

# The Challenges of Resources in Tertiary Entrepreneurship Education for Innovation Development and National Unity

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**Abstract:** The introduction of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is viewed as the most effective way of fast tracking the transition of growing graduate population from theoretical education to the world of work. The major goal of entrepreneurship education is to promote innovation and self employment among the citizens through the inculcation of entrepreneurial knowledge, competences and attitudes in the learners. The paper explores entrepreneurship education and the challenges of resources to promote innovation in students of tertiary institutions. The paper recommends that teachers in tertiary institutions be motivated to encourage innovation and originality in the students in the teaching of entrepreneurship using practical exploration, brainstorming and experimentation methods.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship education, Innovation, Development, and National unity.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, there is a growing emphasis on encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation as a means of fostering economic growth and development. Variety of thoughts exist on entrepreneurship education literature such that no universal definitions, indicator or set of entrepreneurship qualities have been established to define the process or the individual (Fiet, 2011; Gibb, 2002). Many researchers have defined entrepreneurship in terms of ability, risks and innovation. Okpara (2007) remarked that entrepreneurship occurs when an individual creates a new venture, a new approach to an old business idea, using resources in a new way under the condition of risks. Similarly, Ifedili and Ofoegbu (2011) asset that, it is the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and combining them with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby creating wealth.

Entrepreneurship education is the process of providing individuals with concepts and skills to recognize opportunities that others have over-looked, and to have the insight, self esteem and knowledge to act where others have hesitated (Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership Clearinghouse on Entrepreneurship Education, 2003). In the same way Bamkole (2007) observed that entrepreneurship education is a dynamic process of vision, change and creation.

Entrepreneurship education is viewed as a major driver of innovation, competitiveness and growth. Hisrich and Peters (2002) maintained that the innovation introduced by entrepreneurs provides unique benefits and greater satisfaction to consumers of their product. It plays a significant role in sustaining the level of development already achieved and aiding further development. Drucker in Awodiya (2010) argues that the major entrepreneurial task is to bring about innovation that changes possibilities. Entrepreneurship education, therefore goes much further than the traditional view of starting a business. This preparation should develop a generation of people who are more creative, innovative and risk-taking where change is accepted as a norm (Hisrich and Peters, 2007) A population such as this would probably be more successful in all spheres of life.

The introduction of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary institutions is looked upon as the most effective way to fast-track the transition of growing graduate population from theoretical education to the world of work (Emaikwu, 2011). The aim of bringing entrepreneurship into the classroom should be to allow young people to experience and feel rather than just learn about it in the conventional way. It is therefore incumbent on tertiary institutions in Nigeria to train and prepare students to work in a dynamic, innovative and rapidly changing entrepreneurial and global environment.

Several authors have identified different approaches to entrepreneurship education (Okpara, 2007; Inegbenebor 2005). They found that approaches to entrepreneurship in the more advanced countries differ from those of less advanced countries. For instance, in the developed countries, entrepreneurship education focus more on creativity, innovation and thinking outside the box. In the less developed countries, the emphasis is on how to develop a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and self-employment among students.

Despite the compulsory entrepreneurship education in Nigeria tertiary institutions, many graduates still remain unemployed for a long time after graduation. Ifedili and Ofoegbu (2011) observed that the entrepreneurship education delivered to students of higher institutions seems not to be meeting the aims and objectives for the compulsory course. Perhaps, this may be as a result of inadequate resources to enhance the teaching-learning because for these objectives to be successfully actualized there are some fundamental needs that must be adequately provided.

This study is therefore influenced by a perceived need to explore the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship in Nigeria tertiary institutions with view to proffering solutions to problem of resources for enhanced innovation for development and national unity.

## 2. CONCEPT OF INNOVATION

The concept of innovation and newness is an integral part of entrepreneurship. The National Innovation Initiative (2014) defines innovation as the inter-section of invention and insight, leading to the creation of social and economic value. According to Okpara (2007), innovation is the process of bringing the best ideas into reality which triggers a creative idea that generates a series of innovative events. Innovation is the successful exploitation of new ideas. All innovations begin with creative ideas. In other words, creativity is the starting point for innovations. However, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition for innovation.

