vision's objectives. The study used content analysis method. It concludes that there is the urgent need to revise the education policy in order to more entrepreneurship content to the policy's implementation.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurship has been acknowledged as one of the most important factor that contributes substantially to economic growth and development in every country. It is in this recognition that, today every country accords priority to entrepreneurship education development. Entrepreneurship has assisted in addressing the problems associated with poverty, unemployment, and promoting economic activities that guaranteed effective and efficient exploitation and exploration than of national resources World Bank (1995). In many developing countries, there is the natural resources endowment, both human and materials in abundance, but without the right entrepreneurship education as well as people with psychological disposition, the resources will remain unexploited. Therefore the nation will continue to struggle for development in vain. This is because developing nations continued to lack in entrepreneurs, creative and innovative skills that are capable of promoting entrepreneurship to convert the abundant resources into national development. Once a nation's developed the necessary innovative skills and creative capacity to introduce new ways of doing things, serious socio-economic problems will gradually give way to sustainable economic growth and development World Bank (1995). Such development and its impact could be easily seen on the changing patterns and styles of the living condition of the citizenry, as well as on the health, education, industrial, infrastructural and socio-economic well-being of the people Yosuf (1998). Developed nations have been able to curtail the level of poverty, unemployment and promote the socio-economic well-being of their people, due to the vital priority they had accorded to entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship education Onwualah (2001). In the 1960's and 1970's many developing nations, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Turkey among others also embarked on efforts to promote

entrepreneurship education as well as entrepreneurship development World Bank (1995). Entrepreneurs in the 1970's in Nigeria participated in businesses that were flexible with less complexity in the area of production. According UKpong (1992), such entrepreneurs could easily respond to market demands and the need for raw materials, as well as adapt to changing technologies. The entrepreneurs had also served as training ground for entrepreneurship where labor force and potential entrepreneurs acquired necessary skills which promoted entrepreneurship, UKpong (1992). Training and skills acquisition are necessary today for any entrepreneurs. To large extent skilled workers determine the success or entrepreneurship, as well as the operation of small and medium businesses and enterprises in the area of productivity and profitability Hassan (2005). Aware of this vital component, many countries in Africa and Asia nations introduced several training packages to promote innovations and creativity in entrepreneurship. South, India, and Indonesia and Nigeria have made it a strategy as part of their industrialization policy to provide skills and other necessary training to entrepreneurs NIP (1996). The training being provided include on the job-training, managerial skills acquisition, plant maintenance and repairs, vocational and apprenticeship. Nigeria was not an exception since the 1960's; efforts were made to promote entrepreneurship through the establishment of training and facilitating Industrial Development Centers (IDCs), Owualah (2001). The first centre was established in 1962, in Owerri by the Eastern Nigerian Government in conjunction with the United States' Ford Foundation and it was followed by a similar arrangement with the same organization by the Northern Nigerian government in Zaria. By 1978, more than 30 such centers had been established throughout the country, Rabi'u (1997). The centers had broad objectives which made to engage in many types of entrepreneurship acquisition skills. These included managerial skills acquisition, machinery installation, repairs and maintenance. Others are feasibility studies, marketing product management, choice of production, technique and raw materials World Bank (1999).

The objectives of the paper examined the entrepreneurship content of the national policy on education in Nigeria, and also evaluates entrepreneurship education in the country and what is now needed, if Nigeria is to attain the Vision 2020 objective of becoming one of 20<sup>th</sup> most developed country in the world.

In the light of these objectives, the paper raised the following research questions.

- a. What is the entrepreneurship content of the national policy on education?
- b. How adequate is the policy pushing Nigeria to reach its Vision 2020 goal.
- c. What is the level of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria
- d. Is it adequate to allow Nigeria to achieve its vision
- e. What does Nigeria need in entrepreneurship education to achieve its 2020 vision?

