
ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDIES EDUCATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA: THEORIES AND PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT: *The paper examined the extent to which entrepreneurship studies education had been effectively taught and learnt in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It outlined the core objectives of entrepreneurship Studies education. Entrepreneurship studies education has a lot of challenges such as lack of policy implementation and inadequate funding among others. Requirements for its effective implementation are also outlined. The paper recommends that there be provision for adequate infrastructural materials, teachers and learners awareness and adequate provision of materials if the objectives of the course must actualized. The paper concluded that entrepreneurship studies education contributes significantly towards the growth and development of any given society*

KEY WORDS: entrepreneur, entrepreneurs, education, development, infrastructure

INTRODUCTION

For any country to experience sustainable socio-economic growth, it must give credence to entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurial Education has been introduced into the Nigerian Educational Curriculum with the objective of equipping learners with adequate or relevant entrepreneurial abilities. However, it is broadly accepted that most of them educate ‘about’ entrepreneurship and enterprise rather than educating for entrepreneurship (Okoye & Chinasa, 2019). Only rarely do entrepreneurial educators focus on developing entrepreneurial abilities in the learners. It is therefore imperative to use entrepreneurship studies to promote implementation in education. Entrepreneurship studies can be achieved by equipping youths with skills and competencies in vocational and technical education. Such studies should be a veritable tool for securing employment and emancipation of people through the provision and acquiring of necessary knowledge and skills to make lives more flourishing.

Entrepreneurship studies is a discipline with numerous definitions as there are different authors. Its definitions cannot be exhausted, but suffice to state here a relevant definition to this study. Entrepreneurship studies education is a problem solving approach to students’ empowerment that is capable of leading them to gain the skills required to plan, start, run and grow a business that focuses on innovation and development of new products and services (Inegbenebor, 2005).

Shepherd and Douglas (2007) defined entrepreneurship studies as the essence of entrepreneurship. It is to envision and chart a course for a new business venture by combining information from the functional discipline and from the external environment in the context of the extra-ordinary uncertainty and ambiguity which faces a new business venture. Entrepreneurship studies focuses on the learning experience and the development of competencies, skills, aptitudes and values. Entrepreneurship education is a lifelong process, starting as early as elementary school and progressing through all levels of education including adult education, focusing on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in widely different contexts (Abeng & Obinnaya, 2017).

The Federal government directed all higher education institutions in the country to run entrepreneurship studies programme as a compulsory course for all students irrespective of their disciplines with effect from 2007/2008 academic session (Bassey, Nwagbara & Bisong, 2014). In 2006, the government of Nigeria announced the introduction of entrepreneurship education as an entrepreneurship studies, to be integrated in the higher education Curriculum as a compulsory course for students of specialization (Bassey, et.al, 2014). Effectively, the implementation started in the 2007/2008 academic session. In pursuance of the full implementation of entrepreneurship education, most of Tertiary Institutions established a Coordinating Centre for entrepreneurship education to support students' training. The Nigeria University Commission (NUC) was given presidential directives by the Ministry of Education to supervise and coordinate the programme of introducing entrepreneurship education into Nigerian institutions of higher learning (Amadi & Amakodi, 2019). The introduction of entrepreneurship education into the University Curriculum is an empowerment strategy for graduate self-employment, self-reliance and poverty reduction. Where appropriate skills, attitude and knowledge accompanied with appropriate practical work are taught to the students, they would on graduation become self-employed and employers of labour. This will reduce the rate of unemployment if not completely eradicate and move Nigeria from a consumer to producer nation (Okah & Odelola, 2009).

Entrepreneurship education was harped as the panacea for youth unemployment and a catalyst for sustained private sector-led growth. Entrepreneurship education was introduced to provide students in tertiary institutions with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of ventures. Entrepreneurship studies like any other field has its objectives.

Objectives of entrepreneurship studies in Nigeria

Education at all levels have articulated the national implementation strategy packages as part of long term programmes to address gross unemployment and under employment, especially at Post-graduation level. This programme at maturity is expected to improve Nigeria economic growth through the development of academic excellence. Entrepreneurship studies is particularly relevant as most business, attempt to reconcile the implementation aspects with profitability. This nexus is important and of great interest for the academia, scientific community and even policy makers.

According to Paul (2005), Entrepreneurship studies is aimed at achieving the following among others: to provide the graduate youths with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium scale businesses and to create smooth transition from traditional to modern industrial economy, to offer functional education for youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant; provide to serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development, to reduce high rate of poverty; to create job opportunities, reduction in rural-urban migration. It has been fully observed that these objectives have not been fully realized in Nigeria, subject to numerous challenges facing the implementation of entrepreneurship education. Below are some of the challenges.

