Entrepreneurship Education as Strategy for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Sanusi Sule,
School of Remedial and Basic Studies,
Federal Polytechnic Kaura – Namoda,
Zamfara State Nigeria.
Email: Sansisule78@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper discusses the need for Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria geared towards enhancing sustainable development in the country. Since enterprise skills remain vital in the real sector and the sustenance of economic development, it has become imperative for government to pay attention to this sub-sector. The problems facing the country ranging from acute poverty, youth and graduate unemployment, dependence on foreign goods and technology; to very low economic growth and development among others have promoted government recognition of this fact that has led to the introduction of entrepreneurship rial studies in tertiary institutions. This paper therefore, argues that entrepreneurship education will equip the students with the skills with which to be self-reliant. The objectives and strategies for re – designing entrepreneurship education are also discussed. The paper recommends that education programmes at all levels of education should be made relevant to provide the youth the needed entrepreneurial skills.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneur, Development Education
1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship has received much attention from both scholars and policy makers during the past decades, because there was a growing need in many countries for entrepreneurs to enhance economic growth and development.

The aim of the study is to discuss the need for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria geared towards enhancing sustainable economic development. The effect of entrepreneurial education has made countries such as the USA, Britain, France and Germany to mention but a few. The study is limited based on the information available when the research was carried out.

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in the growth of an economy. Entrepreneurship development has been accepted as one of the strategy to achieve the objective of promotion of entrepreneurship towards solving the problem of unemployment and rapid industrialization (Mali, 2000). The development of small and medium industries has been accepted as one of the most significant and important characteristics of industrial development in India.

The results of the study conducted by Karl Eller centre – Berger Entrepreneurship programme University of Arizona (2000) indicated that entrepreneurship education increased the probability of being instrumental in a new business venture by 25 percent; graduates are three times more likely to be self-employed; graduates receive annual incomes that are 27 percents higher and own 62 percent more assets and are more satisfied with their jobs (self-employment) Despite the importance of entrepreneurship to economic development, the role of youths in promoting entrepreneurship remain largely unaffected. Thus a better understanding of the factors that affect entrepreneurial intentions could have theoretical and practical implications of policy makers.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is generally viewed as a process of creating something new. Entrepreneurship involves creation process, conscious devotion of time and effort, involves risk and has some rewards Gana (2001) defined it as willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunities. Entrepreneurship refers to the intentional creation of transformation of an organization for the purpose of creating or adding value through organization of resources (Bird and Jelinek, 1998). As a dynamic process of vision, change and creation (Kuratko, 2005), it requires to be taught for the transfer of its skills and knowledge from an experts to someone else.
2.2 Entrepreneur

Entrepreneur can be defined as an innovating individual who has developed an ongoing business activity where none existed before. Meredith (1983) defined an entrepreneur as a person or persons who possesses the ability to recognize and evaluate business opportunities, assemble the necessary resources to take advantage of them and take appropriate action to ensure success. Entrepreneurs are people who constantly discover new markets and try to figure out how to supply those markets efficiently and make a profit. He is a person that searches for change, responds to change, and exploits change by converting change into business opportunity.

2.3 Entrepreneurship Education

According to Brown (2000), entrepreneurship education is designed to communicate and inculcate competencies, skills and values needed to recognize business opportunity, organize and start new business venture. Entrepreneurial education is focused on developing youth with the passion and multiple skills. It aims to reduce the risk associated with entrepreneurship though and guide the enterprise successfully through its initial stage to the maturity stage.

Gorman, Hanlon, and king, (1997) point out that entrepreneurship education is an educational program that is focused on impacting students with issues on entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education has passed through several developmental stages. Postigo and Tamborini (2007) in their study reviewed and analyzed four lines of research that described in details this phenomenon in different countries. These include; the study of the impact of entrepreneurship education at the University level by price and Monroe, (1993); Charney and Libecap, (2000); the analysis over the pedagogic instruments and methodologies used to teach entrepreneurship (Plaschka and Welsch, 1990; Laukannen, 2000); the research related to the state of the art of entrepreneurship education (Versper and Gartner, 1997) and report on practical experiences at different educational level (Mason, 2000; Solomon, Duffy, and Tarabishy, 2002).

3. Enterprise Education

Entrepreneurship is a concept that involves mental activities such as creativity, innovativeness and proactiveness, while enterprise education is designed to prepare students for engaging in a self-directed economic future such as seeking opportunities, taking risks and having the tenacity to push an idea through to reality combined into a special perspective the permeates entrepreneurs (Adenipekun, 2004). Garavan, Costine, and Hegarty (1995) views enterprise education as the process of or series of activities which aims to enable an individual to assimilate and develop knowledge, skills, values and understanding that are not simply related to a narrow field of activity, but which allow a broad range of problems to be defined,
analyzed and solve. It focuses on developing students with the passion and skills needed to create an inherently risky entrepreneurial enterprise and guide the enterprise successfully through its initial stage to the maturity stage. It communicates and inculcates the skills needed to recognize business opportunity, organizing and process starting new business venture (Brown, 2000). Its aim is to help young people develop skills and attributes that allow them to be innovative and to identify, initiate and successfully manage personal and work opportunities, including working for self (Walstad, and Kourilski, 1999; Bhandari, 2006; Adenipecun, 2004; Uwameiye and Uwameiye, 2006).

