

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET): IMPERATIVE FOR JOB CREATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

¹ALFRED, SABASTINE BAMIDELE AND ²KAYOMA, FRANK, O

¹Vocational Education Department (Agricultural Unit), College of Education, Igueben, Edo State
08166828561; 0805778613

²Agricultural Education Department, College of Education, Warri, Delta State
08038304054

Abstract

Youths unemployment is among the social problems causing the human security challenges and National developmental set-back confronting Nigeria. The root cause of Youth unemployment is traced to lack of relevant entrepreneurial skills needed for self employment. This has resulted in the agitation for entrepreneurship education in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). TVET is a panacea to Youth unemployment challenges because it plays a significant role in the training of potential entrepreneurs. The focus of this paper therefore is to elucidate on how effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in TVET can enhance the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies for job creation and National development. In the course of doing this, the paper discussed the role of TVET in job creation and National development. It explained the concept of Entrepreneurship education. It also discussed the benefits of Entrepreneurship to TVET. Some major constraints to effective implementation of Entrepreneurship education in TVET were outlined which included poor funding, inadequate teaching facilities and students' lackadaisical attitude towards manual skill acquisition. The paper concluded that the acquisition of relevant occupational skills by youths through complementing academic education with practical entrepreneurship education will engender job creation and National development. Consequently, it proffered some ways of enhancing effective implementation of Entrepreneurship education in TVET.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship Education; Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET); Job creation; National development.*

Introduction

Nigeria is experiencing series of socio-economic challenges. The increasing level of youth's unemployment and its attendant rising wave of crime are among the most pressing social problems causing the growing level of human security challenges and National developmental set-back facing the country. Many of the violent crimes in Nigeria such as Armed robbery, kidnapping, political thuggery, militancy, pipeline vandalism and Boko Haram insurgency with far reaching implication for sustainable national development have been

ascribed to youth unemployment (Sijibomi & Miller, 2014). Acknowledging this fact, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) has recently stated that about 80 percent of Nigeria's youth are unemployed and 10 percent under-employed (Inyiagu, 2014). A youth is any individual between the ages of 18-35. The population of youths in Nigeria has grown from 22.5 million to over 30 million which comprises over 25 percent of the Nigerian population. Many of these youths lack skills to compete in the rather weak economy and tight labour market and therefore loiter around from dusk to

dawn while battling with poverty and unemployment (Alhassan & Abdullahi, 2013). A situation which does not augur well for Nigeria's socio-economic development. The root cause of youth unemployment in Nigeria can be traced to skill mismatch and lack of relevant skills among others. So, empowering youths with practical job skills is imperative in order to minimize the negative socio-political and economic consequences of joblessness (Ogbunaya & Udoudo, 2015), most especially as the Public and Private Sectors in Nigeria can no longer support the expansion of white collar jobs (Ogwu, Omeje & Nwokenna, 2014).

Nigeria is at a critical point where the educational system ought to work in order to reduce unemployment among youths. The system of education should be such that would imbibe in youths (students) the necessary vocational and technical skills to be self-reliant after graduation instead of relying on non-existent white collar jobs (Ogwu et al., 2014). At the second international Conference on Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) held in Korea in 1999, a mission for all nations under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to use TVE to address unemployment and other socio-economic challenges of the 21st century was set. The objectives of this mission include to:

- i. Eliminate unemployment by equipping the generality of out-of-school youths and Adults with saleable skills;
- ii. infuse into all, adequate vocational efficiency for effective living;
- iii. enhance and sustain national economic and technological development and
- iv. engender national economic prosperity (Sofoluwe, 2013).

Therefore, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is the most viable panacea to all manners of unemployment challenges in Nigeria (Ogbunaya & Udoudo,

2015). Several empirical studies (Raimi & Akhuenonkhan, 2015) have provided justification for TVET as an antidote to unemployment and underdevelopment. TVET is an important skill-oriented education with the prospect of stimulating employability and national development through ensuring sustainable job creation (Inyiagu, 2014). National development involves unending process of qualitative and quantitative transformation in the capacity of a state to organize the process of production and distribution of goods and services for the material benefit of the society in a manner that sustains improvement in the well being of its individual member in order to enhance their capacity to realize their full potentials (Sijibomi & Miller, 2014).