Challenges facing improving entrepreneurship studies in Nigeria

The challenges in the Nigerian entrepreneurship studies education are too numerous to be enumerated as many authors discussed it from many angles. However, they are unanimous that the predicament in entrepreneurship studies education serves as threat not only to

entrepreneurship education, but socio-economic and political development in Nigeria. Some of these challenges are briefly discussed below:-

1. Lack of policy implementation: Policy can be seen as a principle that guides the existence of programmes. It is a document that gives any programme a sense of direction. It is an articulated plan of action geared towards successive accomplishment. According to Ojile and Tijani (2017) policy is usually a document that spells out all official actions of a system. Hence, educational policies are initiatives of government that determines the directions of entrepreneurship education. It is an obvious fact that the formulation of any entrepreneurship education policy prepares a ground for implementation of the programmes. However, Tijani, Bulama and Musa (2014) remarked that as articulated in the National Policy on Education is that, it has suffered element of non-implementation due to lack of government commitment and sincere desire for educational development. Thus failure to implement the National Policy Education as articulated in it has really denied large population of the citizenry right to quality entrepreneurship studies, hence, the challenge of poverty eradication in Nigeria.

2. Poor funding of entrepreneurship studies in particular and the education sector in general has been a serious challenge to entrepreneurship studies, both at the institutional level and the nation at large. This has adversely affected the implementation of entrepreneurship studies curricula, a fact attested by National Universities Commission and Counterpart Supervisory agencies (Gabadeen & Raimi, 2012).

3. Lack of adequate orientation and sensitization of students in our tertiary institutions can cause a dis-interest in entrepreneurship studies, resulting in wrong mind-set and very weak participation in entrepreneurship activities (Abeng & Obinnaya, 2017).

4. Deficiency of instructional materials such as textbooks and others could also be a challenge at tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

5. Equally, unpleasant feedback from preceding self-employed graduates sends wrong signals to undergraduates taking compulsory courses in entrepreneurship studies in several tertiary institutions (Gabadeen & Raimi, 2012).

6. Lateness in starting entrepreneurship education at any level in Nigeria. This is premised on the argument that introduction of anything new in human society takes time to develop. Available facts in the literature indicate that entrepreneurship into the Curriculum of higher education started as far back as 1947 (Kuratko, 2003).

7. Dearth of lecturers in the field of entrepreneurship to make the course practically interesting and goal-oriented as opposed to too much focus on theoretical instructions and the commonly use of traditional talk-chart method of communicating knowledge and information as well as learning. This hampers creativity and does little to equip students with problem-solving and decision making skills.

8. Inadequate funding: Inadequacy of fund is responsible for creating unconducive learning environment where learners sit on bare floor. At the tertiary level, students struggle for seats with others. Others who could not get, continue to hang on classroom windows for lecture that last for two hours. Without doubt, this constitutes a challenge in no small measure to entrepreneurship studies education at tertiary institution in Nigeria (Ojile & Tijani, 2017).

9. Infrastructural deficiency: The level of dilapidated infrastructure in tertiary institutions constitute a threat to entrepreneurship studies education in Nigeria (Tijani, e.al, 2014). According to Yaduma (2013) this manifest in adequate and poor state of classroom, offices, laboratories, workshops, sports, hostels and libraries. The provision of quality entrepreneurship studies and infrastructure are vital in the provision of the relevant entrepreneurship studies delivery to all students in the teacher producing institutions.

Entrepreneurship studies for more than ten years have been included in the Nigerian Universities Curriculum and is now taken as a full subject in Nigerian Secondary Schools

Curriculum. However, due to its challenges as briefly explained above, it has been observed that its effective implementation is faulty, hence the need for it to be improved upon in Nigeria.

Requirements needed for effective implementation

1. Provision of adequate infrastructural facilities: Effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions scheme is tied to the provision of adequate infrastructural facilities. These facilities should be maintained, and dilapidated classrooms rehabilitated. Infrastructural facilities in tertiary institutions encompass all physical facilities needed to make schools function as intended and attain set goals. The tertiary institution is a higher educational stage for higher learning. It is to this end that Amadi and Amakodi (2019) suggest that an urgent need to provide these facilities in terms of adequacy, appropriateness and gender sensitivity be considered because their use maximizes the benefits from educational programmes.

