

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION (EE) FOR YOUTH'S EMPOWERMENT AT THE POST-BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Presently in Nigeria, many youths seem to wallow in abject poverty with no skills despite the quality curriculum designed to be implemented under entrepreneurship education (EE) at the post-basic education level in Nigeria. This study specifically reviewed the importance of EE for youth's empowerment; it also examined the challenges teachers face in implementing EE curriculum in Nigeria. Findings from literature revealed that EE helps to equip learners with knowledge, skills, and attitude which will enable youths discover their talents in order to plan and create business ventures for economic development. It also revealed that empowering youths needs the competence of teachers in effective implementation of EE as reflected in the Nigeria national policy on education at the post-basic education level. However, several challenges have been identified such as: from poor training, lack of competence in various skill-based areas of EE, lack of facilities and equipment, poor attitude to teaching and learning the skills, poor orientation by parents and teachers, lack of cooperation between the school and the indigenous technologies among others. Findings from this study have implications towards the eradication of poverty and also the high crime rates among youths in Nigeria. This invariably would lead to national development. Based on these findings, it is recommended that human and material resources need to be channeled towards fortifying EE for sustainable economic growth of a nation like Nigeria.

Keywords: Implementing entrepreneurship education; National development; Nigeria; Youth empowerment.

Introduction

The rate of unemployment in Nigeria has over the years been consistently observed among Nigerian youths. This invariably could constitute a major harm not only on the individual themselves but also to the nation. According to Emejo (2013), the current rate of unemployment in Nigeria has been consistently high over the years. This is supported by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), (2018) whose publication shows that the rate of general unemployment in Nigeria and even among post-basic secondary school students over the years has been on upward rate as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: General and Secondary School Enrolment Rate in Nigeria

Year	General unemployment rate (%)	Secondary school unemployment rate (%)
2010	5.10	5.60
2011	6.00	6.60
2012	10.60	10.80
2013	10.00	11.00
2014	6.40	6.90
2015	10.40	11.30
2016	14.20	12.20
2017	20.40	22.00
2018	23.10	23.10

Source: **National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), (2018)**

This increasing rate of unemployment has resulted to poverty, terrorism, kidnappings, prostitution and other vices (Adegoke, 2015; Usman & Tasmin, 2015). Entrepreneurial curricular acquisition at the post-basic education level is an important move to achieving economic development towards poverty reduction among youths in Nigeria. Post basic education is the education children receive after a successful completion of nine years basic education and passing the basic education certificate examination (BECE). It includes senior secondary education, higher school and continuing education given in vocational enterprise institutions (VEIs). This education exposes youths with so many business ventures for job creation and self-reliance thereby promoting private sector and leading to economic development of any nation. However, many youths after graduation especially at the post-basic education level, found it difficult opening up enterprises of their own or securing any job for their sustainability. This tends to be attributed to lack of awareness or non-acquisition of vital entrepreneurial curricular skills while in the school.

It is expected that with change in knowledge economy, skill acquisition among Nigerian youths from primary school level is required. According to national policy on education in Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013), pre-vocational subjects are included to be taught right from the middle to upper basic education level in Nigeria; while entrepreneurship education comprising thirty-four skill areas have also been included to be taught at the post basic education level. With these effectively put in place, unemployment is expected would decrease and the nation's knowledge economy would increase. Knowledge economy demands skills of creativity, innovation, collaboration and critical thinking from effective teaching and learning to empower youths in Nigeria. A fundamental characteristic of entrepreneurship is the capacity to generate employment, and increase wealth.

