

Impact of Entrepreneurship Education as a Tool for Self Sustenance at Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, in Ogun State of Nigeria

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Abstract: Entrepreneurship training is necessary in order to develop expertise as an entrepreneur, identify business opportunities and exploit them. The study therefore, examined the implication of entrepreneurship education in a named university in Ogun State as a tool for self sustenance and poverty alleviation. Questionnaire was used to collect data, while the data collected was analyzed using simple percentage. It was however, observed that entrepreneurship education offers a solution by preparing candidates particularly youths offered admission into university to be responsible, enterprising individuals, who can become entrepreneurs and ready to take risks and learn from the outcome. The researchers recommended that entrepreneurship education is expected to start from any form of post secondary institution, to enable the young ones understand the economics of life, survival, contribution to socio-economic development of their immediate environment and beyond. It also recommended that government should create a friendly or an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and consumer goods to boost the economy.

Key words: Entrepreneurship education, Tai Solarin University, self sustenance, poverty alleviation, training

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is about starting a new business based on a recognized business opportunity as well as operating and maintaining that business. The belief of some people is that entrepreneurship does not need to be taught and therefore, an entrepreneur is born to be so. It should however be noted that for one to be a successful entrepreneur, he/she needs to learn the skills (Griffin and Hammis, 2001).

Entrepreneur training is designed to teach the skills and knowledge that is needed to know before embarking on a new business venture. This would enhance necessary identification and avoidance of many pitfalls awaiting the less well trained and vigilant contemporaries. The training may initially be perceived as a cost in terms of time and money but it would eventually be appreciated.

Ogundele (2007) viewed entrepreneurship as a multidimensional phenomenon. It was found that the processes of emergence, behaviour and performance of indigenous entrepreneurs were separately and in combinations affected not by a single but multiple factors, in ranging degrees. These factors included economic, socio-cultural, ecological, managerial, educational developmental, experiential, technological, structural,

ethical and innovative issues. He concluded that any policy designed to change entrepreneurship scenario in Nigeria will require multiple and simultaneous approaches in the development of necessary changes in the behaviour of indigenous entrepreneurs.

Akeredolu-Ale (1975) examined the origin and performance of indigenous entrepreneurs. He identified 2 broad categories of factors that affected entrepreneurs. These were the environmental factors and the personal level factors. His conclusion was that the problems that were confronting the indigenous entrepreneurs in Nigeria could only be partly explained by the economic factors.

Nigeria is not left out as part of the changing world economy, which yearns for a more articulate policy on the small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Most world economies are characterized by a large number of Micro/cottage, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) mainly in the informal sector. In many economies, they account for a large segment of productive population. Nigeria falls within this later category of economies. The MSMEs in Nigeria account for over 95% of non-oil productive activities outside agriculture, which positions them as potentially strong agents of economic growth and sustainable development (Ubom, 2006).

The federal government of Nigeria in her effort to ensure that her citizens are self-employed, established the National Directorate of Employment in 1986. It is the belief of government that this agency will reduce unemployment, which is a bane of our society. The agency's operations include re-activation of public works, promotion of direct labour, self-employment, organisation of artisans into cooperative and encouragement of culture of maintenance and repairs (Onifade, 2001).

Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun via Ijebu-Ode, is cited along the Eastern side of Ogun State. Entrepreneurship is regarded as a natural fit for Business education department because it integrates the functional areas of business, accounting, finance, marketing, management, the legal and economic potentialities in which a new venture operates.

It is therefore, important for these categories of students to think like an entrepreneur since they are expected to start their own businesses after graduation or work closely with entrepreneurs (Griffin and Hammis, 2003).

Entrepreneurship also has a general education as well as a professional education component in Tai Solarin University of Education, which is meant for all categories of students in the university. Thus, the university integrates entrepreneurship education for all students irrespective of initial course admission and expect them to start their own businesses after graduation either on vocational or professional level to alleviate poverty and join in the scheme of improving their social-economy environment in particularly and beyond for self economic emancipation. They are also fit to work closely with Entrepreneurs with Small and Medium Enterprises (SME).

Entrepreneurship education means many different things to educators from primary schools to the university level. At each level of education, it is reasonable to expect different outcomes as students mature and build on previous knowledge. The overall purpose remains to develop expertise as an entrepreneur.

This has motivated the authors to look at the impact of the entrepreneurship education as a tool for becoming

a successful entrepreneur with particular reference to Tai Solarin University of Education. Though, the university is about two-and-half years old but the set objectives, goals, mission and vision of the university are already manifesting amongst the students and the improvement of social-economic activities within the university community. This necessitated the study to examine the level of impact of Entrepreneurship education to its students and reflect it to self sustenance and poverty alleviation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researchers adopted the use of primary data collection to investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurs. Questionnaires were administered on the students of Tai Solarin University of Education, who are being given entrepreneurship training. The questionnaires were distributed on a purposive sampling basis hence, the category of students, who have decided to experiment the entrepreneurship training given to them in school were administered in order to know if the training is actually necessary or need to be amended or restructured. The categories of students administered are involved in one type of business or the other in addition to their current educational pursuit.