## **CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES**

Entrepreneurship means so many things to different people, depending on their educational background and their professional callings. Schumpeter (1961) tries to give entrepreneurship a universal meaning when he defined entrepreneurship as "a means of doing new things or doing things that are already being done in a new way". Nnenna (1999) described entrepreneurship as a creative and innovative response to environment, where such responses can take place in any field of human endeavour, while Drucker (1986) sees entrepreneurship as a purposeful activity to initiate, maintain and develop a profit oriented business. Whatever may be the meaning of entrepreneurship, it requires basic skills, innovative and creative knowledge and certain traits and attributes for an entrepreneur and entrepreneurship to thrive in any economy. Certain skills must be acquired by any potential entrepreneurs- such as mental, managerial and aptitudes or attributes in order to success Norbert (2001). "It should be emphasized that some qualities must be possessed by any potential entrepreneurs, while other must be acquired through training, education and development," Norbert (2001). It is this sense that, entrepreneurship success will depend on organized training and formal education for skills acquisition and entrepreneurship education. There are lot literatures in entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education is essentially aimed at creating awareness and mobilizes people for career purpose in order to provide skills needed to promote business and development Toulouse (1996). "It could be through the formal from of training to impact specific skills in order to perform certain job or acquire proficiency in certain entrepreneurship ventures" Nwana (1995). Creating people with ability to create, innovate and add values to the economy, according to Nwachukwu (2003) requires a different approach, which emphasizes on creating traits or attributes that will needed by those trained to embark in entrepreneurship. The values and attributes needed by entrepreneurs, according to Nwachukwu (2003) should include among others, creating the ability for people embarking on entrepreneurship to take reasonable risks, have innovative skills, and should accountable in the way they use their resources, time, talents and skills. They should also have the ability for hardworking, self-confident in their decisions and should also be leaders in their respects.

Literature on traits has been emphasized as relevant in addressing deficiency in entrepreneurship education. It is not only the skills for venturing into the business to ensure success, but also the necessary traits or attributes of entrepreneurship such as behaviour, attitudes and other rental and personal attributes. These skills can also be acquired as demonstrated by Gorman et al (1997) in Aruwa (2008), where, such traits were acquired from cultural background and experience. Therefore such values, traits and attributes associated with entrepreneurship could be acquired through formal education and trainings. There are also a lot of literatures that link successful entrepreneurship to functional educational policy, where innovative and creative skills acquired through the formal education, imbued with the instilling or imbibing of success traits in entrepreneurs, create a culture of entrepreneurship in an economy Yosuf (1998). Sulit (2006) attributed the success of entrepreneurship to the Chinese, Japanese and newly emerging economies to the culture

and the educational system on those countries. The challenge before countries especially in Africa is to develop the skills and knowledge of their citizens and deploy them towards economic development. Harbison (1973) emphasized this link between knowledge and economic development thus

“Human resources...constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations, capital and natural resources are passive factors of production: human beings are the active agents, who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations, and carry forward national development. Clearly a country which is unable to develop the skills, knowledge of its people and to utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else,” Harbison (1973)“.

Functional education to educationalists is the kind of education that comes spontaneously from the influence of the environment. It is based on the child needs rather Bealik (1961) rather than oriented towards a national educational development policy. In this study, it is considered as the education, which could be imparted on the individuals, so as to prepare him to face the challenges of achieving the national goals of his country. To achieve national goals, the nation’s education policy, the nature and structure of entrepreneurs’ education must be tailored towards serving the needs of the pupils, students and citizens in order to work towards realizing the objectives of development. In this case, the teacher will not just going to be a go-between the people and the subject, he would be an active agent of nurturing innovation and creativity. To achieve such goals according to Mahieu (2006) insists that such education for national development must promote initiative, flexibility, responsibility, and enterprises. Job advertisement also emphasizes these types of traits and education content should stress them in order to achieve society’s goal Mahieu (2006), especially where there is shortage of technicians. The study used content analysis as its research method. The method subject documents of various form of analysis relevant to the area of study which include the quantitative and qualitative techniques. This, according to Rubin (1983) has a lot of advantages over other methods because of the availability of data already analyzed by other researchers. Primary data from the National Education Policy document were used. Secondary data were also relied upon during the study.

## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONTENT OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION**

The Nigerian National Policy on Education was an up shut of the National Curriculum Conference which took place in 1973. It was a gathering of experts across the country. The outcome of the conference was a draft document that was later fine-tuned in consultation with the states’ Ministries of education and Local government education departments. It was published in 1977 as the first National Policy on Education document. Since the publication it has been revised trice, first in 1981, 1998 and in 2004 to accommodate changing needs of the society and the challenges of national development to keep abreast “with the dynamics of social change and the demand for education,” NPE (2004). Some innovations were also

introduced during the three revisions. Section d of the philosophy and goals of education in Nigeria reads thus

“There is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive united Nigeria; to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individual direction in education...The acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical, and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society, NPE (2004).

