

Entrepreneurial Education as a Paradigm for Educational Administration in Nigeria

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Abstract— The need for educational administration in Nigeria to leverage on the dynamism of entrepreneurial education in our collective bid for socio-economic development can hardly be over stated. Entrepreneurial skills are needed in the real sector, for growth to be sustainable and measureable. This fact is aptly recognised by the government in the introduction of entrepreneurial studies in tertiary institutions across Nigeria. The paper explores valid skills that can be picked up by learners and practitioners of education as they studiously desire self-reliance. Also enunciated are strategies for re-designing entrepreneurial education with a view to producing better quality graduates who can dare the monstrous phenomenon of unemployment, acute poverty and foreign dependence. Furthermore, a model has been provided depicting the role educational administration plays in fostering a dependable entrepreneurial education. Not only have strategies for effectiveness in the teaching of entrepreneurial education been suggested, the paper has outlined recommendations that can be adopted to make the field better poised to deliver on the stated objectives.

Index Terms— Education, educational administration, entrepreneurial education, entrepreneur, acute poverty, national development.

I. INTRODUCTION

The perception among stakeholders that the country's institutions of learning are factories for the production of job seekers must be corrected. One sure bullet for the restoration of confidence in the structure and organisation of education in Nigeria is the introduction of entrepreneurial education. The skills and aptitudes which students acquire in the course of their tutelage are reputed to be capable of putting bread on their table for life. What this implies is that acquiring education without training will leave the students as dependent on the society (or parents) as they were before the commencement of their training programme. According to Ejimofor (2013), there has been complete lack of enterprise education in the nation's educational system until very recently. Equally lamentable was the dire lack of tools and benchmarks for accessing the quality of entrepreneurial education programme in educational institutions (Segun 2014).

Education has been defined as the process through which individuals acquire skills and aptitudes which make them relevant to themselves and the society (Audu 2007). The inability of scholars to acquire skills and/or aptitudes all

through the schooling-period has remained a genuine cause for worry. According to Salor (2013), Nigeria is in the 21st century economy with a 19th century system of education. This is a system that places much emphasis on the conventional classroom environment, reverencing certificates produced for job seekers, resulting in huge unemployment and/or underemployment. The reason according to Otikiti (2012) is that since independence, Nigeria has failed to connect education to enterprise development. Entrepreneurial education should be recognised as an engine for growth and as such a pivotal agent against (acute or mild) poverty. The on-going revolution in entrepreneurship and vocational education must be driven with the vision that is targeted at liberating the wealth of human capital that the country is enviously endowed with.

II. THE CONCEPT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Education is the key that unlocks development. According to Wolfensohn (2000), no country succeeds without educating her people. Education should therefore be seen as the key to sustainable growth and poverty reduction. It therefore makes a lot of sense to posit that in the 21st century where we are at the moment, countries that hope to achieve rapid socio-economic growth should be ready to tread the path of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria provides students of tertiary institutions with knowledge, motivation and skills that can guarantee occupational success. It is conceived as a life-long process because the concept of life-long learning is necessary in present-day economy. Entrepreneurship education concerns all levels of education or training, affecting all stages of life and different apprentice groups. It is in recognition of this fact that the federal government, acting through the Federal Ministry of Education, made entrepreneurship education a compulsory course for study in universities across the country. This will go a long way in addressing the problems relating to self-reliance and its retrogressive underpinnings. The development, in addition to proper equipping of technical laboratories at secondary and tertiary institutions will better position the education sector for the harvest of skilled manpower as well as the concomitant increase in quality of life for Nigerians.

Nigeria's socio-economic advancement indices are disappointingly low. The World Bank (2013) report which reveals that poverty reduction and job creation efforts in Nigeria have failed to keep pace with population growth only goes to show that Nigerians are getting less value for education. Time is therefore ripe for the country to properly

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prioritise entrepreneurship education alongside educational administration in order to develop enterprising people, with a capacity to engender self-reliance through appropriate learning processes. The essence remains the development of opportunity-seeking managers, who are capable of driving the process of efficient education delivery in the 21st century.

Upon the realisation of the need to boost employment opportunities through micro enterprises, the federal government of Nigeria worked assiduously to develop a broad based entrepreneurial programme that can add value to domestic production. Government equally recognised that entrepreneurship is one basic skill that provides lifelong learning to students. To enhance the employability of youths produced from the ivory towers, government put together a labour-market friendly curriculum. This is necessary to rev up the standard as well as relevance to higher education in the country. Various institutions would be producing graduates that have appropriate skills, dispositions and competences which will make them competitively relevant in the world of work. This is the basis upon which the presidential directive in 2006, through the federal ministry of education made entrepreneurship education compulsory for all higher institutions in Nigeria with effect from the 2007/2008 academic session (Okojie 2012). The National Universities Commission subsequently directed all universities in the country to introduce the program as a general studies course. The aim here has been to prioritise education and training by developing in the students that entrepreneurial mindset which can nurture and sustain a business or a private school for instance.

