THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

Stella C. Ezeh, Ph.D  
Department of Educational Management  
University of Port Harcourt,  
Port Harcourt.

Ngozi C. Njoku, Ph.D  
Faculty of Education,  
University of Port Harcourt,  
Port Harcourt.

And  
Rosemary O. Iroha  
Faculty of Education,  
Rivers State University of Science & Technology,  
Port Harcourt.

Abstract  
The study examines the roles the Principal’s play in the development of entrepreneurship education in secondary schools. It also x-rays the concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education as means of helping the students develop the needed skills to function and be self reliant. The reasons for the development of entrepreneurship education in secondary schools, the stages of developing entrepreneurial skills, successful development of entrepreneurial skills, as well as the roles the Principals play in the development of entrepreneurship education were also examined. The paper concludes that poor economic state and high unemployment rate necessitated the need for the development of entrepreneurship education in secondary schools. It was recommended among others that Principals should endeavour to use sound management techniques to ensure effective development of entrepreneurship studies in their schools.

The National Policy on Education regards education as an instrument par excellence in national and economic development (FRN 2004). This perhaps is as a result of the understanding that the level of progress, development or otherwise of any nation is closely connected to the educational potentials of the citizenry. As
education is the vehicle for improving the quality of the individual as well as the growth and development, then the Nigeria Philosophy of education stresses on the development of the individuals into sound and effective citizenship hence the national goals that are derived from the philosophy to include the acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental, physical social abilities and competence. To achieve the goals of secondary education, the students need to be taken through a learning process that will inculcate in them the abilities and skills that will prepare them for the future. Bello and Salisu (2009) observed that the current trend in youth unemployment in Nigeria reveals that large number of youths trained and untrained educated and uneducated are idle and without any hope of securing an occupation for survival.

In wealthier countries despite their level of development there are still some people who are living on less than one dollar per day. (The European Commission Report, 2005). It also posited that Nigeria as the sixth oil producing country in the world is unexpectedly contending with the problem of poverty with a population of about 127 million people. Educational programmes that enhance the lives of the citizenry must be able to specify and identify the relevant target groups and design suitable strategies for addressing their educational needs. In Nigeria today, many young people leave school with no useful qualifications, others are educated in a setting that is detached from the mainstream education and some choose to drop out since what is taught in the school is perceived as irrelevant to their lives. Once they drop out, they constitute nuisance to the society because they are not properly equipped to face the challenges of the globalized world.

Attention is being redirected to human capacity building for national development globally as well as in Nigeria (Fayolle 2006). The economists saw human capital development as that which will transform the society's present situation to where it ought to be. It is an accepted fact that the formal school system is the best in transforming human beings to be able to contribute positively to the national economic growth and development. (Akangbou 1985). The curriculum content must be drawn on life experiences of all the students in order to create equal opportunities for all. Remedial work and promotion of competences in all the areas of the curriculum must be integral parts of education process. United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO (2003) advised that the curricular should be more practically oriented with clear guidelines for teacher activities and students learning experiences that will centre on the inculcation of entrepreneurship education in the students. However, our biggest challenge about entrepreneurship education is how to translate the theories into practical realities in the lives of the students. To carry this out, UNESCO (2003) calls for a review of recommended approach to teaching, learning and assessment so that the life long learning skills are fostered in the students. Babalola (2006) added that it is the role of the principal of a school to ensure that the plans or the contents
of the curricular are adequately interpreted and implemented by teachers. This should be done by organizing, directing, controlling and coordinating all the activities of the schools towards the achievement of the set educational objectives. They should supervise and monitor the entire process that take place to ensure proper development of entrepreneurial skills in the students. They should equally measure and review the actual performances of both the students and the teachers against the benchmarks to ensure that the objectives are actualized as this type of education will go a long way in making the students to be self reliant after graduation.

**What is Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Education?**

Entrepreneurship training is very necessary in any secondary educational curriculum because it equips the graduates with the skills that will help them to engage in income generating activities later in life. In this way, it helps to develop their community's economy and encourages self reliance. Moreover, it equips the unemployed and out of school youth for livelihood in an informal economy (Nwagwu, 2007). He also said that entrepreneurship is a process of conceptualizing, organizing, launching and then through innovation, a business opportunity is nurtured into a potentially high venture in this complex society which in turn helps in resulting to monetary or other personal satisfaction and independence. It includes planning, organizing, analyzing, communicating, evaluating and recording the progress in learning outcomes. It helps them to respond positively to changes and the disposition to show ones initiatives. It is also seen as an art with which the factors of production (land, labour and reproducible capital) are put together to produce goods and services to the members of the society.