Innovation is one of the most difficult tasks for the entrepreneur. No entrepreneur or enterprise, however successful and big, can continue to hold a place of leadership unless it recognizes that modern business operates in a world of galloping change which creates new problems, risk and opportunity and for which they have to mobilize the enterprise resources to make their impact felt (Schumpeter, 1985 in Badi and Badi, 2008). Innovation is the basis of all competition advantages, the means of anticipating and meeting customer's needs and the method of utilization of technology.

Okpara (2007) remarked that innovation is fostered by information gathered from new connections, from insights gained by journeys into other disciplines or places. He stressed that innovation arises from organizing circles of exchange, where information is not just accumulated or stored, but created. Without innovation an enterprise and what it provides quickly become obsolete. Innovation therefore, requires a fresh way of looking at things, an understanding of people and an entrepreneurial willingness to take risks and to work hard.

Badi and Badi (2008), identify three forms of innovation:

- (i) Innovation in processes, including changes and improvement to methods. These contribute to increases in productivity which lower cost and help to increase demand.
- (ii) Innovation in product or services. While progressive innovation is predominant, radical innovation opens up new markets. These lead to increases in effective demand which encourages increases in investment and employment.
- (iii) Innovation in management and work organization, and the exploitation of human resources.

## 3. CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

Development in the general sense is a many sided process. At the individual level; it implies increase in skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity and materials wellbeing. According to Emaikwu (2011), development is a gradual advancement through progressive stages of growth from within. From this point of view, development implies changes and this is very important in any consideration of entrepreneurship education.

From a broad perspective, the development approach to entrepreneurship considers the nurturing of the actual or potential talents in entrepreneurs to become more effective in running their own organizations. In support of this statement Alapiki (2005) notes that development when used exclusively in economic sense, refers to how members of a society increase, jointly exercise their capacity for subduing the environment. All these are assisted by the processes of formal education, training and development in the society and achievement of any of those aspects of personal development is very much tied with the state of the society.

Development as used in this context is the systematic process of training and growth and through it, the individual gains and apply knowledge, skills, insights and attitudes with which he/she manages profit seeking and other work organizations effectively.

#### 4. CONCEPT OF NATIONAL UNITY

Societies nowadays face many problems and challenges such as lack of coexistence and social harmonization between their members, thus divergences begin to appear between the components of the same society. Researchers differ in the definition of national unity. As a result, everyone defines it through the vision he adopts and believes in. Ojo (1999) views national unity as the participation of individuals in the language, land and economic life or in the psychological formation, reflected in the characteristics that describe the national culture.

#### 5. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

Success in business today demand constant innovation as growth and development cannot be sustained without additional innovations (usually in the product or services or in its marketing). Schumpeter (1985) in Badi and Badi (2008) introduced the concept of innovation as key factor in entrepreneurship in addition to assuming risks and organizing factors of production. Okpara (2007) reiterated that entrepreneurship is a creative and innovative activity. He maintained that entrepreneurship education is the first and arguably the most important step for embedding an innovation culture in any nation.

Introducing new product is usually seen as part of the process of innovation, which is itself seen as the engine driving continued growth and development. Many people believe that true entrepreneurship occurs when individuals ignore the established ways of thinking and acting and seek novel ideals and solutions that can meet customer's needs. (Hisrich and Peters, 2002). Entrepreneurship is therefore, the innovatory process involved in the creation of an economic enterprise based on a new product or service which differs significantly from products or services offered by others in content, organization and marketing.

Indeed, the central entrepreneurial contribution, which alone is rewarded with a profit, is to bring about the unique event or innovation that changes the economic, social or political situation. Entrepreneurs have the potential to raise production through various forms of innovation. They are always thinking of new ideas and new ways of doing things and are not afraid to utilize these ideas (Gibb, 2002). Okpara (2000) supported by saying that creativity and innovation are in the heart of the spirit of enterprise. Thus the value of innovation is to provide a gateway for astute entrepreneurs to actively search for opportunities to do new things, to do existing things in extraordinary ways.

