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**INTEGRATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION INTO THE CURRICULA OF
NIGERIAN ADULT EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

Inculcating entrepreneurship education into the curricula of Nigerian adult education programmes is an important step to build and innovate culture and create entrepreneurial persons and organizations. These will in turn create economic growth and jobs and help improve growth and jobs and help improve the quality of life in Nigerian. The low level of exposure to business and entrepreneurship in adult education for all students is making the shift from necessity to opportunity entrepreneurship difficult. More effective measurement and evaluation of the long-term impact of entrepreneurship education programmes in adult education on economic growth and job creation is needed. This should be based on generally defined set of outcomes not only on narrow measures as start-ups created but should be a consensus on the definition of entrepreneurship education and the scope of what should be measured and agreement on the process of data collection and on coordinating mechanisms.

Introduction

There is actually little consensus as to the definition of entrepreneurship. Within and across disciplines, most definitions highlight qualities that depict competitive, creativity, innovation, risk taking and the ability to grow and manage projects and businesses (Iheonunekwu 2003). Entrepreneurship in Nigeria's higher institutions need to be used to stimulate the entrepreneurial mind-sets of young people, encourage innovative business start-ups, and foster a culture that is friendlier to entrepreneurship and to the growth of small and medium sized businesses. Dickson, Solomon & Weaver (2008) and Vincett & Falow (2008) have jointly consented that developing entrepreneurial skills among students at all levels has become an issue of priority to both educational policy makers and practitioners. This has brought out many researches and the introduction of entrepreneurial programmes and courses in institutions of learning and other entrepreneurship based centres for the purpose of inculcating the culture and spirit of entrepreneurship. A report released by the National Universities Commission (2004) stated that only about 40% of our university graduates are able to get paid employment in the public sector within five years of graduation. Entrepreneurship education will heighten some socioeconomic problems like poverty, unemployment and all types of social vices in the society.

Adult education and Entrepreneurship Education

There is a growing demand and the popularization of entrepreneurship education which has led to the establishment of entrepreneurship education centres in Universities for teaching curriculum in entrepreneurship, enterprise development, and capacity building. Fatunla (1989) posits that there have been consultations between the Vice Chancellors of Universities, Rectors of Polytechnics, the national universities commission, the Federal Ministry of Education, etc. to work out ways to ensure that entrepreneurship is introduced into the curricula of higher institutions, so that before graduating each student will be equipped with the basic management tools to cope with self-employment. Already, colleges like the Polytechnic Ibadan, Federal University of Technology Akure, and Covenant University, etc. have Entrepreneurship as a course in their curricula. Most interesting is the department of nursing, Namdi Azikiwe University which has NSC 451: Entrepreneurship in Nursing as a 3 unit course as part of their curricula. The goal of entrepreneurship education is to provide creativity, innovation and self-employment and may include the following elements:

1. Developing personal attributes and skills that form the basis of an entrepreneurial mind-set and behaviour (creativity, sense of initiative, risk taking, autonomy, self-confidence, leadership, team spirit, etc.).
2. Raising the awareness of students about self-employment and entrepreneurship as possible career options.
3. Working on concrete enterprise projects and activities.
4. Providing specific business skills and knowledge of how to start a company and run it successfully. Entrepreneurship programmes and modules will offer students in higher institutions the tools to think creatively, be an effective problem solver, analyse a business idea objectively, and communicate, network, lead and evaluate any given project (Fatunla, 1985).

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to ensure optimal realization of the goals of the entrepreneurship education, teacher/instructors' development and to provide needed manpower and private sector partnerships to boost the provision of needed facilities in the universities.

Importance of Entrepreneurship Education

Ekong (2008) posits that the impact of learning will be better felt at the higher institutions – reasons:

1. The students are more mature and able to narrow their thoughts down to what they really want to become in life.
2. They are closer to the point of graduating from school life into the society and therefore the reality of making an income for life sustenance is more real to them than students at the lower level of schooling. Therefore, they will be in a better position to appreciate the benefits of the programme.

Entrepreneurship education will:

- (a) help foster an entrepreneurship culture among students,
- (b) Encourage students to pursue an entrepreneurship career and equip them with a set of skills that will help them identify viable business ideas and provide them with a practical

approach to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial courses may compliment general education for a broad range of students or serve as a specialist course for an elite group of entrepreneurial students, boost university relationship with other stakeholders in the entrepreneurial field and facilitate the creation of policies and entrepreneurship infrastructures.

The Curriculum Restructuring in Entrepreneurship Education

Curriculum is knowledge, activities and experiences, formal and informal, planned and guided which the school uses for the benefit of the learner (Esu, 1986). The focus of the entrepreneurship education curriculum is to have the student learning experiences and activities as their control focus.

Volkman (2004) put forward a curriculum divided into three components. This was considered comprehensive enough to equip the products of the school system with the needed skills and capacities for future life.

(a) Personal development

It should build confidence, motivate progress, strengthen the entrepreneurial mind-set, foster a desire to achieve and inspire action.

