Abstract
Unemployment among graduates of tertiary institutions is alarmingly on the increase, including vocational/technical/business education graduates. This is as a result of limited job opportunities available for employers of labour (private and public). This has necessitated the need for inclusion of entrepreneurship skill acquisition in the nation’s school curriculum in order to equip the students with skills that would assist them actually to become self-reliant and self-sustaining in the society. The target is the eradication of poverty in Nigeria in recognition of the basic essence of the National Economic Empowerment strategy of the Federal Government. Entrepreneurship and education is the key driver towards industrialization and technological advancement. It is the bedrock for achieving rapid economic development and modernization. Entrepreneurship compliment occupational skill in preparing students for the world of work. One of the goals of tertiary education in Nigeria is to acquire physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. This position paper therefore addresses the needs for entrepreneurship as a basic skill in the Nigerian educational system.

Curriculum is a set of courses, course work, and content offered at a school or university. It is also referred to as learning content, activities, and structures as experienced by students. The curriculum of a school is the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values under the auspices of that school. (Doll,1996). Ivowi (2008) saw curriculum as a tool designed for educating a person in order to change the orientation, behaviour, actions and values claims to that of a good person whose concern is not only to develop self but also the world around.
Curriculum helps to form human beings into persons. It is prescriptive, and is based on more general syllabus which merely specifies what topics must be understood and to what level to achieve a particular grade or standard. Curriculum encapsulate everything in the teaching and learning situation; to wit; the philosophy which spells out the aims and objectives of education, the learning experiences and the content for the realization of identified goals, the methods (ways and means) for teaching and learning the content, the teacher and their students in the usual teaching/learning transaction, the environment or areas where teaching take place, the larger society which embraces all the units (formal, non-formal and informal) of the educational system, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the entire policies and programmes (Maduewesi, 2005 and Oriaifo, 2005). The listed units show the various areas of concern for implementation. The success of a product is determined by the level of fulfillment of its purpose.

The curriculum of any school consists of all the situations that the school may select and consistently organize for the purpose of bringing about changes in the behaviours of the learners and as a means of developing the personality of the individuals. It is the total experience involving the school in the process of educating young people. It includes the teacher, subjects, content, method of teaching and evaluation as well as the physical and psychological dimension of the experience. (Offorma 1994, 2002). In other words curriculum is the vehicle through which education is attained. It is the system of planned action for instruction.

Entrepreneurship is a process of engaging in a business enterprise and managing it in a unique way, having advantage over other competitors. Nwafor (2007) defined entrepreneurship as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek investment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities.

It is the practice of starting new organization or revitalizing mature organization, particularly new business generally in response to identified opportunities (Onuoha, 2007). Entrepreneurship involves exploring, analyzing and evaluating, exploiting business opportunities and rigorously pursuing such opportunities to a successful end which eventually culminates in the opening of a business enterprise (Duze, 2010). Igbo (2006) identified four major categories of skills needed for entrepreneurship which includes:

i. Managerial skills
ii. Accounting and financial skills
iii. Marketing skills and sales skills
iv. General business skills.
A skill is a fairly automatic response to a particular situation. A performance is said to be skilled if it is performed with a minimum of conscious effort. In other words, a skill is an automatic response within a particular context. It must be performed to an appropriate standard. To acquire a skill, a learner should know the sequence of actions required, practice the action, reflect on the experience and receive feedback until the skill becomes automatic at the appropriate standard. That is to say that a skill is best perfected by practice to a point of automatic production. Acquisition means something acquired or gained.

Entrepreneurship skill acquisition refers to skill that enable individuals to acquire certain personal characteristics, qualities and skills that will enable them establish new business, improve business or staff performance to enhance their earnings. In entrepreneurship skill acquisition, students learn how to nurture micro enterprise; they are also exposed to real micro enterprise while still in school. This will increase their potentials and the tendency that they will excel when they are out of school. They are also expected to be self confident in order to face squarely and conquer challenges they will encounter.

Education typifies the entire acts and process of training. It includes the acquisition and transmission of knowledge, skills and attitudes for the well being of self and society (Oriaifor, 2006). Entrepreneurship education is lifelong learning processes that will help a country control its economic destiny. It is critical to the future of today’s youth; this is because even when there are no jobs available, there is always “work to be done”.

It is in this light that this study emphasizes the need for entrepreneurship skill acquisition and its proper implementation in the nation’s school curriculum. Tertiary education provides leadership in training and innovation responsible for sustainable development of any nation. Entrepreneurship education skill acquisition will equip undergraduates with the capacity to control and direct their economic destinies, develop their business potentials, and exploit their Gods given talents. This will help reduce unemployment and poverty rates in this country.

Goals of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

Tertiary education according to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, including those institutions offering corresponding courses. Goals of tertiary education (FRN, 2004:36) are to:

i. contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training.
ii. develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;

iii. develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local external environment;

iv. acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individual to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;

v. promote and encourage scholarship and community service;

vi. forge and cement national unity; and

vii. promote national and international understanding and interaction.