#### 6. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

The growth and development of skill-based courses in any country of the world largely depend on the quality and adequacy of resources in these areas of professional endeavour. This is because education in skill-based courses requires not only facts and information but also involves changing peoples's attitude. Owoeye and Yara (2011) defined resources in teaching and learning as all the materials, objects and aids that can be used in helping students to learn. These resources actually make education in skill-based courses unique.

According to Ugwuanyi and Eze (2008), Educational resources are those basic requirements that aid and facilitate effective school teaching and learning. They constitute input into educational systems that determine largely the implementation of educational programmes and invariably objectives achievement. It comprises human beings (teachers), facilities and equipment for teaching and learning.

A cursory look at the nation tertiary institutions show that the schools are struggling with limited resources and dilapidated/out-dated instructional facilities. It is noted that while material resources play an integral role in teaching and learning by stimulating critical thinking, make learning enjoyable, interesting, exciting and concrete; human resources such as qualified teachers play a decisive role in manipulating all other resources, else they remain useless.

## 7. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL UNITY

The role of entrepreneurship has been viewed to be critical to the overall development of a nation. Prominent among these roles are innovation, creativity and job creation which serve as means of achieving self-reliance. Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) affirms that education is an instrument for national development, fostering the worth and development of the individual and the general development of the society.

Emaikwu (2011), observes that entrepreneurial success depends on development and for an entrepreneur to be successful, he/she need to possess certain qualities in addition to skills and knowledge concerned with technical aspect of owning a business, Such skills are acquired through education, training and development. The focus of development approach is entrepreneurship skills. Okpara (2007) highlighted these skills to include:

- i. development of entrepreneurial spirit, characteristics and personality
- ii. development of technical and professional competencies needed for productive work employment.
- iii. development of enterprise-building capabilities to initiate and start one's own business
- iv. development of managerial capability to run the business and other self-employment activity successfully.

Bamkole (2007) sees entrepreneurship education as a programmatic and viable approach for stimulating national development. Most entrepreneurs will establish small business. According to Small Business Administration (2006) in Ifedili and Ofoegbu (2011), "more than 90 percent of the nation's businesses have fewer than 20 employees". More than 50 percent of all entrepreneurs start business in areas in which they have job experience, and personal savings are their most import source of funding. This could lead to viable economy with more employers rather than employees thereby having a cream of capable men and women who will positively influence the national economy.

It is clear that education makes man moral and ethical; inducts the individual into the shared values of society; develops commitment to societal goals in the individual; defines behavioural patterns of individuals and society; and also enhances the productive capabilities of individuals and by extension the society. Alapiki, (2005) asserts that the dominant expectation of education is development, it is also expected that it will enhance the integration of sub-populations that are divided by language, religion or ethnicity. Indeed, education is a product and process that reforms society and induces changes in behaviour patterns of individual. This provides the basis that education can be a vehicle for national unity in Nigeria.

National unity is one of those hard-to-described terms. Unity occurs when all of the elements of a piece combine to make a balanced, harmonious, complete whole, hence the need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria. Therefore, the school programme need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive for the attainment of individual and national development.

## 8. CHALLENGES OF RESOURCES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

It would be improper to get carried away by the seemingly good potentials of entrepreneurship education and not preempt some likely problems that could be encountered in acquiring and putting the skills to use. Ugwuanyi and Eze (2008) lamented that the demand of education is growing higher everyday but the available resources are not keeping pace in terms of development. This is in line with Azih (2008) who discovered that many higher institutions in Nigeria are poorly facilitated in terms of materials and equipment required for practical purposes. Similarly, conventional teaching methods still seem to be widely used in entrepreneurship education, despite the growing demands for renewed and more entrepreneurial teaching approaches.

Entrepreneurship has been incorporated into existing curricular without adequate preparation of resources (Ifedili and Ofoegbu, 2011). Entrepreneurship as a subject requires facilities like Skill Development Centre and equipment. These demand a lot of funds which may be difficult for many institutions to secure in order to facilitate the practical teaching of the course.