This study is specifically important because of the high rate of unemployment among youths today in Nigeria. If youths are not effectively handled from the cradle,

the tendency of losing them to evil groups becomes very high. At the adolescent stage, youths if not properly guided with lucrative entrepreneurial skills, could remain very idle and thereby become a target for recruitment into various dangerous organizations such as boko haram and other militant groups that are very rampant in Nigerian society today. An idle mind is usually the devil's workshop. If youths are acquainted with various entrepreneurial skills, as stipulated in the national policy FRN (2013), with thirty-four entrepreneurial skills, they would be able to acquire some economic skills that would not only sustain them but also the nation. Some of these skills are integrated at the post basic education level which ranges from auto body repair and spray painting, auto electrical work, auto mechanical work, auto parts merchandising, air conditioning and refrigeration, among others are specified under: Mechanical, agricultural, catering, tailoring, electrical, and a host of others (FRN, pp. 20-21). The question is how aware are the youths about the importance of entrepreneurial skills? What challenges could hamper the implementation and learning of entrepreneurship curriculum in Nigeria? These among concepts such as entrepreneurship education, youth empowerment and curriculum implementation would be discussed.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education (EE)

Entrepreneurship is a process of creating or developing a new business venture or maintaining an existing one in order to make a profit (Amitabh, 2017; Sousa & Almeida, 2014).

The term entrepreneurship is derived from a French word "entrepreneur" meaning one who undertakes tasks in a production process (Ngerem, & Ezikpe, 2016). It could also be defined in terms of specific functions which the entrepreneur performs or in terms of characteristics or activities generally associated with the entrepreneur (Okoli, & Okoli, 2013). An entrepreneur could also be defined according to Arogundade (2011) as a person or persons who possesses the ability and innovation towards the development of a business where none exists. Entrepreneurs are people who constantly discover new markets and try to figure out how to supply those markets efficiently to make a profit. The entrepreneur could therefore be considered as an innovator. Thus, the entrepreneur here is seen as initiating change or innovation by actively creating new opportunities for job creation and eradication of unemployment among Nigerian youths. Entrepreneurship therefore, serves as a platform for youths to transform opportunities to business ventures towards job creation and poverty eradication (Okehi, 2019). This serves as a tool for developing the nation in the 21st century education towards sustainable living.

Entrepreneurship education according to Gautam and Singh (2015) is the process of application of knowledge, attitude, skills and competences that involve creativity, innovation and risk taking into business. Research has shown that entrepreneurship education prepares the youths for sustainable responsible and

transformative living (Okon & Friday, 2015; Raposo & Paco, 2011). However, Esu (2011) described EE as a form of education which prepares individuals or youths for acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences needed for a specified work that could yield to employability and higher job mobility.

Concept of Youth Empowerment (YE)

Youths are regarded as people whose ages range from 15 years to 35 years. It is a stage of life between childhood and adulthood as socially determined. It is a period when one is at the apex of one's physical strength, undergoing significant changes in physical, emotional and social make up (Egbefo, & Abe, 2017). It is a period in life characterized by excesses in behaviour and can be associated with feelings of rebellion, anxiety, confusion and naivety (Egbefo, & Abe, 2017). At this stage, youths take part in helping out in their family's tasks with one trade or another.

Youth empowerment means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others (Okoli & Okoli, 2013). Youth empowerment in the context of this study means implementing the entrepreneurship curriculum to enable youths acquire the needed skills for self-reliance and for national development in order to reduce unemployment. The success of entrepreneurship education in any developing country depends on youth's empowerment. However, national development could be considered a key indicator of the country's advancement in sustainable growth. Entrepreneurship education most probably is what the present and future youths need to be self-reliant and to be job providers instead of job seekers.

Importance of Entrepreneurship Education (EE) in empowering youths in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship education provides a wide ground for new inexperienced adventurers in every economy to enhance standard of living of people in a country. It is the field where a person can start his or her idea of venture, which may end up in a giant enterprise. Entrepreneurship provides enormous kinds of products which increases the income of youths who are employed in the entrepreneurial enterprises.

The importance of entrepreneurial curriculum at this stage is vital in order to eradicate idleness and occupy the youths with hands on task skills and activities. Findings by Ngerem, and Ezikpe, (2016) revealed that entrepreneurship education is a viable medium of steering the wheels of economic development for secondary school graduates in Imo State of Nigeria. The researchers also found that financial management skill, risk taking skill, communication skill, and human relations skill among others are entrepreneurial skills required for economic development and empowering of youths.