III. THE CONCEPT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Education has been defined as an engine for economic, socio-political transformation (Odey 2014). For education to be able to deliver on its core mandate, it must be carefully planned and administered. In developing countries like Nigeria, effective planning and administration of education is a sine-qua-non, considering that quality natural and human resources are usually lacking (especially in specialised fields). In the field of education for instance, effective administration/planning is a worthy consideration bearing in mind the fact that we educate for a purpose –probably for the purpose of manpower requirement, educational opportunities, cultural bias, economic trends, ecological and environmental vagaries. An educational system becomes successful if it is properly planned and administered, judiciously appropriating available financial and administrative elements to attain stated objectives. The renewed emphasis on entrepreneurship education will from all indications enhance the standard and quality of educational offerings in our schools. This no doubt calls for effectiveness in service delivery at all levels.

Today, education in Nigeria is seen as a form of investment (Afolabi 2014). This investment is usually in human capital development with attendant economic benefits. These days, many Nigerians go to school with the hope that the end of the scholarly period will connect them with well

remunerated jobs, enjoyable leisure and enhanced spiritual life. This point was corroborated by Nwagu (1976) who stated that education is universally accepted as a form of investments in human beings, yielding economic benefits and contributing substantially to the nation's future wealth by increasing productivity and citizen's consumptive capacity.

The Mix between Entrepreneurship Education, Educational Administration and National Development As stated elsewhere in this paper, entrepreneurship education is concerned with the inculcation of entrepreneurial skills, abilities, knowledge, competences and aptitudes which make individuals live successful lives and contribute qualitatively to societal advancement. Thus when entrepreneurial skills and values are properly inculcated in individuals, they become vocationally and ethically poised for the world of work. According to Odey (2014), entrepreneurial education nurtures and empowers an individual.

Educational administration is concerned with the utilization of human and natural resources in a co-operative manner and is accomplished by performing functions inclusive of directing, controlling, organising, staffing and planning. Not left out are all those procedures and techniques needed in operationalizing an educational organisation in line with established policies (Mishara 2008). Educational administration encompasses all managerial functions such as financing, directing, supervising, planning, organising, monitoring and evaluating. Thus an educational administrator plays prominent roles in planning, program design as well as policy making, all with a view to effectively and efficiently implementing the educational plans, programme and policies (PPP).

When mention is made of national development, it is implied that a particular nation witnesses rapid development in her social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological spheres. According to Emeka (2014), national development has to do with improved conditions of living for all nations. This indeed, is the outlook of development indices.

How Can the Mix between Entrepreneurship Education and Educational Administration Advance the Course of National Development in Nigeria?

Figure 1 below is a model that depicts the role educational administration plays in bringing about a viable entrepreneurial education for national development. These roles include (but not limited to) resource organisation, funding, resource planning, staffing and quality control. The inputs that are to be assembled for a workable entrepreneurship education programme can be categorised into fiscal, physical, material and human resources.

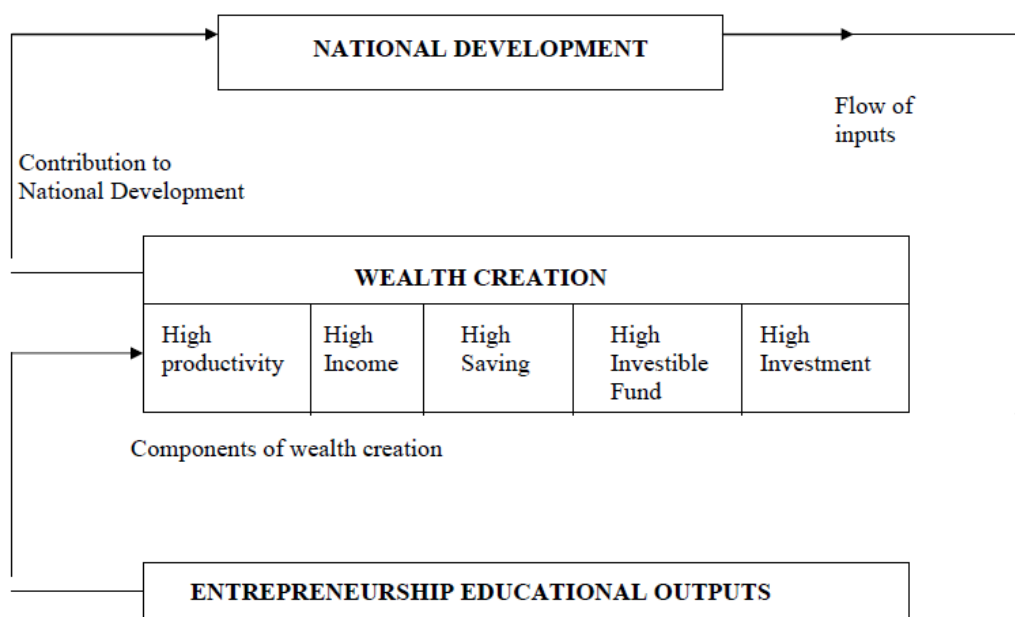


Fig1. A model of the role of educational management in initiating and sustaining entrepreneurship education for national development (Source: Aggarwal, 1981).

