



ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education

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ABSTRACT

The present system of education is unable to create employment opportunities for the youth. Educating the youth is necessary to make changes in the knowledge, skills, values, behavior and lifestyles required to achieve sustainability and stability in their lives. Hence it must be a high priority to reorient the educational system and curricula of our country towards these needs. There is a need to develop a specific entrepreneurial culture among the young generation. Most of these considerations are absent in the present educational scenario. To empower the youth, it is necessary to know the barriers and the other factors that affect their careers. It is also necessary to create awareness among the youth to meet the challenges of the open market policy. Self-employment that keeps pace with the times is necessary for socio-economic development. The reorientation of formal education system towards sustainable development, at all levels, including higher education for the youth that gives due importance to both the content and the outcomes of sustainable development is essential. Entrepreneurship education can generate self-employment among the trained youths and change their lives. Every youth must acquire the the basic skills to start and run an enterprise. Vocational, technological and entrepreneurial skills are required for self-sustainable enterprise.

KEYWORDS

Introduction

Sustainable development is an organizing principle for human life on a finite planet. It posits a desirable future state for human societies in which living conditions and resource-use meet human needs without undermining the sustainability of natural systems and the environment, so that future generations may also have their needs met. Sustainable development is a must for every developing economy. The term 'sustainable development' rose to significance after it was used by the Brundtland Commission in its 1987 report, the commission coined what has become the most often-quoted definition of sustainable development: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"(Smith,1998). To achieve sustainable development, nations must develop infrastructurally as well as, educationally. Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education is therefore a panacea to guarantee first amiable development. The need for entrepreneurship education started emerging in the mid 1980s. This is because before this period, unemployment and poverty were not a national concern as it is currently. It has been observed that tertiary education has not been able to include philosophy of self-reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment that will promote pride in primitive work and self-discipline, encouraging people to take part actively and freely in discussions and decisions affecting their general welfare, promoting new sets of attitudes and culture for the attainment of future challenges. Nwangwu (2007) opined that the failure of tertiary education to inculcate the above philosophy in students has led to wastages in terms of both human and natural resources. This is because the youth and graduate from tertiary institutions are not equipped with the skills needed to exploit the natural resources. All these factors have rendered the pursuit of self-reliance among our graduates difficult to retain. Ayodele (2006) identified inadequate capital to be one of the principal factors hindering entrepreneurship in the country. Other problems identified by Ayodele include irrelevant education that is bookish, theoretic and "white-collar job" oriented., another problem is the fear of failure by the people to take risk on entrepreneurial activities, while an unstable and conducive political environment drives away investors that are planning to embark on entrepreneurial activities. In addition, government programmes are not designed to promote entrepreneurship, looking at the country – the level of infrastructural development provided by the government is still very low and this has been affecting to a very high extent the level of productivity and entrepreneurial activities in the country. The high rate of many business enterprises winding up prematurely consequent upon the employable and unemployable youths and adults idle away. It is against this backdrop that this paper sets to look into entrepreneurship education as imperative for sustainable development in India

The 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. Another view of entrepreneurship education is the 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 coupling these with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and create wealth. In the same vein, Nwangwu (2007) opined that entrepreneurship 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. A new educational approach to sustainable development is emerging in the entrepreneurship literature. Usually business schools encourage a 'profit-first mentality', critics question the ability to deliver sustainability-related education programmes. The relationship between nascent entrepreneurs' intentions to exploit learning and the extent of a profit-first mentality was examined in a study by Fernando, L.(2012). The results indicated a strong relationship between perception of learning benefits and intentions of nascent entrepreneurs to exploit those benefits. Although a profit-first mentality was negatively related to perceptions of benefit, learning itself was not affected. The results had implications for research, policy and the practice of entrepreneurship education. Emeraton (2008) described entrepreneurship education as that which deals with those attitudes and skills that are necessary for the individual to respond to its environment in the process of conserving, starting and managing a business enterprise. Some basic attitudes and skills are essential for an individual to respond positively to his environment and explore its potentials. This implies that entrepreneurship education prepares the individual to be properly equipped to acquire saleable skills which could be used to manage his own business or that of other persons (Oduwaiye, 2005). Entrepreneurship education is therefore that education which assists students to develop positive attitudes, innovation and skills for self reliance, rather than depending on the government for employment. This will in-turn produce graduates with self confidence and capacities for independent thought to discover new information leading to economic development.

Who is an Entrepreneur?

Entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur. The word entrepreneur which is a French word means "one who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations in economic goods". 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 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. In today's world, anybody, industry or business leader with innovative and creative business abilities is described as an entrepreneur or someone who engages in entrepreneurship.

Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education

The objectives of entrepreneurship education are:

- To offer functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant.
- Provide the youth 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.
- Offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management, to make certain bearing feasible.
- To reduce high level of poverty.
- Create employment generation.
- Reduction in rural-urban migration.
- 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 and adults which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on.

Entrepreneurship Education and Sustainable Development

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 graduates 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 universities to stimulate economic growth through a deliberate agenda of production of entrepreneurial graduates. In many countries, including US, high schools offer entrepreneurship education for life-long trade. And many of them offer courses that enable students to meet their general academic requirement while learning a trade. However, because of the recent challenges in world economy many schools have shifted emphasis to training in computers, information technology, and related fields. Public schools work closely with willing industries to establish curriculum and programmes to meet their skill demand. While career education has continued to thrive in many societies, it is unfortunately an area that is neglected (Ajao, 2004). The neglect of entrepreneurship education is rubbing nation of the contribution their graduate would make on the economy; the graduates could establish. It is, therefore socially injurious to neglect this important area. Given these facts, it is a disservice to the society to neglect entrepreneurship education. Hence there is a need for effective strategies for entrepreneurship education.

Strategies for Effective Entrepreneurship Education

In order to achieve viable entrepreneurship education that will enhance sustainable development the following strategies 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 graduates some work skills and experience.
- Pool local public and private funds to create a small venture capital fund.
- School-based enterprises where students identify potential business, plan, create and operate small business using the school as mini-incubators.
- Provide small business schools where interested students and community members can participate.
- Develop entrepreneur internship programmes matching students

with locally successful entrepreneurs with clearly established education programmes.

- Establishing an enterprise college aimed at fostering the specific skill sets required for entrepreneurship to serve as skill-acquisition centers for the youths.
- Creating an economic friendly political environment.
- Improving on the government taxation on small scale businesses.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship education promotes sustainable development. The problems facing the country are many ranging from high rate of poverty, youth and graduate unemployment, overdependence on foreign goods and technology to low economic growth and development; among others. Entrepreneurship education will equip the students with the skills to be self-reliant. Government and other education stakeholders should make sure that educational programme at all levels of education are made relevant to provide the youths and graduates the needed entrepreneurial skills. It is also recommended that the government should give adequate attention to entrepreneurial development in the country through the provision of good economic environment.

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