2. The learners: Learners also are critical elements in curriculum implementation while teachers are the arbiters of the classroom practice. The learners hold the key to what is actually transmitted and adopted from the official curriculum. The official curriculum can be quite different from the curriculum that is actually implemented. The learner factor influences teachers in their selection of learning experience, hence there is need to consider the diverse characteristics of learners in curriculum implementation (University of Zimbabwe, 1995).

3. The teacher: The teacher selects and decides what to teach from the prescribed syllabus or curriculum. Since implementation takes place through interaction of the learner and the planned learning opportunities, the role and influence of the teacher in the process is indisputable (University of Zimbabwe, 1995). Teachers are pivotal in the curriculum implementation process. If the teacher is to be able to translate curriculum intentions into reality, it is imperative that the teacher understands the curriculum document or syllabus well in order to implement it effectively. Atakpa (2016) stated that entrepreneurship education is not properly taught in our tertiary institutions. Therefore, there is need for effective implementation of the curriculum and engagement of qualified teachers. This, according to Nwekeaku (2013) is as a result of lack of lecturers with practical entrepreneurial training and consciousness. Nigerian universities do not have adequate and high level manpower for effective teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education in the country. The available teachers were drafted from the existing facilities and have not got additional skills to cope with the challenges of the new entrepreneurship education thus, may not perform any miracles if they are lectured by the same old lecturers.

4. Resource materials: Rodgers and Masendu (2000) states that no meaningful teaching and learning can take place without adequate resource materials. This applies to curriculum implementation as well. For the officially designed curriculum to be fully implemented as per plan, the government or Ministry of Education should supply schools with adequate resource materials such as textbooks, teaching aids and stationary in order to create an environment in which implementation can take place.

The importance of infrastructural facilities in any educational system is echoed by Ojeifo's (2012) suggestion that adequate provision of instructional materials to enhance teaching/learning effectiveness be made as this will increase inputs to the success of the tertiary institution programme. Facilities such as textbooks, libraries, classroom, seats and tables, laboratories, computers, technical and vocational equipment, electricity and so on are imperative to tertiary education in Nigeria. Hence, efforts should be made to ensure that they are adequately supplied and used for the good of the educational system. The provision of furniture and equipment is very important in the tertiary education Programme, Nakpodia

(2011) observes that there is acute shortage of furniture, teachers' tables and chairs, books, teaching aids and instructional materials. He noted that the previous educational programme could not succeed as government alone borne the burden of financing the programme. This eventually resulted to delay in teachers' salaries, no adequate supply of instructional materials, no development of teachers regarding retraining on the job, no proper attention on curriculum development and there was no conducive teaching and learning environments in the school system. Unachukwu (2009) noted that both hard and soft infrastructure is needed as prop for the system. Interest groups include: These include parents, parents and teachers associations, school development associations (SDAS), school development communities (SDCS), religious organizations, local authorities, companies and private school proprietors are also expected to help in the provision of these materials.

5. Nigeria University Commission (NUC) benchmark: To make the delivery effective, Amadi and Amakodi (2019) outlined ten areas in the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BEMAS) guide for teaching entrepreneurship education in Nigeria Universities:

- (i) Introduction to entrepreneurship
- (ii) entrepreneurship in theory and practice
- (iii) types of business, staffing and marketing
- (iv) capital requirement and raising capital
- (v) financial planning and management
- (vi) feasibility studies and reports
- (vii) innovations
- (viii) Legal issues in business
- (ix) Insurance and environmental consideration, and
- (x) Possible business opportunities in Nigeria.

The practical implication of this is that, the absence of this requirements examined hinders the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The extent of effective implementation of entrepreneurship studies

It is true that the National policy on education emphasizes equality of right to education for all her citizens (FGN, 2013). However, it should be considered that human experiences rather point to obvious heterogeneity among persons, segments and needs in Nigeria. Bailey (2014) observed that recognizing all as not being equal can bring about more effective implementation of educational service provisions in heterogeneous circumstances. This appears to be obvious for some reasons:

1. The implementers should be targeting individuals and segments rather than abstract general body, class of people or segments with non-concrete characteristics that may not reflect real and practice oriented conditions that can satisfy real needs of the people and the society. Learners experience should be prioritized in the entrepreneurship education process in Nigeria rather than making the entrepreneurship merely objective, teacher or curriculum centered with no reference to individual needs. The reality of persons can be found only in their distinctive characteristics which entrepreneurship studies should consider important. Specific entrepreneurship education is better than general education.