Due to the dwindling economic situation in Nigeria, Ugiagbe (2007) stated that the FGN has emphasized the need for every Nigerian citizen to strive for self-reliance through self employment which has resulted in the need for entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education comprises education efforts that are directed at providing learners with appropriate knowledge, attitude and skills needed for engagement or participation in entrepreneurial success (Tibi, 2012). Entrepreneurship could play a very significant role in employment generation in a country. Through effective entrepreneurship education, Youths can acquire entrepreneurial skills for survival in a poor economy. Entrepreneurial skills according to Onu (2011) are essential in tackling unemployment and poverty challenges because entrepreneurship enhances self-reliance and self-employment. Therefore TVET has a very significant role to play in training potential entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial skills are very useful in TVET programmes (Ugiagbe, 2007).

Although entrepreneurship education has been introduced into TVET institutions and other tertiary education institutions to inspire students to acquire employability skills and to appreciate the dignity to labour (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2004), it appears that the level of entrepreneurial skills acquisition is very low due to the ineffectiveness of entrepreneurship education in these institutions (Onu, 2011). Sijibomi and Miller (2014) pointed out that the course content of most tertiary education in Nigeria lack entrepreneurial content that would enable graduates (youths) become self employed and employer of labour rather than being job seekers. Against this backdrop, the concern of this paper is to elucidate on how to effectively implement entrepreneurship education in TVET institutions. This is predicated on the premise that effective implementation of entrepreneurship education will leverage in the youths the qualities and skills they would need to become self-reliant and self-employed in today's global market.

The Role of TVET in Job Creation and National development

The Japan international cooperation Agency (JICA, 2001) conceptualized TVET as a comprehensive term used to cover institution-based formal and non-formal education and training programmes in the technical and vocational institutes. UNESCO (2009) viewed TVET as learning aimed at developing skills in the practice of certain trades as well as preparing students for entry into the labour market. Sofoluwe (2013) stated that TVET is a concept reserved for the education of technologist and technician cadre of manpower in all occupational fields which is offered by the Polytechnic, Monotechnic and Colleges of Education. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), the goals of TVET are to:

- a. Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- b. Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development and
- c. Give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically.

TVET has been accepted globally as a strong catalyst for National development. TVET prepares people for the world of work and through it people acquire skills, knowledge, attitudes and values for them to choose occupation which will enable them to participate in the production of quality goods and services (Ogbunaya & Udoudo, 2015) It is a potent means of fast-tracking citizens' capacities and economic growth, as well as an indispensable programme that can produce demand –driven manpower for sustainable national development. Its workplace preparatory characteristic is a driving force in accepting it as a tool for national development (Akhuemonkhan & Raimi,2013;Chukwuendo & Omofonmwan, 2015).

Many countries worldwide are renewing efforts to promote TVET and are increasing the emphasis placed on improving the capacity of TVET due to its important role in equipping individuals with relevant skills and knowledge for the Job market and to engage them in income- generating livelihoods (Alhassan & Abdullahi, 2013; Inyiagu, 2014). The world giant economies such as Canada, China, Australia, Germany, Singapore and Japan have cuddled TVET and reaped its benefit to become global leaders in all aspects of enterprise in a very short space of time (Inyiagu, 2014). TVET has deep potential of redirecting the energy and zeal of the unemployed and unskilled youths to

practical hands- on- skills for self employment and self- reliance (Raimi & Akhuemonkhan, 2014).

TVET has a critical role to play in training potential entrepreneurs (Ugiagbe, 2007). It increases productivity, empower individual to become self-reliant and stimulates entrepreneurship (Alhassan & Abdullahi, 2013). TVET can provide youths the skills to become productive entrepreneurs and enable them to establish small business on their own (Okoro, 2012; Alhassan & Abdullahi ,2013).

The Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

Before conceptualizing Entrepreneurship education, it is necessary to first of all define the terms: Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship, because it will assist in understanding the concept of Entrepreneurship education. Tibi (2012) defined an entrepreneur as someone who sets up a business or industry where he invests in the future of the enterprise using the factors of production including land, labour and capital. Ugiagbe and Nwaogwugwu (2008) identified certain unique roles of entrepreneurs to include: perception and identification of business opportunities; selection of the legal form; location and site of the enterprise; identification, selection and acquisition of key resources; innovation and risk bearing. Entrepreneurship is defined by Ugiagbe (2007) as the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coping with the management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth. It is through entrepreneurship that the entrepreneur takes risks, becomes gainfully employed, gives opportunities to other people, becomes self- reliant, earns income and contributes to national development by improving his immediate community (Tibi, 2012).