Entrepreneurship education embraces all formal and informal processes intended to create the enabling environment for the students to facilitate the development of relevant entrepreneurial skills, attitudes orientations, experiences and values for sustainable business, economic growth and over all social political, cultural, scientific and educational development. Thus, entrepreneurship education must be a central position in our educational system and curriculum as a salient strategy to put the Nigerian economy on the fast lane of economic regeneration and growth so as to make our economy one of the strongest economies in the world by the year 2020 (Igwe 2009). According to Bird (1995) entrepreneurship education is an education that is focused on the establishment of values for the acquisition of new ideas, knowledge, skills and competences which must be relevant enough to the prevailing economic realities of the contemporary society.

**Reasons for the Development of Entrepreneurship Education in Secondary Schools:**

The development of entrepreneurial skills among secondary school students is a vital tool for attaining the Millennium Development Goal Projects
Journal of Assertiveness

(MDG's) hence the introduction of entrepreneurship education in secondary school curriculum. The FRN (2004) emphasized the need for this functional education that helps in the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria. This necessitated the efforts made by the government and educational planners to restructure the secondary school curriculum to meet the needs and demands of the industries and the society so that their products will be able to create wealth in a period of mass unemployment. Nwagwu (2007) added that we are in the era where graduates can no longer be absorbed by the labour market because it is filled up or where many youths are not well fitted into the world of work because of lack of the pre-requisite knowledge needed to function adequately. Due to this present hardship condition that led to high rate of unemployment, then the need to expose students during their secondary school schooling to certain skills that will make them to be self-reliant. These are found in entrepreneurship and its education. The major concern of incorporating entrepreneurship education in secondary school students is for them to have self development and fulfillment to take more responsibility for themselves, to discover their inherent capabilities and aptitudes that will help them maximize the available opportunities in coping with the complexities of the society. Therefore, the type of education these students need is the one that will enhance the development of human capital. This education is said to be a profitable investment by making the educated person a skilled someone who can use the skills he acquires as investment in himself which some returns are expected. The human capital will help them to develop positive values of self reliance, resourcefulness, creativity, initiative, courage and responsibility.

Entrepreneurship education according to Osaam (2009) offers the students the opportunity to experience jobs and earnings, savings and investing money in business at early stage of life than their peers. It will also contribute positively to the beliefs in their abilities and sense of self worth. The skill will also help the students to form a base of knowledge about the functions and operations of business and to develop some level of familiarity with business environment such as the technological and scientific changes. This will go a long way in reducing the high rate of unemployment, youth restiveness and other social vices in our secondary schools. More importantly, it will offer the students an incentive for creative thinking and broadens their understanding of career opportunities available in the society where they live and operate in. He also added that entrepreneurship education instills in the students the entrepreneurial spirit which is manifested in persistence, confidence, boldness and foresight in any business. The student will be equipped with the analytical skills required in the work place, problem solving decision making skills, and technical skills as exhibited by his ability. This will also help him to appropriately apply the acquired knowledge to the work place, be proficient in the use of instruments or equipment due to adequate practical experiences, sound mind that easily comprehends problems and high solution profferability.
Stages of Developing Entrepreneurial Skills in the Students

Uche Nwabueze and Ememe (2009) outlined that the consortium for entrepreneurship education supports the concept that entrepreneurship is a life long learning process that has five distinct stages of development. This lifelong learning model developed by Dennis (1993) assumes that every student in our secondary school should have opportunity to learn about the stages of business development which are to be taught with activities that may be infused in other subjects or as separate subjects.

Stage 1- Basics- the students are expected to understand the basics of our economy, career opportunities and the need to master the basic skills to be successful in a free market economy.

Stage 2- Competency Awareness- In this stage the students learn to speak the language of business and see the problems from the business owner's point of view.

Stage 3- Creative Application- Here the students can take time to explore business ideas in a variety of ways to plan the business.

Stage 4- Start up- The students are encouraged to start-up a business and be their own boss. This enables them to have experience on how to risk their own money, organize their own work and handle diverse activities at the same time.

Stage 5- Growth- Students when given money to start up businesses may not be able manage final outcome. There is need for seminars and workshops to enable them to recognize the potential problems and deal with them on time as this fosters growth and prosperity in business.