The current population of the students in the institution for degree program is about 5,000, out of which about 200 of them are already involved in their own businesses in addition to their education. This constitutes 4% of the admitted students and was administered for the purpose of this study.

Data analysis: The data collected from the field was analyzed using simple percentage as well as frequency distribution Table 1.

The field survey revealed the following as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurs

Table no.	Details	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Undecided (%)
1.1	Entrepreneurship education is only for students in business education	25 (12.5)	170 (85)	5 (2.5)
1.2	Entrepreneurship education is very relevant in business decisions	180 (90)	16 (8)	4 (2)
1.3	Entrepreneurship training is very important for the survival of any business	186 (93.5)	10 (5)	3 (1.5)
1.4	It is important to have the skills in order to be a successful entrepreneur	183 (91.5)	15 (7.5)	2 (1)
1.5	An entrepreneur is expected to be able to identify business opportunities	185 (92.5)	13 (6.5)	02
1.6	Entrepreneurship training is designed to teach skill and knowledge that is needed before embarking on a new business venture	191 (95.5)	9 (4.5)	--
1.7	An entrepreneur should be able to identify business opportunities and exploit it.	186 (93)	11 (5.5)	3 (1.5)
1.8	An entrepreneur should not be regarded as born but made	181 (90.5)	10 (5)	9 (4.5)
1.9	The entrepreneurship training received would assist in becoming self-employed in future	190 (95)	9 (4.5)	1 (0.5)
1.1	Entrepreneurship has a general education as well as professional education	195 (97.5)	5 (2.5)	---

Source: Authors' Field Survey DEC (2007)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the Table 1, it was confirmed that entrepreneurship education is not only designed for business education students but to all categories of students to enable them cope with the challenges of self-employment and be able to exploit business opportunities. About 85% of the respondents agreed to the fact that the training should be meant for every student in the higher institution of learning. This agreed with the Federal Government position to agree with the National University Commission (NUC), which directed that all universities should give their students entrepreneurship education and such that the course must be made compulsory.

The Table 1 shows that in taking business decisions, it is important to have entrepreneurship training. This would enable the entrepreneur to take the right decision at the right time and right place. This was attested to by 90% of the respondents.

The respondents also agreed to the fact that for any entrepreneur to succeed, it is important to have the training as well as skills and knowledge (Table 1). These assertions are attestation to the economic reforms adopted by the Government so that graduates of universities would not only be self sustenance but alleviate poverty and contribute to the social-economic growth of their environment and beyond.

An entrepreneur is also expected to identify business opportunities as well as taking the risk of exploiting the business opportunities (Table 1) agreed to this. All the students that were administered are into various businesses, which includes, selling of handsets, business centers, sale of shoes, handbags and jewelries, refuse bin collection, canteen operation and so many others. This has also, brought about development in the community in which they operate.

It is also important to note that there is nothing like a born entrepreneur. Any entrepreneur that wants to be successful has to pass through training in order to be able to make the difference between trained and untrained entrepreneur (Table 1). The administered students confirmed that the training given to them at the institution has helped them in taking the right decisions as regards their businesses. The training has positive impact on their various businesses as the entrepreneurs are able to know when to move forward, backward or stay action.

An entrepreneur, who has passed through, the entrepreneurship training must have received both the general education as well as professional education to enhance broad knowledge and experience of the job.

CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship is an employment strategy that can lead to economic self-sufficiency for people. It makes people to create and manage businesses in which they function as the employer or boss rather than merely being and employee.

Some of the teenagers interviewed were already practicing entrepreneurship while, some wanted to become entrepreneurs even though, they knew that it would not be an easy path.

Entrepreneurship education offers a solution by preparing people, particularly youth to be responsible, enterprising individuals, who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by immersing them in real life learning experiences where they can take risks, manage the results and learn from the outcomes.

Work experience for youth in higher institution, both paid and unpaid, help them acquire jobs at higher wages after they graduate.

By launching a small business or school-based enterprise, youth can lead and experience different roles. In addition, they learn to communicate their ideas and influence self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills. Moreover, they learn how to become team players and to engage in problem solving and critical thinking. It is also not out of place to note that the administered students are between the ages of 18 and 24 years, they are also from the less privileged family. This has made them to the self sustenance as well as relieving their parents from unnecessary financial burden.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An entrepreneur is expected to have the ability to set goals and to manage time, money and other resources. These are skills, which are useful in any workplace.

The ages of the young people, their interests and abilities, the time they have to devote to entrepreneurial activities, the available fiscal and human resources, the expertise of staff and what kind of training and support staff might need to be considered.

Entrepreneurship education is expected to be given to young people to enable them understand the economics of life. This should begin at the elementary school level, teaching children how to impact the world around them as individuals, workers and consumers.

This program should continue through the secondary and all higher institutions of learning, in order to prepare students for future economic and workforce issues.

Finally, the government should create a friendly or an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and consumer goods in order to boost the economy.

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