Entrepreneurial education equips individuals for productive activities and employment opportunities which could attract wage employment, self-employment

and income generation activities (Egbefo, & Abe, 2017). With a better funding, management and supervision, youths at this level could be engaged to acquire all the necessary skills needed for self-employment, job creation, and for sustainable living.

Similarly, Osakwe, (2015) identified some importance of entrepreneurship education generally as an innovative venture for job creation in small enterprises; provision of new ideas, ventures, quality product, technology, and market, to increase the Gross Domestic Products and standard of living of the people towards community development. EE is also believed to promote abundant retail facilities, a higher level of home ownership business, sanitation standards and higher expenditure on education, recreation, and religious activities. Thus, entrepreneurship leads to more stability and a higher quality of community life.

In Nigeria, Mazumber and Ahmed (2015, p.22) outlined some importance of entrepreneurial skills peculiar to rural women as:

- creating the spirit of self-confidence to establish business of their own to earn income;
- Engaging women in small scale business programs with the help of self-help activities which empower them economically to participate in family and community economic affairs;
- Bringing about savings, education, health, family welfare, social life, cleanliness etc.;
- Help women improve family income, and as such provide family members with better life styles including good nutrition and clothing to improve children education and family health;
- That which helps in household decision-making;
- Acquisition of entrepreneurial skills to eradicate poverty in developing economies.

Emphasis here was mainly on developing only rural women. This could be an indication of high unemployment level among rural women in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship has been identified as a means of providing employment and a powerful weapon of fighting poverty in the country. Entrepreneurship education is said to be crucial in boosting productivity, increasing completion and innovation, creating employment prospect and revitalizing economies (Ndubuisi-Okolo, Anigbuogu, & Onwuzuligbo, 2014). When Nigerians especially unemployed youths are mentored and provided with the needed resources and enabling environment for business startups, they would be economically engaged thereby shunning the illegal acts of hostage-taking, kidnapping, bombing, vandalism and homelessness according to the researchers.

Concepts of Curriculum Implementation (CI)

Curriculum is the roadmap to the attainment of educational goals through best practices. Curriculum is derived from Latin word “currere” meaning “to run”, “a track” or a ‘racecourse’ with literary meaning as a ‘runway’ or a course which one runs to reach a goal (Bobbitt, 1918 in Ogwu, 2019). Curriculum according to Damole (2011) and Jackson (2012) is all the learning experiences which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried out in groups or individually, inside or outside of school. According to Rufa’l, (2018), curriculum consists of the diverse parts of the education process that participants need to go through in order to attain the objectives of education set. Research has also shown that curricular are those subjects that are most useful for contemporary living which embody essential knowledge (Ogwu 2019). One of the ways of ensuring that education assists in addressing national and global unemployment is by incorporating entrepreneurship education as an essential knowledge into the school curriculum from the cradle. Such curriculum is needed in order to have a functional society. This curriculum prepares Nigerian youths with knowledge, attitude and skills to be self-reliant towards sustainable living through effective implementation(Umunadi, 2013).

Curriculum implementation is the action phase of the curriculum process. According to Azubuike, Ukegbu, Igwe and Obih (2019), it is the process by which planned curriculum is transformed into the classroom to achieve its objectives by bringing positive change in the life of the learner. This actually involves the learner, instructor and instructional resources. However, the actor in implementation task is the teacher who sees that the planned curriculum is effectively executed (Azubuike, Ukegbu, Igwe & Obih, 2019). Putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study is also known as curriculum implementation or practices, where the learner is the central figure (Nwafor & Okoi, 2018). This practice is a process of putting the vital curriculum components such as content, learning experiences, educational resources, delivery methods, and evaluation into action according to Ogwu (2019), in order to achieve the goal set. This according to Chukwudebelu (2019) is not limited to such components but also inspection and supervision of what is being implemented in order to realize the goal set out to be achieved. Implementation of entrepreneurship curriculum has been to a low extent leading to students ignorance or lack of needed skills that were supposed to be acquire while in school at a very early stage (Ogwu, Ukwueze, & Ukoha, 2017).