The human, material and financial resources that go into the planning process are considered as educational inputs. Human resources here can be broken down to include all the teachers as well as the non-teaching staff. Similarly the material resources include books, audio-visuals, periodicals and charts. To be included as physical resources are technical workshops, classrooms, libraries and laboratories as well as halls. All funds released to the institution for the purpose of procurement as well as overheads are categorised under financial resources. What the educational administrator does in the circumstance is to identify these resources and carefully use them to attain the aims of entrepreneurial education in the institution.

A closer look at figure 1 shows the expected output of entrepreneurship education which includes acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, cognitive development as well as learned aptitudes and values. These go a long way in assisting recipients in their mission to banish poverty and create wealth. To do these effectively, recipients of the training can access loans and take decisions regarding the sort of business they need to establish or schools to build. Through efficient resource management, such an entrepreneur can create reasonable wealth and dominate the world around him. This is one way through which efficient human and material resource utilization can create wealth and engender national development. Every nation desirous of a buoyant economy, laced with rapid national transformation must work on the labour by leveraging on entrepreneurship education.

There are also other specific contributions that educational management can make for national development through entrepreneurship education. These are:

1. Designing the entrepreneurship education programme

Educational management helps in designing the curriculum which can be pragmatic in nature, with in-built job training titbits. Such a curriculum which must be flexible in nature should cater for the needs of learners in varying

fields such as fashion design, baking, irrigation technology, weaving, barbing, gold smiting, tie and dye e.t.c. Aggarwal (1981), observed that all the knowledge a pupil acquires in school will be useless if he cannot make ends meet upon graduation.

2. Educational administration determines the number of learners as well as the teaching and non-teaching staff needs of the institution for the sustenance of the entrepreneurship programme.

3. School plant planning is a duty performed by educational administration. To this end, Educational administration takes key decisions regarding the locations and/or designs of school buildings. Such decisions encompass issues that relate to accessibility, aesthetics, and safety, freedom from health hazards and closeness to public utilities.

4. The identification of strategies for evaluating the entrepreneurship education programme is a core responsibility of educational administration. This is connected to personality traits, value judgement, manipulative skills, and intelligence of learners and so on.

5. Since organisation is central to the work of administration, it is not out of place to state that educational administration enrolls and places the learners for the entrepreneurship programme, assisting teachers, non-teaching staff as well as artisans in the performance of specific tasks.

6. Evaluation is a feedback process through which quality control measures can be injected into a programme of study. This requires constant assessment of the extent to which policies are being achieved. It helps the personnel to upgrade in some aspects of their work. It also makes co-ordination of the entire effort easier and better accomplishable.

IV. CONCLUSION

Lifelong education, particularly the type made possible by entrepreneurship education, supports recipients in

various fields of endeavours to overcome poverty, generate wealth and substantially pump-up the tempo of lives. Accepted that the skills and aptitudes required to contain the monstrous fangs of poverty can be obtained through entrepreneurship education, so much is expected from the corridors of educational administration to make education deliver on its role as a catalyst for national development. Because education has the capacity to produce entrepreneurs who can efficiently coordinate all other factors of production in such a way that utilities can be created for individual and group progress, it should be accorded a prominent place in the planning process.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Most often, the appointment of administrative officers into positions of authority in institutions of learning is not based on competence, qualifications and/or experience. Factors relating to god-fatherism, favouritism, ethnicity and religion influence the process to a large extent. This practice has been responsible for the failure of a number of educational policies and programme in the country. However laudable an educational programme may be, the moment an electrician or a mason (well connected) is appointed to sit on the driving seat, a misadventure is been guaranteed. Thus seasoned educational administrators should be appointed to direct the implementation and administration of entrepreneurial programme in the country. This can be better done by ensuring that only seasoned educational administrators are appointed to head tertiary institutions (and by extension other institutions of learning). Putting square pegs into round holes will get us nowhere close to year 2020 (the year when Nigeria hopes to realise her dream of being numbered among the twenty most advanced nations of the world).

Over the years, stable political climate has been lacking in Nigeria. This is more so, as successive administrations want to be identified with particular programme or policies. This has made it difficult for the objectives of educational programme to be fairly evaluated, modified or justifiably discarded. But with democracy becoming firmly entrenched in the land, stake-holders are looking forward to a corresponding improvement in educational policy implementation and level of programme attainment. Therefore, educational administrators must be weary of collateral influences that are detrimental to the system. Since entrepreneurship is learned by experience and discovery, entrepreneurial programme should be conceived of as a lifelong endeavour that can be shaped and revised as the need dictates.

Finally, all research findings that have to with entrepreneurship education ought to be commercialised, to make people value them. Whatever has no price is not valued in our society.

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