There is a link between education and the economy. It is necessary to teach undergraduates how to make it financially in order to become economically productive members of their society. The curriculum should include this all important knowledge which can help students to take control of their future. Entrepreneurship education is expected to motivate students to prepare for their careers via a specialized route.

The Need for Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition in School Curriculum

Entrepreneurs drive Nigeria economy, accounting for the majority of our nations new job creation and innovations. They are the people who have a vested interest in the wealth of the economy. Small firms contribute immensely to economic growth. Power and influence in Nigeria is granted to those who own their own land, their own houses, and their own businesses yet we teach our students to be employees and not business owners. The nation’s curriculum is expected to stipulate objectives, learning activities, and assessment of entrepreneurship skills acquisition for her students. This will enable them develop the insight needed to discover and create entrepreneurial opportunities; and the enterprise to successfully start and manage their own businesses to take advantage of these opportunities.

Majority of new business fail and entrepreneurship is a difficult undertaking that requires adequate knowledge to survive. Undergraduate's need these skills that will enable them become entrepreneurs and decrease the chances of failure and increase their capacity and tendency to venture and succeed in self employment. It will also enable them take advantage of available scarce resources to exploit business opportunities and work creatively to establish new resources for the purpose.

In this vast global economic crises, entrepreneurship and innovation provide a way for students to overcome global challenges of today, building sustainable development, creating jobs, generating renewed economic growth and advancing human welfare. Entrepreneurship transcends skill acquisition and help to educate and train people to be creative, innovative, resourceful, confident and courageous to engage in business ventures as well as take the risks involved. It also help retain people already
in business to enable them enhance their management, record keeping ability and the profitability of their businesses. Students are being molded to take their fate in their hands by becoming entrepreneurs even right from school.

Wealth and a high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneurially minded individuals, many of whom go on to create big businesses. People exposed to entrepreneurship frequently express that they have more opportunity to exercise creative freedoms, higher self esteem, and an overall greater sense of control over their own lives. As a result, many experienced business people, economist, educators and political leaders believe that fostering a robust entrepreneurial culture will maximize individual and collective economic and social success on a local, national and global scale.

In president Obamas speech that addresses the “No Child Left Behind Act ” on March 10, Obama stated, “I am calling on our nation’s governors and state education chiefs to develop standards and assessments that don’t simply measure whether students can fill in a bubble on a test, but whether they possess 21st century skills like problem-solving and critical thinking, entrepreneurship and creativity.” Since entrepreneurship skill acquisition is regarded as a proven contributing factor in graduating people out of poverty, the challenge to the educational system is to inculcate into the curriculum such essential skills for survival of Nigerian youth.

Benefits of Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition

1. **Opportunity to Develop Planning, Financial Literacy and Money Management**
   The ability to set goals and to manage time, money and other resources are important entrepreneurship skills which are useful in any workplace.

2. **Opportunity to Exercise Leadership and Develop Interpersonal Skills**
   Entrepreneurship skill acquisition can enable undergraduates learn to communicate their ideas and influence others effectively through the development of self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills valued highly by employers in the competitive workplace of the 21st century.

3. **Opportunity For Work Based Experience**
   The knowledge helps them acquire jobs at higher wages after they graduate.

4. **Other benefit includes**
   Opportunities for creativity, increase feeling of control over their lives and belief in their own potential, increased engagement in more challenging educational activities as well as sense of connection with adults in business and the community.
Conclusion

Entrepreneurship focuses on real realization of opportunities and that starting a legal enterprise is a concept that young people can say yes to. It is accepted that education contributes immensely to economic development and entrepreneurship can do much more. Now more than ever, Nigeria needs innovation, new solutions, creative approaches and new way of operation. Entrepreneurship is an employment strategy that can lead to economic self-sufficiency for people. It then means that entrepreneurship skill acquisition must be reflected in the school curriculum of Nigeria’s undergraduates to equip them with such skills that will be for them a sure way out of the strangulation menace of unemployment and abject poverty. This in turn will reward the country handsomely, not only with a more educated workforce but one that adds to and nurtures her economy’s health.

Recommendations

For securing and sustaining undergraduate future, the following recommendations are made:

1. Curriculum planners should integrate entrepreneurship skill acquisition into the curriculum of tertiary education as a bold step for curbing unemployment. Educators in collaboration with all stakeholders in education should pay more attention to the issue of implementation of entrepreneurship skill acquisition. They should set aside enough time for learning the skills in the curriculum. It is important to get business leaders into classroom to share their expertise and optimism which is a key component of entrepreneurial success that they need to be arranged. They should also expose the benefits of such acquisition and motivate students to have interest in developing their abilities.

2. Seminars, workshops, conferences, and sensitization campaign should be organized by government to expose the need to empower youths and adults on entrepreneurship skills for wealth creation and self employment. They should provide fund for professional development process that will train lecturers for actual implementation of the curriculum and provide technological infrastructures and resources for entrepreneurship education. They should also provide access to information management system for meeting the learning needs of these undergraduates.
References


