

# Restructuring Entrepreneurship Education Delivery Towards Functional Education In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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*Abstract: This paper examined the rationale for restricting delivery of entrepreneurship education towards functional education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It delves into the meaning of entrepreneurship education and functional education, contents of entrepreneurship education in universities, the different entrepreneurship pedagogies with the aim of achieving functional education. The paper reveals that entrepreneurship education is capable of preparing people to be responsible, enterprising individuals who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to achieve the goals they set for themselves in order to live a fulfilled life. It establishes that traditional methods of instruction based in the classroom have been shown to be poor means for the development of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes. In contrast active learning methods in which teachers become facilitators help learners to experiment and learn about themselves. The paper concluded that entrepreneurship education must offer functional education that will empower youth to be self-employed and self-reliant, provide fresh graduates with adequate training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities, serve as catalyst for economic growth and development, reduce high rate of poverty, create employment opportunities, reduce rural-urban migration and create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy.*

**Keywords:** Restructuring, entrepreneurship education, delivery, functional education.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has long been considered a significant factor for socioeconomic growth and development because it provides millions of job opportunities, offers a variety of consumer goods and services and generally increases national prosperity and competitiveness. The positive impact of entrepreneurship as a key factor in accelerating economic growth in recent times have seen a tremendous rise and made many institutions of learning to include entrepreneurship education in school curriculum around the globe.

During the past decade, many developing countries were faced with various problems such as population growth, lack of improvement in economy, excessive number of unemployed graduates, government policies to downsize its structure and inability of the private sector to provide work for the graduates (ODEP, 2009). All these problems and crisis have caused institutions to pay more attention to entrepreneurship as a fundamental issue and have brought about an increasing demand in entrepreneurship education in recent years to produce entrepreneurs. The qualities of an entrepreneur include a set of personal competencies and attitudes such as creativity, innovativeness, analytical ability,

initiative, interpersonal skills, self-awareness and achievement motivation, among others (Ekpenyong, 2006). Thus entrepreneurship education helps to develop its recipients with certain skills and business competencies such as:

- ✓ Knowledge of types of ownership of business (sole proprietorship, partnership and business corporations);
- ✓ Undertaking basic steps involved in starting a business;
- ✓ Awareness of facilities available for supplying information on starting a small business government agencies and trade association resources;
- ✓ Ability to determine causes of failure of similar businesses;
- ✓ Ability to assess facilities and equipment required;
- ✓ Knowledge of building and space utilization;
- ✓ Ability to judge performances of employees;
- ✓ Ability to find out sources of capital to start a business;
- ✓ Knowledge of how to determine employee wages and allowances;
- ✓ Knowledge of how to hire and fire employees.

As for the skills required in entrepreneurship, they include: technical skills- e.g. oral communication, writing, monitoring environment, technical business management, technology, interpersonal, listening, ability to organize, network, building, management style, coaching and being a team player. Business management skills include: planning and goal setting; decision making, human relationship; marketing; finance; accounting; management and control; negotiation; venture launch and managing growth. Personal entrepreneurial skills include inner control/discipline; risk taker, innovative; change oriented; persistency; visionary leader and the ability to make change.

Hence, entrepreneurship has been regarded as one of the necessities in the development of countries and the governments must pay special attention for entrepreneurship education in order to expand the student's capabilities for the entrepreneurship and through appropriate training methods, societies can create entrepreneurs who will develop small businesses and maximize the economic potential of an area.

## II. CONCEPT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Entrepreneurship, according to Omolayo (2006) is the act of starting a company, arranging business deals and taking risks in order to make a profit through the education skills acquired. It is a term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities. Entrepreneurship can be described as "the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coupled with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need as well as create wealth. It is a process of bringing together the factors of production, which include land, labour and capital so as to provide a product or service for public consumption. However, the operational definition of entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of a person or persons to acquire educational skills to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful business enterprise.

Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people to be responsible, enterprising individuals who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to achieve the goals they set for themselves to live a fulfilled life. Therefore, entrepreneurship education focuses on knowledge, skills and attitudes of students which all together make up the entrepreneurship key competence.

Entrepreneurship education is not necessarily directly focused the creation of new businesses, although graduate start-ups are one of a range of possible outcomes. Knowledge refers to the need to have a broad understanding and knowledge of entrepreneurship, including the role entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship plays in modern economies and societies. Skills refer to the need to learn how to become an entrepreneur.