It was based on this enunciated philosophy and goals that skills acquisition and creative studies were introduced in the schools curriculum right from primary to university levels. The aim of the primary level with the six year period is to provide the child with the basic tools for further educational advancement and prepare him to acquire skills in trades and craft of his locality. In the implementation of the policy, it stated that cultural and creative arts (Drawing, Handcraft, Music and Cultural activities should emphasized NPE (2004). The secondary school level, during the three year for junior secondary education and three years for Senior Secondary Education, the policy classified the subjects of study into three areas in junior level. There are eight subjects including integrated science and introductory technology. There are also seven pre-vocational subjects and non-pre-vocational electives. At the Senior Secondary Education Level, the subjects of study have also been divided into three groups, of core subjects, 18 vocational electives subjects and 15 non-vocational elective subjects. Part six, section 7 of the policy document contains the science, technical and vocational education and further explained several aspects of the subjects for study at the technical and Vocational Education at the junior and senior secondary level of education in Nigeria. The areas of emphasis are Mechanical, Trade, Electrical Engineering, computer, craft practice, building, wood trade, textile trades, painting trades, business trades, beauty, culture and hospitality trades. The tertiary education in the policy document is defined as the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monothechnics, including those institutions offering correspondent courses. The major goals of tertiary education in the policy document is among others to contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; and acquire both physical and intellectual skills to enable individuals to be self-reliant and become useful members of the society. Though a public policy document is a guide to future actions that will lead to the realization of rational goals in any sector, the national policy on education does not contain adequate content on entrepreneurship education to guarantee national development. It is limited in its scope on entrepreneurship because of its focus on only the formal education sector. In this respect efforts were made to guide states, local governments as well as the federal government on what is needed to attain the nation’s development objectives. Even then, the objectives are not clearly stated as to what kind of nation is desired the policy is guiding stakeholders to realize. Another important aspect missing is that there is no guide as to its implementation in respect of stakeholders’ responsibilities regarding the policy. It is not a gainsaying that the implementation of the policy has a lot to be desired. This could be

attributed to the high demand for formal education, especially technical and vocational training had overstretched the facilities. Lack adequate facilities, funding unqualified teachers among others make the entrepreneurship content of the policy non-functional. Therefore, most of the products of the system find it difficult to engage in activities that promote entrepreneurship and economic development.

## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

Serious efforts to promote entrepreneurship education in Nigeria began in the 1960's with the establishment of the Industrial Development Center in 1962 in Owerri. The Nigeria Civil War disrupted efforts in promoting skilled acquisition and entrepreneurship education until in 1970. However, regional government before the 1970's have introduced vocational education, but deliberate efforts and initiative were only made in the early 1970's, with the setting-up of entrepreneurship development institutions. The included among others, the Industrial Training Fund, (1971), the Center for Management Development (1973), the administrative Staff College of Nigeria (1973), the Nigeria Institute for Chemical Technology and National office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion. Since then, many such institutions were established in almost of all areas of human endeavors, particularly agriculture, chemical, management, industrial, wood, electrical, textiles, painting, building, automobile among others. By 1990's more 63 institutions for training and skills acquisition for the promotion of entrepreneurship had been established by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Besides these initiatives, state governments have set-up business incubation centers and other training centers for entrepreneurship development which are now in hundredth. The state centers focused on skills for self employment and set self-reliance. The training and skills acquisition programmes emphasized mostly of trades- Soap Making, Perfume Making, Bricklaying, auto-repair, radio and other electronic appliances maintenance and repairs etc. The federal institutions on the other hand provide formal entrepreneurship education. The skill acquisition courses offered by the institutions techno-managerial trainings, selection of appropriate technology, machineries, process of production, installation of machineries, plant maintenance services, product development, selection of production techniques, investment counseling and preparation of feasibility studies. Other trainings also include quality control, standardization of products, problem solving techniques, engineering techniques, product management, inventory control and vocational apprenticeship in other areas of National Development, especially in general entrepreneurship. In spite of the various efforts by the governments throughout the country to promote and develop skills acquisition and entrepreneurship development, it appears that many problems are associated with the efforts Hassan (2005). There are still lack of skills among entrepreneurs in various areas of economic endeavors and national development. These may be associated with many reasons. The course content being offered by the institutions may be outdated with inadequate funding from governments. The agencies are under the supervision of ministries and their departments and no efforts are being made to address the content of their courses. At such there is no way for synergy or collaborate efforts among them to address problem of duplication of programmes, duplication of training facilities among others. It has also been

