



CHALLENGES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The role of entrepreneurship education in any nation cannot be over emphasized. This is due to the fact that entrepreneurs are effective tools for nation building. Entrepreneurship is obviously the driver towards an effective and rapid growth and development of any nation. Business education is an umbrella that encompasses technical and vocational subjects like shorthand and typewriting. Technical and vocational courses are 75 to 80 percent practical in nature which makes entrepreneurship one of them. Teaching and learning entrepreneurship in the four corners of the classroom only is not good enough except it is practically applied through the creation or innovation of new things or ideas. This position paper therefore discusses the concepts of entrepreneurship, teaching and learning, and business education. The paper observes that entrepreneurship is one of the branches under business education and teaching and learning of entrepreneurship at all levels of education in Nigeria is paramount and necessary for national economy growth and development. In conclusion, the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship therefore cannot be effective without its practical application and practice. The paper recommended that both government and management of institutions of learning should be willing to provide adequate and necessary facilities for the teaching and learning entrepreneurship.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship education, teaching & learning, business education*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a vital tool towards national development. Developed nations prioritized entrepreneurship and are still seeing the benefits of doing so. Nigeria, as a developing nation still have a long way to go in providing suitable ground for entrepreneurs to emerge due to increasing cases of banditry, kidnapping, poor government policies, epileptic power supply among others. In 2020 for example, Value Added Tax was increased, electricity charges increased and for the third time, there was increase in the price of fuel. In the face of the covid-19 global pandemic, this for sure does not motivate business educators to have or develop interest in entrepreneurship.

Education is a potent vehicle for national transformation. It is a veritable platform for youths to realize their intellectual potential, develop their abilities and follow their aspirations. Education broadens opportunities and builds capacities; education determines the kind of future any nation wants to have. Nigeria and indeed any nation's future socio-economic success will depend on the ability of its people to deal with a global environment that is knowledge driven. Education is the key and bedrock for sustainable transformation (Ajisafe, Bolarinwa & Edeh, 2015).

Curriculum content in the field of business provides a theoretical framework beneficial for understanding business management and, at the same time, provides undergraduates with the knowledge, skills, and techniques arguably indispensable to start up and manage small businesses effectively (Venter, 2001). Entrepreneurship can serve as a career path diverging from employment provided that prior skill sets in the area of self-employment have been inculcated (Hattab, 2014; Saberi & Hamdan, 2018).



Concept of entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the practice of starting new organizations with a view specially to generating innovation in response to identified business potential (Uddin & Bose, 2012). Entrepreneurship involves independent and calculated risk-taking behavior carried out for future benefit (Parker, 2004). Barakabo and Eze (2016) defined entrepreneurship as the ability to recognize and evaluate business opportunities, assemble the necessary resources to take advantage of them and take appropriate action to ensure success. According to Hattab (2014), entrepreneurs identify opportunities using skills inculcated from education. Entrepreneurial activities devolve from skills obtained from entrepreneurial education—a manifestation of entrepreneurial self-efficacy or entrepreneurial intentionality (Moberg, Vestergaard, Fayolle, Redford, Cooney, Singer, & Filip, 2014).

Entrepreneurship is regarded a critical mechanism to stimulate innovation, which accelerates economic growth. Over the long term, as historically evident, entrepreneurship leads to economic progress (Al-Sokari, Horne, Huang, & Awad, 2014). Entrepreneurship increases prosperity in an economy by engendering production of more higher than lower value-added goods and services and by increasing productivity (Bourne, 2011; Yang & Li, 2011; Hasan & AlmuBarak, 2016).

According to Ojeifor (2012), entrepreneurship education in Nigeria amongst other things seeks to provide students and teachers in institutions of learning with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage (stimulate) entrepreneurial success in a variety of ventures. Variations of entrepreneurship education are offered at all levels of schooling in Nigeria from primary to secondary schools through the graduate university programmes.

Objectives of entrepreneurship in Nigeria

Ayatse (2013) and Ojeifo (2012) observe that entrepreneurship is a key driver of the Nigerian economy. Paul (2005) note that entrepreneurship education is structured to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Entrepreneurship education offers functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant
- ii. Entrepreneurship education provides youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
- iii. Entrepreneurship education serves as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
- iv. Entrepreneurship education offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management, to make certain bearing feasible.
- v. Entrepreneurship education aims to reduce the high rate of poverty among the Nigerian population.
- vi. Entrepreneurship education creates employment opportunities and generation.
- vii. Entrepreneurship education aims to reduce rural-urban migration
- viii. Entrepreneurship education provides the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium sized businesses.
- ix. Entrepreneurship education seeks to inculcate the spirit of perseverance in both youths and adults which will enable them to persist and insist on any business venture embarked upon.
- x. Entrepreneurship education seeks to create smooth transition from a traditional to a modern industrial economy.