3.1 Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education according to Paul (2005) is structured to achieve the following objectives: to offer functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant; to provide the young graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities; to serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development; to offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management in order to make certain bearing feasible; to reduce high rule of poverty; to create employment generation; to reduce rural – urban migration; to provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium sized businesses; to inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the youths which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on; and to create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy.

3.2 Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development requires balancing environmental, societal and economic considerations in the pursuit of development and an improved quality of life. Sustainability includes intergenerational equity, gender equity, just and peaceful societies, social tolerance, environmental preservation and restoration, poverty alleviation and natural resource conservation. The major essential tool for achieving sustainable development include the following areas: improving the quality of basic education; re-orienting existing education programme in order to address sustainable development; developing public awareness and understanding; and providing training to all sectors of private and civic society.

3.3 Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development is the focus or projection of education that seeks to equip people towards creating a sustainable future. Stakeholders such as government, businesses, educational institutions, media and organization play important roles in achieving sustainable development. Each of the sectors has a different vision if sustainable development. Some are interested in environmental preservation and protection; some have economic development interests while others may be more interested in social development.
According to UNESCO (2000) the way each nation, cultural group and individual views sustainable development will depend on its own values.

In many European nations, Universities and Technical colleges trained students of science, economics and business management in skills that help to build more sustainable societies. Programmes such as peace education, and “youth entrepreneur” schemes are carried out in many schools. Hence, such initiatives help students and teachers to gain an understanding of the inter–linkages needed for sustainable development. The emphasis has been on education that will provide life and occupational skills that will enhance the potentials of individuals reinforcing self – sufficiency and improving quality of life.

3.4 Entrepreneurship Education and Sustainable development in Nigeria

According to Arogundade (2011), Nigerian government seems to have woken up to the reality that the country needs to break away from the vicious cycle of poverty, infrastructure neglect, corruption and other social problems. This is because 45 years after independence Nigeria has not attained her optimum level of development. According to Kolawole and Omolayo (2006) many individuals have difficulties in translating their business ideas to realities and creating new business ventures because of lack of necessary information and skills needed to achieve their targets. To him, the University Curriculum was in the past oriented towards making graduate suitable only for white collar jobs. This underscores why millions of our youths and a lot of University graduates roam about the streets of the major cities and towns in search of white –collar jobs. It is necessary and possible to position Nigerian Universities to stimulate economic growth through a deliberate agenda of production of entrepreneurial graduates.

In many countries, including USA, high schools offer entrepreneurship education for life - long trade. And many of them offer courses that enable students to meet their general academic requirements while learning a trade. However, because of the recent challenges in the world economy many schools have shifted emphasis to training computers, information technology, and related fields. Public Schools work closely with willing industries to establish curriculum and programmes to meet their skills demand. Where is Nigeria in this history of entrepreneurship education? While career education has continued to thrive in many societies, it is unfortunately an area that is neglected in Nigeria (Vanguard Dec. 23 2004). No wonder why things are not working as they should in Nigeria. Unfortunately those who influence education policy in Nigeria (Legislators, Educators, the media and e.t.c) disappear to feel that graduates of technical vocational institutions are not equal to University graduates; hence there is need for effective strategies for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.
4. Strategies for Effective Entrepreneurship Education

In order to achieve viable entrepreneurship education that will enhance sustainable development in Nigeria, the following strategy according to Ayodele (2006) will help to alleviate the problem of entrepreneurship education in the country; there should be some form of genuine school work based learning incorporated in some studies as part of the national economic development strategies the development of apprenticeship scheme would give new graduate some work skills and experience; pool local public and private funds to create a small venture capital fund; school – based enterpreise where the students identify potentials business, plan, create and operate small business using the school as mini – incorporate small business schools where interested students and community members can participate; establishing an enterprise college aimed at fostering the specific skills sets required for entrepreneurship to serve as skill – acquisition centres for the youths; creating an economic friendly political environment; improving on the government taxation on small scale businesses.

5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

It is obvious that Nigeria is lagging behind in preparing its workforce for the challenges of the fast changing global economy. It is therefore, concluded that enhanced and sustainable global economic development depends on a strong entrepreneurship education. It is against this background therefore, that the following recommendations are proffered for effective entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. Government and other education stake holders should make sure that educational programs at all levels of education are made relevant to provide the youths and graduates needed entrepreneurial skills; Governments should give adequate attention to entrepreneurial development in the country through the provision of good economic environment so that it will encourage individual participation in business while this is guaranteed entrepreneurship will flourish and consequently improve economic development.

References