The federal government through the ministry of education has approved the established of Entrepreneurship Study Centre (ESCS) in all the government owned tertiary institutions in the country. The primary roles of the centre according to Emaikwu (2011), is stimulation of entrepreneurial competencies among students, staff and the community. The entrepreneurship study centre is expected to:

- i. develop and offer courses, seminars, workshops and conferences to advance and propagate entrepreneurship
- ii. provide entrepreneurial clinical services in entrepreneurship to students, staff and members of the public
- iii. serve as national centre for the training and development of experts in entrepreneurship
- iv. promote research and experimentation in entrepreneurship

Similarly, another role assigned to the Entrepreneurship Development Centre according to Inegbenebor (2005) is to identify all innovations and inventions in tertiary institutions for the purpose of assisting the innovators/inventors to commercialize them and establish contacts with potential business partners.

Emaikwu (2011) lamented that very few universities complied with the federal government's directives to National Universities Commission (NUC), Nation Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), and National Board for Technical Education (NABTED) to ensure that institutions under them establish Centres for Entrepreneurship Development. Where the centres are established, they are not adequately funded by relevant authorities. This is in line with Dolor (2001) who lamented that the teaching of vocational education programmes in schools is very much retarded in terms of technological and modern equipment.

The strategic goal of this national policy is to improve the capacity of youths to develop positive, independent and innovative thought process and overall entrepreneurial mindset as a way of stimulating future graduates towards venture creation. Therefore, there is need to address some of the issues concerning the practicability of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria tertiary institutions.

## **9. ENHANCING INNOVATION IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND UNITY**

Institutionalizing innovation is a paradoxical goal that is yet to be achieved in Nigeria institutions of learning. Currently, many institution of learning in the developing countries are moving towards problem-based teaching and learning as a solution to producing graduates who are creative, innovative and can think critically, analytically and solve problems.

Badi and Badi (2008) remarked that entrepreneurship requires innovation, initiative and creativity; therefore, it has to be taught using experiential methods that allow active engagement of the learner. Gibb, (2002) advocated strong research linkages to enhance innovation in entrepreneurship education. According to him, success in entrepreneurship depends critically on openness and linkages with innovation systems in other countries. This is so because strong innovation systems depend both on local environment and global connectedness.

The heart of a more innovative approach to entrepreneurship education is creating an opportunity for students to feel entrepreneurial and this requires a teaching methodology which creates opportunity for students to learn by doing. Owoye and Yara (2011), confirmed that knowledge is not learning until is in some way internalized either by application or thinking. Very often, this internalization is achieved by doing.

Existing models of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria fall somewhat short in developing innovation in students (Okpara, 2007). Therefore, entrepreneurship educators should develop models of teaching and learning that support the development of this process. Fiet (2001) recommended case focused method for teaching entrepreneurship education. Similarly Ifedili and Ofoegbu (2011) assert that teachers have essential role to play in enhancing creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship education, Thus, the questions of how teachers understand entrepreneurship education, how they value it and how willing they are to adopt new pedagogical methods are significant.

To encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, there is need for the federal government to increase and sustain funding in programmes that are designed to foster innovation.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

There is a seeming consensus on the importance of entrepreneurship in ameliorating some socio-economic problems especially poverty, unemployment, and all sort of social vices in the society. Economic growth and job creation are still two of Nigeria's biggest challenges. Our education system as such is unable to equip students with the combination of skills and practical experience necessary to start and run a business successfully. Thus, the focus of teaching and learning entrepreneurship in our higher institutions call for another approach that will produce new breeds of entrepreneurs that are innovative and dynamic with visions for the future development of the country for national unity.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the challenges of educational resources facing entrepreneurship education in the tertiary institutions and the dire need to promote innovation in the teaching and learning process, the following recommendations were made.

- i. There is need to address some of the issues concerning the practicability of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria tertiary institutions through mobilization of institutional support for the programme, curriculum review, funding together with political will of the government.
- ii. TETFund, small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (SMEDA) need to collaborate with the government for the establishment and sustenance of Entrepreneurship Skills Centres (ESCs) in all the tertiary institutions in the country. This is imperative for helping the students to develop creative and innovative talents.
- iii. Teachers should encourage innovation and originality in the students in the teaching of entrepreneurship education using practical exploration and experimentation methods.

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