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education at the Post-Basic Education Level in Nigeria

There are many challenges towards the actualization of entrepreneurship education implementation for youth empowerment in Nigerian institutions. These challenges range from personal attitude to material and human support. Many a time, most beautiful curriculum plans tend to fail at the implementation stage due to poor

policies, human and material resources. In Nigeria, unemployment rate according to Muogbo, and John-Akamelu, (2018), has been found to be highly based on lack of entrepreneurial development due to so many setbacks

Challenges teachers face as a result of entrepreneurship failure according to Nwobia in Obizue, Duru & Obizue (2017, p.239) includes:

- Lack of planning,
- Lack of experience,
- Poor financial management,
- Poor location,
- Bad attitude,
- Uncontrolled expansion and Poor management.

Researchers like Oluyemi, Ajayi, Abiola, and Ajibade (2018, p.38) have also shown that challenges of EE include:

- Inadequacy of finance;
- Inadequacy infrastructure base,
- Low entrepreneurship skills, and
- Multiplicity of policies/regulatory measures was also responsible for low turnout in the implementation of the curriculum.

Other Challenges facing entrepreneurship education according to Osakwe (2015, p.185) include:

- Lack of manpower and infrastructure/instructional facilities,
- Inadequate provision of funds by the government,
- Lack of awareness, counseling and orientation on entrepreneurship education and
- Lack of systematic plans to address the existing gap of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions.

Many researchers have also attributed barriers to ineffective entrepreneurial skill acquisition to: poor training leading to lack of competence in various skill-based areas of the curriculum; lack of facilities and equipment; poor attitude to learning skills; poor orientation by parents and teachers; lack of cooperation between the school and the indigenous technologists; poor environment; poor attitude and poor policy implementation (Egbefo, &Abe, 2017; FRN, 2013). All these challenges justify the need to increase entrepreneurial activities in order to reduce high rate of unemployment and its negative effects among youths.

Conclusion

Unemployment especially among the youths has become a global challenge according to Oseni, (2017) and this influences many nations directly or indirectly.

Empowerment of youths using EE is needed to promote self-employment, industrial and national development. Self-employment is one of the main national objectives to Nigeria developmental plan and endorsement is a necessary foundation for National development (Egbefo, &Abe, 2017). Empowering youths using EE would assist in developing their brains and hands to acquire suitable, skills and attitude, to design, produce, and use methods and processes that will enable them make maximum use of the abundant nation's resources for their benefit and that of the society. However, challenges bound to the realization of these potentials, such as human and material resources, enabling environment, poor attitude among others. Therefore, there is an urgent need to direct the consciousness and awareness of Nigerian youths towards being empowered with the technological and managerial skills that are there in the school curriculum.

The study has implications for policy implementation in Nigeria, by making sure that the recommended entrepreneurship curriculum in the policy book is implemented as stipulated in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013). The study also has implications for students' awareness of the importance of the entrepreneurial skills that is expected to be learnt while in school. It also has implications for teacher supervision and monitoring by Ministry of Education, to ensure that the planned curriculum is implemented as should be.

Recommendations towards Implementing EE for Youth Empowerment in Nigeria

It is based on challenges envisaged that recommendations are suggested as follows:

1. Monitoring team from the Ministry of Education should be put in place to monitor the implementation of the curriculum.
2. Technology as a way of innovation and creativity should be integrated into the teaching and learning of vital areas of EE to empower the students.
3. Collaboration with the indigenous private sector, need to be integrated into the pay roll of institutions for efficiency based on experience on the practical aspect.
4. Capacity building workshop by Ministry of Education should be reinforced on teaching the entrepreneurial skills.
5. Teachers should be sensitized to have attitudinal change towards implementing innovative creative skills.
6. Government of Nigeria should be sensitized according to Oseni (2017) into sponsorship of schools by providing necessary facilities and technologies to make sure that the innovative curriculum is realized towards individual and national development.
7. Students' should be made aware about the entrepreneurial skills early enough to enable them gain experience and build competence through mastery of the topics, and ultimately take entrepreneurial action. They gain

the experiences through theoretical and practical activities, with emphasis on the latter.

8. An enabling environment should be provided by the government for easy interaction in business. This should be in terms of security and amenities such as electricity, water and good roads.

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