2. The implementers of the programme should recognize and properly assess the already existing imbalance in the Nigeria society and so approach cases of entrepreneurship educational needs with particular attentions in every society. The issue of geopolitical zonings and educationally advantaged States based on political lines should be properly reconsidered to reflect the differences of individual conditions of people and segments (Obot, 2014). Thus,

the implementers should be well-positioned to address individual and social concrete needs rather than abstract and merely relevance to individual learners in their peculiar conditions. The needs of Nigerians go beyond political lines that are in most cases based on majority count.

3. The would-be beneficiaries should understand that education is meant to create in all equal educational and social status. This will enable them to access and evaluate the programme based on what the programme can really achieve for them as individuals in the society. The beneficiaries who know what to expect from the entrepreneurship programme and the level of positive impact expected from it are most likely to be motivated and actively involved in it. In addition they will be disposed more to appropriate and contextualized the programmes to their advantage.

Theories of entrepreneurship studies

Several theories have been put forward by scholars to explain the field of entrepreneurship education. These theories have their roots in skimmers behaviourism theory of learning Economics, Psychology, Sociology and so on. Only Skinners behaviourism will be given a close examination in this paper.

Skinner's Behaviourism Theory of Learning (1968)

Behaviourism as a theory was primarily developed by B. F. Skinner. It loosely encompasses the work of people like Edward Thorndike, Tolman, Gultrie and Hull. They assume that learning Economics is manifested by a change in behaviour, the environment shapes behaviour and the principle of contiguity (for a bond to be formed) and reinforcement (any means of increasing the likelihood that an event will be repeated) are central to explaining the learning process. For behaviourism in learning Economics, the learning is the acquisition of new behaviour through conditioning.

Skinner (1968) talk about an approach that is applicable to students, according to him, its include drill, practice and programmed instruction. Approach which combined teaching strategies is what he called the integrated learning system (ILS). These approaches to teaching generally involve the following:

1. Breaking down the skills and information to be learned into small units.
2. Checking students' work regularly and providing feedback as well as encouragement.
3. Direct or 'teacher' centered instruction, lectures, tutorials, drills, demonstrations and forms of teachers controlled teaching tend to dominate behavioural classrooms.
4. Students can be taught when the focus is directly on the content to be taught.

Skinner best known contribution is in the realm of teaching machine and programmed learning. Among the contemporary behaviourists, Skinner is undoubtedly the best known. His contributions to programmed learning and behaviour theory are widely publicized. It emphasized on learning procedure that can enhance students' performance, thus:

1. Each step in the learning process should be short.
2. Learning should be regularly rewarded in the early stage.
3. Reward should follow quickly when the correct response appears.
4. The learner should be given an opportunity to discover stimulus discrimination for the most likely path to success.

CONCLUSION

Nigerian graduates should be encouraged that it is better to be a small head than to be a big tail. Hence, to be an employer of people is better than to be a servant whether civil, public or modernized servant. Their skills will enhance business expansion and reduce the level of poverty.

The paper also unequivocally discussed the challenges of entrepreneurship education that lack of effective implementation, poor funding, lack of adequate orientation and sensitization of students, deficiency of instructional materials, unpleasant feedback from preceding self-employed graduates, lateness in starting entrepreneurship education and dearth of lecturers in the field of entrepreneurship hinders the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Recommendations

For appropriate and effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria to suffice in accordance with the set goals and objectives, the following recommendations are made:

1. That government should stimulate economic growth – a deliberate programme of encouraging of entrepreneurial graduates.
2. That tertiary institutions should give adequate attention to entrepreneurial development and effective implementation in the country through technical and vocational education.
3. That tertiary institutions should work closely with willing industries to establish curriculum and programme to meet their skills demand. The tertiary institutions offering entrepreneurship education should organize periodic field trips, individual tours to develop nations, mentorship programme, hosting of exhibitions /fair, coaching /grooming, seminars / conferences/workshops and exchange programmes in order to inspire undergraduate students and learners to imbibe entrepreneurial traits. With these activities, the students would not only be equipped with the relevant skills needed but will also gain new knowledge from other countries that will help improve the learning of entrepreneurship studies.
4. That Nigeria government should commit itself to implementation of educational policy, reforms and innovations at tertiary educational system.
5. That adequate provision of sufficient infrastructural development should be made by the government at tertiary levels of the Nigerian educational system to cater for population explosion.
6. That education sector should be well funded. Therefore, the Nigeria government should comply with 26 percent budget allocation to education since it is the backbone of national development.

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