argued that, many of the agencies do not have courses indicating entrepreneurship traits and other personal psychological and economic traits for entrepreneurship success. This means that despite Nigeria's abundant resources-human and material, the link between entrepreneurship development and functional education is weak. This may perhaps be attributed to the lack of functional education policy as well as the lack of conducive environment for economic development. There is the need to have psychological traits, characteristics and attributes for entrepreneurship in the content of the curriculum of entrepreneurship education Aruwa (2008). "In spite of... evidence of the importance of entrepreneurship education, no significant effort has been made towards developing a comprehensive curriculum to support training of future entrepreneurs" Aruwa (2008)

### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND VISION 2020**

The Vision 20:2000 was initiated by the Nigerian government with the sole objective of making Nigeria one of the most developed countries by 2020 was set up a committee consisting of 750 people. The members were divided into 29 thematic groups and 13 special interest groups. The education sector one of the 29<sup>th</sup> thematic committee. It is called the National Technical Working Group on Education on Vision 2020. The report of the committee submitted to the government in November 2009 has been accepted. The report contains far-reaching recommendation on Entrepreneurship education, if Nigeria is to achieve its goals. The recommendations include upgrading the educational facilities, technology development, research and technology acquisition and the improvement of teacher Education NTWG (2009). Government is yet to start the implementation of the recommendations, which hopefully which take the nation to the club of 20 most developed patients. Having examined the entrepreneurship content of National Policy on Education in Nigeria, Entrepreneurship education, as well as the Report of the National Technical Working Group on Vision 2020 educational goals, there is a serious deficiency in terms of the goals envisaged by the year 2020 and the nation entrepreneurship education readiness. First the entrepreneurship content of the National Policy on Education is inadequately with lack of necessary facilities in schools to implement the entrepreneurship contents of the policy with more than 94, 000 Secondary Schools, 94 Universities and more than 200 monotechnics, Polytechnics and College of Education NTWG (2009). More so, the institutions are under the various tiers of governments, which lack of supervision, co-ordination, and standard control. The some fate be felt the level of entrepreneurship education in the country, especially that there are 63 Entrepreneurship Education Institutions under the Federal Government NTWG (2009). The mandate of the institutions are contained in various statutes enacted at various periods, creating overlapping responsibilities and duplication of functions. State governments equally have such institutions. They are mostly underfunded, with the curriculum highly deficient in meeting current national entrepreneurship needs.

Therefore what is required for Nigeria to attain Vision 2020 objectives in terms of entrepreneurship based National Education Policy is very enormous. These including the

facilities for leaning, teacher-training, upgrading of the entrepreneurship content of the national education policy as well as the entrepreneurship education in the country.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The paper concludes that the entrepreneurship content of the National Policy on Education is not adequate enough to propel Nigeria to reach its goal by the year 2020. The same conclusion applies also to the level of entrepreneurship education in the country. It also concludes that there is the need to review the content of the National Policy on Education to add more entrepreneurship content that should be adequate enough to assist the nation in the process of becoming one of the 20<sup>th</sup> most developed nation. There is also the urgent need to provide adequate funding and facilities in the nation's educational institutions, especially those assigned with the responsibility of technical and vocational education. The 63 entrepreneurship Education Institutes as well as those of the states should be brought under an umbrella that will ensure that the curricula are updated, provided with adequate funding to meet the Vision 2020 goals. Teacher training is also necessary in this regard as it would assist teachers to deliver the necessary knowledge for the attainment of the goal. This will also enable the educational system to emphasize on positive attributes and traits of entrepreneurship which are vital for a serious national development.

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