On the other hand, Entrepreneurship education is a carefully planned educational process leading to the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies and skills for efficient and effective living (Abdulkarim, 2012). Entrepreneurial skills are those skills that enable someone to form and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities at profit level. They are classified in to three main groups namely: personal, interpersonal and business skills. Personal skills are problem solving skill; goals getting skill; planning skill; team building skill and estimating skill etc. Interpersonal skills are communication skill; Skill to hold anger and assertive skill etc., while business skills include developing business plan; accounting skill and marketing skill among others.

Entrepreneurial competencies are the key characteristics that should be possessed by a successful entrepreneur in order to perform entrepreneurial functions effectively. Competency is the ability of an individual to perform a Job properly (Abdulkarim, 2012). Abdulkarim (2012) outlined entrepreneurial competencies as: initiative; persistence; concern for high quality of work; efficiency orientation; problem solving; assertiveness; use of influence strategies; sees and acts on opportunities; information seeking; commitment to work contract; systematic planning; self confidence and persuasion. All these skills and competencies culminate in successful operation of a business venture by an entrepreneur in any occupational area of TVET (Ugiagbe, 2007). The objectives of entrepreneurship education was highlighted by Paul (2005) as cited in Tibi (2012) to include : (i) offer functional education to youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant; (ii) provide youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities; (iii) serve as a catalyst

for economic growth and development; (iv) reduce the high rate of poverty; (v) reduce rural-urban migration of youths; (vi) provide youth graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on and (vii) create a smooth transition from traditional to modern industrial economy.

The Benefits of Entrepreneurship Education to TVET

In order to create employment and sustain the growth of the economy, Okoro (2012) suggested that emphasis should be shifted to the development of relevant entrepreneurial skills/competencies in the youngsters. This will enable the youngsters to exploit ideas and create enterprises (small or big) not only for personal gain but also for social and development gains (Onu, 2011). Ugiagbe (2007) pointed out that entrepreneurial skill can provide creativity and management strengths which when combined with technical skills and competence could produce goods and services.

Entrepreneurial skills are very useful to the beneficiaries of TVET. They stimulate the beneficiaries to be self confident; bold; courageous; honest and display some responsibility roles which enable them to establish and sustain their business and become self-employed and even employ others (Ugiagbe, 2007). Teaching entrepreneurship in TVE courses will equip TVE graduates with both technical and entrepreneurial skills (FRN, 2013). Entrepreneurship education can be taught theoretically, practically or both. The most commonly used methods for teaching entrepreneurship education are lecture; computer simulation and business games; Students Company; project work/group work and work placement (Abdulkarim, 2012), F.O. Several other benefits that can be derived from the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in TVET

programmes include : (i) Reduction in crime rate and other social vices as more youths would be engaged in self employment; (ii) reduction in unemployment rate; (iii) creation of more business venture which would in turn bring about increase in economic growth of the nation and development of personal qualities of youth which are not only helpful in entrepreneurship but also in other aspect of life (Abdulkarim, 2012). Ogwu, Omeje and Nwokenna, (2014) were of the opinion that entrepreneurship education is what the Nigerian education of the 21st century should aspire for just as it is in countries like Japan and Asian Tigers because of its capacity to train entrepreneurs who can create jobs. Also entrepreneurship education will equip the youths with the required skills and competencies to explore career opportunities in the following vocational/Entrepreneurial area: (i) In Vocational Agricultural Education- sheep/cow/goat rearing; piggery; Beekeeping; poultry; fish farming; Arable crops production; plantation crops farming; food processing; fumigation; ornamental gardening/landscaping; Horticulture etc. (ii) In Vocational Business Education- computer operator; stenographer; file clerk; administrative/personnel secretary; Retailer; wholesaler; cashier; store keeping; Advertising; Auctioneering etc (iii) In Vocational Home Economic Education – Tailoring; Weaving; Tie and Dyeing; Cookery; Soft Drink/Ice cream production; Pastry production; Soap/Cream/Detergent making etc and (iv) In Vocational Technical Education- Furniture making; Upholstery; Welding and Fabrication; Aluminum fittings and installation; Auto Electrical work; Auto Mechanical work; Vulcanizing; Auto body repairs and Spray painting etc (Abdulkarim 2012).