It concerns skills needed to turn ideas into action, whereby it is important to make a distinction between soft entrepreneurial skills (e.g. social skills) and hard entrepreneurial skills (e.g. drafting a business plan). Attitudes refer to the need to learn to become entrepreneurial. It deals with the need for individuals to develop certain attitudes that will help them to take action, including taking responsibility for their own learning, careers and life. Primary education determines to a large extent the entrepreneurial mindset of people, whereas at a higher educational level one of the main purposes of entrepreneurship education is to develop entrepreneurial skills.

Entrepreneurship education will provide at least one or more of the following elements:

- ✓ Foster those personal attitudes and skills that form the basis of an entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour (creativity, risk propensity, self-confidence, independence, etc.);
- ✓ Raise awareness of students about self-employment and entrepreneurship as possible career options;
- ✓ Use practice-based methods, where students are involved in project work and/or in activities outside the classroom (linking them with the business world or with the local community);
- ✓ Provide basic business skills for self-employment or self-management, and knowledge of how to start and develop commercial or social venture successfully.

Entrepreneurship education should not be confused with general business and economic studies, as its goal is to promote creativity, innovation and self-employment. Entrepreneurial programmes offer students the tools to think creatively, to be an effective problem solver, and to communicate, to network and to lead. Entrepreneurship is not necessarily a topic - it is also a different way of teaching and of helping young people to fully develop their potential.

Entrepreneurship education can play a significant role in changing views of students towards self-employment and through education on necessary skills to manage a business has prepared them for self-employment labor market (Nelson, 1996). Entrepreneurship education tries to prepare people, particularly youth, to be responsible, take risks, manage the business and learn from the outcomes by immersing them in real life learning experiences. Entrepreneurial education can change students' view regarding self-employment and prepare

them with skills needed to supervise a business through education (ODEP, 2009).

Three elements are very important in entrepreneurial education process:

- ✓ Recognizing a market opportunity and creating a business idea, service or product that is to grasp an opportunity which is the basis of the entrepreneurship process;
- ✓ Organizing and devoting resources needed to pursue and turn a situation into an opportunity with the hope of surviving outside the uterus;
- ✓ Creating, executing, performing and operating a business organization that performs toward conduction of the time to act opportunity (Sahlman and Stevenson, 1992).

Necessity and importance of entrepreneurship and its education has led to a dramatic rise in the number and status of entrepreneurship programs at colleges and universities (Finkle and Deeds, 2001; Kurakto, 2005; Matlay, 2005). The popularity of entrepreneurship as a course or programme has become prominent among both graduate and undergraduate students (Finkle and Deeds, 2001).

### III. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION DELIVERY SYSTEM

Educators worldwide are observing growth and persistent demand from individuals and governments to deliver entrepreneurship education. It has been claimed that everybody in the dynamics of the contemporary economy, could be an entrepreneur or should be exposed to entrepreneurship training and development (Gibb 2002). Government that identify a link between entrepreneurship and economic imperatives have been forging ahead to formulate policy for educational environments that encourage an entrepreneurial spirit. It would seem that many in political, educational and academic circles have arrived at the conclusion that a nation benefits when its people are more enterprising and/or entrepreneurial.

A research finding by Rasheed (2002) on two variations of entrepreneurship education revealed that one is aimed at raising awareness for career purposes and skill training and the other included classroom-based 'enterprise' activities. The former might be loosely considered as education 'for' entrepreneurship (although it also seems to contain elements of the above category). While the latter might be regarded as education 'through' entrepreneurship. The results were compare with a control group not receiving any form of entrepreneurship education and the findings showed that the classroom-based enterprise activity learning had the same effect as the awareness-based entrepreneurship education except for two major differences. The group experiencing the education for entrepreneurship in career awareness displayed a gain in achieving motivations while the enterprise activities group or the education through entrepreneurship group showed an increase in levels of innovation. The study demonstrates the variation in outcomes that may result from different entrepreneurship education practices and serves to remind us of the importance of clarity in educational objectives.