Teaching and learning entrepreneurship in business education

Sequeira (2012) views teaching as a set of events, outside the learners which are designed to support internal process of learning. Teaching (instruction) is outside (external) the learner. Sequeira added thus, "it is an accepted fact that teachers are usually not born but made. Good teachers nurture their knowledge and skills through constant and deliberate efforts. One of the pre-requisite to be good teacher is to understand the teaching learning process in more depth. This facilitates better appreciation of the teaching profession as well as the process of imparting education". Teachers cannot motivate students to learn if they lack self-motivation. Teachers are in the middle of these changes. They need to be equipped with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to be able to provide their students with the new curricula, pedagogies and learning environments. Teachers need to be trained for the task.

According to Sequeira (2012), learning is about a change: the change brought about by developing a new skill, understanding a scientific law, changing an attitude. Learning can be defined as an act of getting experience, knowledge, skills, competences and values by understanding what to do and how to do it to achieve a particular and specific outcome or result. Learning brings about



changes in existing behaviour of humans, plants and animals. Learning is a process which occupies important role in moulding the structure of our personality and behaviour. Learning is internal to learners while teaching is external.

There is a strong relationship between business education and entrepreneurship as both are technical in nature and practical base. In fact, business education is an umbrella which houses technical and vocational subjects like shorthand, typewriting, accounting, book keeping, among others. Gidado and Akaeze (2014) notes that business education is a skill-based course which inculcates entrepreneurial skills in the recipient. They added that entrepreneurship deals with creative identification and utilization of business opportunities. Business education is described as an education for business and about business. It equips its recipients with creative skills that would make them to perform well as entrepreneurs.

According to Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015), the primary goal or objective of business education is to produce competent, skillful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work. Njoku (1997) therefore defines business education as that facet of educational training that helps the individual to acquire relevant skills needed for living. Business education is also an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable him/her operate in the environment he/she finds himself/herself (Njoku, 2006). It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by, the definitions of business education continue to change. This means that business education is not static. Therefore, any worthwhile programme has to move with time. Modern business education offers an extensive battery of entrepreneurial skills (Henry & Treanor, 2012). Teaching and learning has gone beyond the teacher standing in front of a group of pupils and disseminating information to them without the students' adequate participation (Ajayi, 2008).

Importance of business education in Nigeria

Ebinga (2014) observe that the contributions of business education to national development include the provision of technical, vocational and industrial skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and overall economic development, while specifically equipping young trainees with the technical know-how and requisite skills that ultimately enables them understand the increasing complexities of new-age technologies and the need to acquire skills necessary for the management of our nation's abundant human and natural resources.

Technological changes continue to modify and improve the different sectors every economy especially education. Technology has brought a lot of changes to business education and Ajisafe, et al (2015) affirm that business educators have always accepted that change as a fact of life. From the typewriter to the transistor, business curriculum has continually shaped itself to meet the needs of business. As a result, the success and survival of business education constantly depends on its ability to adapt and keep pace with the needs of its recipients. These changes present challenges for both the learner and instructor. Nevertheless, it is the business educator that must be willing to adapt and manage these challenges to ensure successful programs for the future. It is essential that business education be a useful and vital component of transformation agenda if the curriculum of business programs across the country is to continue to meet the needs of its students (Ajisafe, Bolarinwa & Edeh, 2015).

According to Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015), the importance of business education to the nation include the following:

- i. Business Education help more people have skills that can make them employers of labour. Dependence of the nation on government will be minimal as people become job creators.
- ii. As people develop proper values towards work, they tend to contribute more both socially and economically to the nation. For instance, the nation is divorced or break-free from violence, sexual immorality, pride, corruption and examination malpractice among others.
- iii. As citizens become judicious spenders, the country gains by way of investing excess resources on meaningful projects that would lead to economic development. Government can curb poor infrastructural facilities in the education and health sector by ensuring judicious utilization of resources.
- iv. If one understands another's right as a citizen of a country and enforces them the country would have less to worry about but would rather devote more time and resources on development.



- v. If citizens of a country develop sound moral value then the country will be free from insecurity and peace will reign supreme. More people will invest in the country and there will be increased in growth and development.
- vi. Business education has made it possible for those who want to be retrained in order to upgrade their skills and have access to education. In this way, people who finish secondary grammar school with no saleable opportunity skills will have to acquire skills that make them become functional, through retraining programmes.

Business education remains the foundation of human resource development which provides knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding needed to perform in the business world as a producer or consumer of economic goods and services that business offers. To ensure national transformation as being emphasized as a slogan on daily basis, there is immediate need to tackle the challenges of entrepreneurship in business education programme headlong to pave way for the fulfillment of its roles in national life (Ajisafe, Bolarinwa & Edeh, 2015).

Challenges of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria

The challenges of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria are enormous with little or no effort made to curtail it for the better. Most times, some good efforts made to improve on those challenges are jeopardized by some influential people in the country for selfish reasons. Few from the many challenges of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria include poor funding, corrupt practices, lack of, or inadequate educational facilities, epileptic power supply, inconsistent and poor government policies, among others.

Poor policy formulation or lack of commitment towards implementation: This is a common feature in Nigeria. Laid down policies seem to be abandoned sooner than later. Most establishments, schools and institutions in Nigeria lack clear-cut policies to follow, issues of inadequate infrastructure for the safeguarding of facilities and others are likely to cause problems one way or the other.