(b) Business development

Technical, financial literacy and skills are to engage in self-employment and in entrepreneurship that can lead to self-improvement. This will include the expected business and functional curricula.

(c) Entrepreneurial skills development

It should provide training in social skills, networking, creative problem solving, opportunity seeking and dealing with bureaucracy, local/cultural norm and how they affect businesses etc. Every entrepreneurship curriculum must have the above as its integral elements so as to provide the students with the cherished skills and capacities that can make them self-sufficient and highly productive in the society. Entrepreneurship programmes should be developed across disciplines, not just in business schools or economics departments, as we find in some higher institutions. Most of these departments have offered specializations and even degrees in entrepreneurship, but most entrepreneurs come from medicine, to the arts, etc. So it is imperative that entrepreneurship should be taught in a cross disciplinary manner and not confined to any one or two departments. In adult education some of the areas that should be included in entrepreneurship curricula depending on the educational level include basic skills (financial literacy etc.), opportunity recognition, business planning, and start-ups, managing the transition from necessity to growth firms and exit/transition of ownership, particularly family owned. The younger the target audiences the more the curriculum needs are to be focused on basic skills and awareness-raising, about business and entrepreneurship (UNCTAD, 2009).

Integrating Entrepreneurship into Higher Education

Higher institutions promote entrepreneurship on multiple dimensions. There is the macro, firm and individual level of entrepreneurship. Adult education can partner with governments in developing the required strategy at both the individual and the firm level. There is also a critical role of higher institutions in originating the content and setting the tone for developing the policy and institutional framework for entrepreneurship. There is no consensus as to the precise scope of entrepreneurship education. The introduction of

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entrepreneurship education in the educational system will naturally consolidate developed partnerships that will promote the possibility of harnessing diverse ideas, knowledge, expertise, experiences and skills for national development. The resultant effect will be effective and efficient resources, management, sustained economic development as well as scientific and technological breakthrough (Ekong 2009).

A general view of entrepreneurship education is encouraging the attributes of successful businesses. Another is using the process of creation of new ventures to help students acquire the range of business skills required to run a successful business. Adult education has the potential to teach about entrepreneurship and also to nurture the qualities of entrepreneurship. Institutions of higher learning have the role to promote innovation by supporting academic and research activities. So businesses and institutions of higher learning can partner in order to nurture innovation and entrepreneurship. With this partnership, they can sustain development of intellectual capital in their creation and growth of high technology firms that will lead to innovation and wealth creation in that society (Oteh, 2009).

Entrepreneurship Education Strategies

Entrepreneurship education can be inculcated into the education strategy in higher institutions. This ensures that it is treated as an integral part of the long term educational system rather than teaching it in isolation and at a short term. Coordinating this strategy in adult education will involve setting up a working group that includes representatives from various ministries and also from other stakeholders e.g. business, academia and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO'S) (Volkman, 2004).

Ekong (2008) posits that National policies and programmes facilitating entrepreneurship education can set the strategic framework in which schools, universities and private sector bodies can work to implement programmes and activities within their institutions. There is always a challenge with follow-up and ensuring that implementation is carried through effectively. Government often set up agencies or other bodies to implement these programmes. When the government shows interest by funding these programmes, other funding sources follow suit. Entrepreneurship education is most times coordinated by the ministry of education which makes sure that a roadmap is provided to ensure that the necessary stakeholders are engaged and that budgeting and financing is supplied to implement the strategies and policies Fatunla (1985).

Teacher development and private sector partnership

Iheonurekwu (2003) opines that teachers are the main stay of entrepreneurship education. With all the strategies and plans in place, there would not be any impact without teachers to carry out the teaching. Training has to be provided using interactive teaching methods, networks and sharing best practices among the teachers. He goes on to say that, to make sure that entrepreneurship education thrives, the proper incentives and rewards should be put in place so as to ensure that other teachers will be attracted to join key entrepreneurship faculty champions. Most of the teacher training initiatives to date have been at the adult education level. Apart from providing teachers the main positive way forward for entrepreneurship education is effectively engaging with the private sector in facilitating entrepreneurship. Through partnership, the private sector can provide entrepreneurship theory-to-practice seminars at universities. Private entrepreneurship centers and foundations

can also play an important role both in funding and in serving as centres of expertise and entrepreneurship.

Large corporations have a strategic interest in developing the competences of would be entrepreneurs who are in schools and often take part in cost sharing, in local skills development and upgrading programmes (UNCTAD, 2009).

Conclusion

Inculcating entrepreneurship education into the curricula of Nigerian adult education programmes is an important step to build and innovate culture and create entrepreneurial persons and organizations. These will in turn create economic growth and jobs and help improve growth and jobs and help improve the quality of life in Nigerian. The low level of exposure to business and entrepreneurship in adult education for all students is making the shift from necessity to opportunity entrepreneurship difficult. More effective measurement and evaluation of the long-term impact of entrepreneurship education programmes in adult education on economic growth and job creation is needed. This should be based on generally defined set of outcomes not only on narrow measures as start-ups created but should be a consensus on the definition of entrepreneurship education and the scope of what should be measured and agreement on the process of data collection and on coordinating mechanisms.

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