Peterman and Kennedy (2003) also drew attention to the wide variety of entrepreneurship programs on offer in the market place and suggested that while positive results may be found from a study of one program, it could not be assumed that all programs would have similar results due to variation in content, pedagogy and learning styles. This observation is consistent with the claim by Rasheed (2002) that there was little uniformity in content and approach among course. It is however opined that entrepreneurship education research needed further development. This view has also been more recently echoed by Halrison and Leitch (2005). However, it is noted generally that educators have emphasized experimental learning aimed to reach diverse audience (Kuratko 2004).

Ekpenyong and Egberanwen (2010) asserts in a recently conducted survey of seven selected academic institutions namely, Universities and Polytechnics, one Federal University, four private Universities, and two Federal Universities; that only one of the institutions met the basic criteria - Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State. The Institution has a dedicated Entrepreneurial Development Centre with well-designed and taught courses. Teaching covers the theory and practical aspects. The courses are taken from the fundamentals in years one to four. Four of the most relevant courses include preparation of business plan feasibility study, technology and entrepreneurial ventures, SMEs/entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Entrepreneurial succession, and E-Commerce. From 300 to 400 levels, students were specifically exposed to the practical aspect of entrepreneurship education and were expected to choose from a list of over 20 business/vocations, depending on their areas of interest's after intensive lectures and practical sessions. In the final year each student is to write and present a business plan. In Yaba College of Technology, Lagos and Auchi Polytechnic, Edo State; there is a moderate achievement in entrepreneurship education. The others appear to be at the infant stage of their entrepreneurship development cycle, as they strive to grapple with the problem of appropriate content for their courses, student organization for instruction and its mode.

### IV. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ITS EDUCATORS

Entrepreneurship educators. need to devote more time to marketing, creativity and innovation and less time to just creating business plans. One should consider integrating concepts and theories presented in the fine arts, drama and the engineering department to create an entrepreneurial environment in the classroom. Some educators based the entire grade on the successful implementation of a business, idea, concept or process. Growth issues, interface with external forces, developing a management team, are all significant factors in understanding the entrepreneurial process. Creation of a universally accepted paradigm may allow greater clarity in the teaching of entrepreneurship.

A study of some countries delivering entrepreneurship education concludes that above all, the topic of entrepreneurship education needs to be approached and treated in a more interdisciplinary manner..." (Klandt, 2004). The

Klandt study also suggests that "... universities and polytechnics organize events and programs in the field of business formation that vary in type and scale. These comprises of separate workshops, lecture series, seminar programs, contact possibilities, consultancy, corporation, and more. Klandt portrays the inconsistencies in approaches to entrepreneurship education and suggests that the choices made by institutions are seemingly largely guided by pragmatism rather than clear and specific design choices.

Entrepreneurship educators need to ensure that the knowledge disseminated and evaluation criteria employed in the classroom is consistent with the phenomenon surrounding the entrepreneurial process. They should focus on integrating the classroom with the reality confronting entrepreneurs daily, visit and/or interview entrepreneurs using a structured interview guide, create possibly with the cooperation of the drama and fine arts departments, activities and exercises to realize the full potential of entrepreneurship students. In essence, entrepreneurship educators should take a cue from both the Coleman and Kauffman Foundations 'recent support of "cross-campus" initiatives. They should integrate the subject matter with a discussion of technology. They should interact with the engineering, and medical schools if they are on campus.

Entrepreneurs should be invited to give a talk or lecture on their successes and failures inherent in businesses by inviting local accountants and bankers who interact daily with entrepreneurs. These invited professionals should focus on the process of converting good ideas into viable business opportunities and examine the process of building a sound entrepreneurial team. Finally, as with small business management educators, the invited professionals should explore the creation of web-based businesses as this is a growing trend among entrepreneurial start-ups. In short, there is a need to create a learning environment which mirrors the living environment within which entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ventures exist.

The purpose and goals of entrepreneurship education are not only based on measurement of the number of business beginners created from universities but also about developing attitudes, behaviors and competencies at the individual level. It is also about the application of those attitudes, skills and abilities that can take many forms during an individual's career, creating a range of long-term benefits to society and the economy. Hence, entrepreneurship and innovation must be deeply integrated in the curriculum to embed a new entrepreneurial spirit and mindset among students (Wilson, 2008).