Constraints to effective implementation of Entrepreneurship Education in TVET Institutions

In spite of the benefits of entrepreneurship education as the provider of necessary tools for

self-employment and job creation, its effective implementation has been constrained by many factors, a few of which are highlighted here. A major problem of effective implementation of entrepreneurship education is poor funding. There is scarcity of capital to establish workshops, procure farming inputs and other skill developing equipment, resulting in outright shortage of training equipment and facilities. (Adara, 1991). TVET programmes require expensive equipment and machines for the recipients to benefit maximally and acquire the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes. But government over the years has not provided enough funds to prosecute the programmes effectively (Ugiagbe, 2007).

Another problem of entrepreneurship education in TVET is inadequate teaching facilities. The workshops for TVET at tertiary education level do not have the modern skill building equipment, tools and machines (Okoye & Okwelle, 2013). This is coupled with the fact that nowadays, there is an enormous increase in students' enrollment into TVET programmes without a corresponding increase in the provision of equipment/ facilities to cater for the skills need of the students (Ugiagbe, 2007).

Students' lackadaisical attitude towards manual skills acquisition is another major constraint. According to Tibi (2012), many present day youths attend Colleges or Universities not to learn skills for the world of work but to acquire the certificate which they tag "meal ticket" to the oil-greased National cake. This makes it near impossible for proper acquisition of entrepreneurial skills.

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Notable among the challenges posed to entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is that the course contents for most tertiary institutions lack entrepreneurial content that would enable graduate (youths) become self-employed or employer of labour rather than being job

seekers (sijibomi & Miller, 2014). Tibi (2012) explained that vocational subjects in schools are being taught without vocational intent just to enable students to pass written examination without actual evaluation of the ability of learners to perform manipulative tasks. The result of which the students are not properly groomed to acquire the much needed skills that will make them fit into the society as employers of others or as self-employed graduates (Raimi & Akhuemonkhan, 2015). In a survey of the adequacy of Agriculture Curriculum for equipping students of Colleges of Agriculture with Entrepreneurship skills to meet Unemployment challenges in Nigeria, Onu (2011) found that the Curriculum of the Colleges of Agriculture is not adequate for the students to develop resource management skills, marketing skills and time management skills needed to equip them with appropriate life skills for self employment and self-reliance.

Conclusion

All over the world, especially among developing nations, much emphasis is now being placed on making education more responsive to the needs of the people by equipping the learners with productive skills such as entrepreneurial skills. TVET is a skill development programme which is highly required for the training of the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce that Nigeria needs to create jobs and develop its economy.

Therefore, a well structured TVET system which involves complementing academic education with entrepreneurship education will enhance productivity, competitiveness and promote entrepreneurial activity. This will leverage in-school youths the qualities and skills they need to become relevant in today's global market. The relevant occupational skills which can be acquired through this programme will engender job creation, self-employment and in turn drastically reduce the rate of crime,

kidnapping, terrorism and other social vices constituting security threats to human lives and national development.

Recommendations

The following recommended strategic options can be used in addressing the challenges to effective implementation of Entrepreneurship education in TVET institutions in Nigeria:

1. There is need for the establishment of Entrepreneurship Development Centres which will serve as liaison agency between Government and TVET institutions. This will pave way for adequate funding and effective implementation of entrepreneurship education.
2. Student Company (where students produce and sell goods) needs to be built and equipped in various TVET institutions. The student company tasks can be assessed using the Process and Product assessment approach.
3. Competency-based approach needs to be adopted in imparting entrepreneurship skills/competencies on TVE students using multi-teaching methods. This will serve as a departure from the traditional course-based approach.
4. The existing students Industrial Works Experience Scheme (SIWES) needs to be restructured and re-organized through school-industry collaboration for effective capacity building of prospective TVET graduates.
5. There is the need for capacity building of qualified TVE teachers on Entrepreneurship education through *Alfred A. O. Ogunyemi & Kayode, F.O.*
6. There is the need to develop in the students of TVE, positive attitude towards entrepreneurship through the use of successful entrepreneurs as guest lecturers.

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