Entrepreneurial Success

For a student to succeed in any business, he must be focused with a good vision of what he wants to achieve, that is the kind of business he intends to do and how to go about it to ensure that it is successfully carried out. This will help to satisfy the needs of the customers (Uche, et al 2009). They also added that the students should be flexible, that is they should understand the dynamic world and their immediate environment that change constantly. They are expected to have a broad array of entrepreneurial skills to succeed in today's competitive market. They must also be in possession of the basic skills necessary to enable them to start, nurture, finance and market their own business enterprise. The key to success in business is the development of entrepreneurial ability to produce expected results. The entrepreneurial skills and qualities needed to be possessed by these student entrepreneurs include sales and marketing, financial know how, self motivation, communication skills, administrative skills, thinking skills, risk taking skills, time management skills, and information skills.
Who are the Principals?

They are the administrators in secondary schools that contribute towards the achievement of educational goals. They ensure strict adherence and compliance of both the teachers and students to the rules and regulations that govern the schools. They are seen as models because they help to shape the teachers professional attitudes, behaviours, aptitudes, academic, skills, and intellectual proficiencies. They equally direct the students on the areas of need and make sure that the needed skills and knowledge are developed in the students by the teachers. They also coordinate and direct all the curricular and co-curricular activities to ensure that the objectives stipulated are achieved, these are usually done through measurement and evaluation.

The Role of Principals in the Development of Entrepreneurship Education in Secondary Schools

The parts that the principals play in the development of entrepreneurship education in students are enormous. Some of them are:-

1. Motivation- The principals reward their teachers, students, collaborators and other stakeholders out from the yields realized from the business ventures, this will reinforce and encourage them to develop more interest in business and these help to spur the zeal and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship education.

2. The principals should involve the students in interactive and reflective learning. This involves cooperative learning, problem based learning, group or peer work, project work, learning by doing and learning diaries in entrepreneurship development. (Seikkula-Leino 2008).

3. The principals should encourage the students to be involved in the entrepreneurial activities such as creating out door business services to the public but managed by the students and supervised by their teachers. The students are allowed to see how money is realized, profits are made and some are given to them as incentives.

4. The principal print and disseminate to all the students books with stories of achievements and pictures of young and successful entrepreneurs in order to serve as role models to them.

5. The principals introduce innovative teaching methods into all subjects as necessary basis for building an entrepreneurial spirit and extend greater range of pedagogies in use through innovative curriculum implementation.
6. They create forum for assessment of the development of entrepreneurial skills in the students and issue certificates or other gifts that will encourage them in the development of entrepreneurial skills.

7. They organize for industrial work experiences for the students during holidays to ensure that they are given the opportunities to visit some industries and if possible work in appropriate and relevant establishments. This helps to expose them to the necessary and ideal skilled work situations.

8. They make sure that the necessary elements of entrepreneurship behaviours are inculcated in the students. Such as curiosity, creativity, initiative, team spirit and so on. They also ensure that the teachers use posters, pictures and other real life objects and tools that are found appropriate to teach them.

9. Principals create opportunities for students' orientation on entrepreneurship education this will help them know the importance of being creative and value the most honorable means of livelihood at all the stages of life they pass through.

Conclusion

Nigeria is a country with numerous problems but most pronounced of such problems are poorly managed economy and unemployment. This poorly managed economic situation and the need to reduce unemployment rate have necessitated the need to call for the development of entrepreneurship education in our secondary schools. Effective entrepreneurial skill acquisition is indispensable towards producing a self reliant nation and dynamic economy which are the good indices of growth and development. The principals play the role of providing the structures for the students' interaction with their school environment that will help them develop the entrepreneurial skills and strategies to contribute to the nation's economic growth and development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations if strictly adhered to will help in the proper development of entrepreneurship education in secondary school students.

1) Government should be able to make adequate funds available to schools in order not to cripple the initiatives and forces of entrepreneurial spirits in the principals and the students.

2) The principal should create enabling environment to galvanize the activities of entrepreneurship in their schools.
3) Students should be encouraged to explore, manipulate and control their environment and show greater enthusiasm, zeal and entrepreneurial spirit with the view to utilizing every opportunity to becoming future successful entrepreneurs.

4) The principals should endeavour to use some managerial techniques to ensure the effective management of entrepreneurial studies in secondary schools.

5) There is also a need to arrange for in-service training, workshops and seminars by the educational planners for the principals, so that they can always have up to date information about entrepreneurship education and all its involvements.

6) The principal should from time to time invite resource persons to enlighten both the students and the teachers on entrepreneurship education. This will go a long way in convincing the students on the need and the importance of entrepreneurship education.

References


The Role of Principals in the Development of Entrepreneurial Education at Secondary School Level - Stella C. Ezeh, Ph.D; Ngozi C. Njoku, Ph.D and Rosemary O. Iroka