## V. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION PEDAGOGIES

The successful implementation of entrepreneurship education depends on teachers and the pedagogy they apply in classrooms and thus teachers' role in delivering and 'shaping' entrepreneurship education is of paramount importance. Through initial teacher education, they should be equipped with the specific skills and knowledge to implement the pedagogy of entrepreneurship. Traditional methods of instruction based in the classroom have been shown to be poor

means for the development of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes. In contrast, active learning methods in which teachers become coaches and facilitators help learners to experiment and learn about themselves. Also, an emphasis should be put on pedagogies that allow students to experience and feel the concept — a changed learning context is thus beneficial: the classroom can be supplemented with practical, hands-on experiential learning opportunities, bringing the outside world into the school. The pedagogies that are paradigm shift from the traditional classroom teaching/learning are:

- ✓ Strategic Alliances — this implies forming relationships with other businesses where students are expected to be forty percent in school and sixty percent in cooperative enterprises. These include: business plans; student's business start-up; consultation with practicing entrepreneurs; computer simulation; interview with entrepreneurs; environmental scam; live case and film; introducing students to people who might be able to facilitate their success such as bankers, economists, accountants and marketers.
- ✓ Also indicate instructional or delivery inputs needed for entrepreneurship education such as: trained entrepreneurship teachers; adequate funding by government and private agencies; adequate tools; modern technology and instructional materials; occupational/business information; ICT and e-learning; assurance of quality control and standard specification by governing body, e.g. federal ministry of education and national universities commission.

Teachers need to be better informed about entrepreneurship education: what it is? What is the purpose? What are the learning outcomes? What are the benefits? What are the appropriate teaching methods and what is the goal? The broad understanding of entrepreneurship education, i.e. aiming to foster the ability to turn ideas into action/the entrepreneurship key competence needs to be communicated to teachers to get their support. Via communication efforts, it can be highlighted that the entrepreneurial key competence is also important for the increase of social innovation, educational attainment by preventing early school leaving, improved employability etc. There needs to be a move away from the "teaching to the test" syndrome to encourage the use of new, innovative teaching methods by also addressing the assessment methods used. If pupils and students are still primarily tested on knowledge and hard skills etc and not also on their transversal competences, there are no incentives for teachers to use new teaching methods and actually no option for them to use new methods, because they will spend all their time teaching to the test. Teachers need to believe in the potential of their students - not only regard academic achievements as the only right thing. Through entrepreneurship education and student-centered teaching methods, and the authentic tasks this entails, teachers will see a wider range of students' talents. They can thus award other intelligences and keep exuding a belief in students' potential. This has an impact on teaching style and assessment methods used. Teachers should be evaluated on their use of new, innovative teaching methods to encourage them to enhance their skills in that area.

Educators are challenged with designing effective learning opportunities for entrepreneurship students. Programmes for entrepreneurship students should emphasize individual activities over group activities, be relatively unstructured, and present problems that require a "novel solution under conditions of ambiguity and risk." Students must be prepared to thrive in the "unstructured and uncertain nature of entrepreneurial environments" (Ronstadt, 1990).

## VI. CONCLUSION

The review of related literature indicates that entrepreneurship education should be taught using the relevant pedagogies to achieve desired results. It was noted that the kind of education under consideration requires much exposure of students to more practical than theory. Entrepreneurial education plays a significant role in creating awareness on the roles entrepreneurs play in a national economy and the need to be job creators rather than job seekers. Entrepreneurship education if well implemented will prepare people, particularly youths, to be responsible, take risks, manage the business and learn from the outcomes by immersing them in real life learning experiences.

Teachers need to be trained and retrained in entrepreneurship education in order to implement its content. Teachers need to engage in entrepreneurship education by learning by doing. For example, student teachers can, as part of their education, take an internship at a school/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that delivers entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship cannot be a field that succumbs to stagnation. It must recognize and apply technologies in the educational setting. It is important for students to have skills in innovation in technology education and entrepreneurship to be ready to fit into the global market place on which today's economy depends on.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This paper therefore recommends that:

- ✓ entrepreneurship education at various universities and colleges should be tailored toward individual empowerment
- ✓ Enterprise education programs should provide social experience such as opportunities to exercise significant responsibilities, to start one's own business and to observe relevant role models.
- ✓ Teachers of the new business education curriculum should be trained and re-train to create enabling environment to cater for different needs of individual learners.

Entrepreneurial education should play a significant role in changing views of students towards self-employment and necessary skills for self-sustenance.

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