Poor funding of education: Funding of Nigeria's education has been poor and grossly inadequate for a very long time without genuine reason. Ibukun (2016) noted that in 2011, N306.3bn was allocated to education in Nigeria. N400.15bn in 2012, N426.53bn in 2013, N493bn in 2014, N492bn in 2015, and N369bn in 2016. Instead of a progressive move in the budget allocation, it continues to decline. "Nigeria's most important sector remains underfunded. Ivory Coast and Senegal have met and gone beyond; it is most appalling that the most populated country, the biggest economy and the largest exporter of crude-oil in Africa is still yet to meet it". In a selection of 20 countries around the world, Nigeria is ranked last in funding its educational sector. Ghana is 1st with 31.0%, Cote d'Ivoire is 2nd with 30.0%, Uganda is 3rd with 27.0%, Morocco is 4th with 26.4%, South Africa is 5th with 25.8%, Swaziland is 6th with 24.6%, Kenya is 8th with 23.0%, Botswana is 10th with 19.0%, Tunisia is 13th with 17.0%, with Lesotho having same percentage, Burkina Faso is 15th with 16.8%, while Nigeria is 20th with 8.4% (World Bank, 2012, in Nzeh, 2013). "To underscore the situation, no Nigerian university is ranked among the top 800 in the world or among the top 10 in Africa" (Oyededeji, 2016).

Lack of, or inadequate educational facilities: Okiy (2005), Ashcroft and Watts (2005), Ani (2005), Waiganjo (2006) expressed concerns on the poor funding and noted that it is the main reason why most schools and institutions of higher learning today lack facilities. Goar and Yilwatda (2018) observe there are dilapidated buildings, classrooms and libraries and lack of repairs to spoil equipment, and careless attitude towards management.

Epileptic power supply: Nyam, Yilwatda and Buwah (2018) notes that this is a pathetic state of the Nigerian economy. The state of energy generation, distribution and supply continues to suffer from compromise and corruption which has defied attempts to fix this sector. A study carried out by Chisenga (2004) notes that only Nigeria among ten (10) African countries including Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa, has very unique problem of electricity. The power generators which serve as substitute to power source produce noise pollution and also emit carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the air which causes health problems when inhaled, amongst other disadvantages (Nyam, Yilwatda & Buwah, 2018).

Corrupt practices: Widespread and ever present corruption has eaten deep into every aspect of the Nigerian economy. Nigeria is the 136 least corrupt nation out of 175 countries, according to the 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International. Corruption continues to hit Nigeria hard despite efforts to fight it for good. Money released for purchase of ICT facilities are



diverted by corrupt officials in highly-placed offices for their personal use (Trading Economic, 2017). Common corrupt practices in Nigeria include diverting funds meant for the purchase of educational equipment and development of infrastructure.

Unwillingness by management to train and retrain business educators: Business educators are responsible for instilling knowledge and skills among business education students so they can become great entrepreneurs in the near future. However, the management of many institutions of learning from the primary to the tertiary levels are unwilling to train and retrain teachers towards acquiring better knowledge, skills and competences for the students to have the best too.

Conclusion

Major economies of the world specifically developed nations like the United States of America and China among others were boosted by entrepreneurship activities. However, developing nation like Nigeria is yet to see the need to prioritise entrepreneurship and give it the maximum back up to be taught in primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions of learning.

A nation thrives when its citizens have adequate knowledge and skills on entrepreneurship and are supported by deliberate government policies to back up and support entrepreneurs in whatever way possible. The acquisition of such knowledge and skills starts from learning institutions where the teaching of entrepreneurship is also done effectively.

A thick line can be drawn between entrepreneurship and business education, meaning that entrepreneurship is part of business education subjects like ICT office application, book keeping, shorthand and typewriting which are practical base. The teaching and learning of entrepreneurship therefore cannot be effective without its practical application and practice.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. The Nigerian government through the Ministry of Education should make deliberate effort to set up a committee of committed scholars and researchers (business educationists) to develop a blueprint for entrepreneurship education at all levels of education in the nation and ensure its full implementation too.
2. The Nigerian government should ensure government primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions of learning are well funded so it can help the management of such institutions carry out repairs and maintenance of some essential facilities that will improve the teaching and learning environment.
3. The Nigerian government should make deliberate effort to provide adequate educational (teaching and learning) infrastructural facilities such as laboratories, libraries, adequate classes, among others. The government should collaborate with the relevant agencies to improve the source of power supply around the nation.
4. Management of institutions of learning should not leave the provision of teaching and learning facilities in the hands of the government or governing council alone but make effort to assist and provide affordable facilities for effective teaching and learning.
5. The Nigerian government should deliberately fight corruption sincerely to a standstill or to its barest minimum without fear or favour. Ethnic, religious and political views should be set aside when fighting corruption.
6. Management of institutions of learning should be willing to frequently send and sponsor business educators towards the development of their knowledge and skills on entrepreneurship education and other business education related courses. Business educators should ensure they also take responsibility for their development in their different fields of study.

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