



Entrepreneurial Education at the Tertiary Level in Nigeria- Imperative for Poverty Reduction and Economic Development

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Abstract

Globally, entrepreneurship is seen not only as the anti-dote to the astronomically growing socio-economic problem of unemployment, but particularly as the engine of economic growth and stability and by extension, the prosperity of nations. Accordingly, concerted efforts, backed by deliberate State policies and strategies, are normally geared towards its promotion and sustenance. The starting point has been recognized to be wholistic and integrated education and enlightening programmes/projects, such as the National Consortium on Entrepreneurship Education in the USA. Nigeria has not been left out of this global attention, as the National Universities' Commission, NUC, recently directed every tertiary institution in the Country to make entrepreneurial education an integral part of its curriculum. This paper examines, among others, the necessity, scope and challenges of this all-important programme at the most critical level of education. A wholistic approach has been adopted, including a survey of relevant stakeholders, notably students at the tertiary level of education in Nigeria, with thought-provoking positions/findings upon which appropriate strategies and approaches have been contributed for not only the success of the programme, but most important for the much-desired economic transformation revolutionized by entrepreneurial spirit.

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1. Introduction

Can entrepreneurship be learned or rather, taught, considering that it is a concept and practice that is associated largely with an individual's innate make-up – personality, as posited by quite a number of authorities? This is a question that was also posed by Karen Wilson of the European Foundation for Entrepreneurship Research [28], who answered it both in the positive and negative. Our poser is premised both on some of the theories of entrepreneurship that consider it being more successfully practiced by personalities that meet the defining characteristics of 'entrepreneurs' [20] and the common pattern in Nigeria where government policy directives hardly get implemented either appropriately or continuously to achieve the desired objectives.

However, unlike Wilson, our poser is answered wholly in the positive, considering the overwhelming mass of evidence from literature on not only the desirability but particularly the degree of correlation between education and entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial spirit and especially the necessity of entrenching or even initiating it in the light of the current realities, both locally and globally, of unprecedented levels of unemployment and poverty.

The European Commission [14] reports that the results of a study it commissioned to assess the impact of entrepreneurship education on four dimensions – 1) the acquisition of entrepreneurial competence; 2) intentions towards entrepreneurship; 3) employability; and 4) impact on the society and on the economy – show that entrepreneurship education makes a difference; those who went through entrepreneurial programmes and activities display more entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions, get a job earlier after finishing their studies, can innovate more even as employees in a firm, and start more companies. Similarly, Abubakar [2] reports of findings from the works of Revans, who developed theories of action learning and reviewed findings of previous studies centred on such relevant questions as the degree of relationship between a persons' choice of entrepreneurship and their general level of education; and the link between individuals' general level of education and their entrepreneurship performance, with the conclusions that: 1. In both developing and industrialized countries, there is evidence to support a positive and significant relationship between education and entrepreneurial performance, whether measured as growth or profit or earning power of the entrepreneur. 2. Evidence linking general education to decision to take up entrepreneurship is ambiguous and cannot be classified as either positive or negative. The second conclusion suggests, therefore, that a specific form of education –entrepreneurial education –must be the determining factor. Our second premise is also supported by the need to promote the practice of entrepreneurship out of necessity more than choice, as posited by several commentators, experts and authorities, either at Seminars, Workshops, Conferences, Policy formulation fora or Books [2,15,14,5,24] in line with the desire to create an army of self-reliant youths in the bid to de-emphasize paid employment which is fast becoming more of a dream than reality for a greater proportion of graduates.

Thus, the best way to ensure that this goal is achieved is through a systematic, wholistic approach to entrench the culture of entrepreneurship into one of the most important segments of the citizenry – the youths, at all levels of the enculturation process: education. For us, we consider the tertiary level as a critical one which is

most likely to produce the desired results more than the other levels. This is the thrust of this paper, which is presented as outlined in the abstract, but is preceded by an understanding of the term “Entrepreneurship or Entrepreneurial Education” and a brief background to the policy directive.

2. Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship has been defined in several ways by several authorities from several points of view, based largely on their understanding of the defining characteristics of ‘entrepreneur’. Arunma [25] aptly captured thus: “The concept of entrepreneurship is nebulous and many academic disciplines have contributed their perspectives on the concept, including Psychology, Sociology, Economics and Management...An Economist views entrepreneurship in the context of the combination of resources, labour, materials and other assets such that their value is greater together than individually. From a Management perspective, entrepreneurship would entail the introduction of change, an innovation or a new order. To the Psychologist, an entrepreneur would be analysed as a person typically driven by the need to obtain a specific goal, to experiment, to accomplish, or perhaps to escape the authority of others, while from the social perspective, an entrepreneur is a person who uses business skills and knowledge to create enterprises that accomplish social purposes in addition to being commercially viable”. In spite of this lack of consensus on the definition, both within and across disciplines, most definitions nonetheless highlight qualities such as competitiveness, creativity, the ability to grow business, and innovation [25]. This is evident from a few of many other definitions. The authors in [20] stated that being entrepreneurial is having the ability to find and evaluate opportunities, gather the necessary resources and implement actions to take advantage of these opportunities, maintaining that entrepreneurs are leaders, take calculated risks and enjoy challenges that involve moderate risks, strongly believe in themselves and their ability to make good decisions. Wilson,[28] referring to other works, defined entrepreneurship as,“the pursuit of opportunities beyond the resources you currently control”, while The European Commission defined it as individual ability to turn ideas into action, and includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. For us in this paper, entrepreneurship is taken to mean the willingness and ability to take the risk to create and exploit opportunities, through innovation, by setting up and managing economic ventures with the determination to achieve set objectives.

The Encarta Dictionary of Current English provides many definitions of Education, but that relevant to this paper is “the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at a school or similar institution”. This entails that education is the process by which knowledge is transferred from one party (teacher) to another (student) in a formal setting, mostly a school or other organizations with similar setting. Globally, this scenario has been in use as the most, if not the only, appropriate means of building up desirable values, ideas, processes, etc, especially in the young members of the society in order for them to not only conform to what has been accepted or prescribed as the norms of the society necessary for life, but particularly to be useful to themselves in the society as they mature. This is known as the process of socialization.

Again, globally, this process has been recognized and broken into levels, based largely on the age and related characteristics of the young, though slightly varying from one society to another, but with common fundamentals, almost universally 3 – the basic (Primary), Intermediate (Secondary or High School) and the

Tertiary (Higher Education –University, Polytechnic, College (of Education), etc). For this paper, it is the last level that is being covered.

Thus, from the foregoing, we have adopted a working definition of entrepreneurship education at the tertiary level of education as the formal process by which students at the University, Polytechnic, Monotechnic, College of Education or institution of similar status or other institutions acquire the comprehensive knowledge of entrepreneurship. The “other institutions” contained in this definition include those public or private organizations that are not set up in the mould of a school or educational institution, but can offer other learning experiences, especially practical exposure, in conjunction with or to supplement the educational institutional setting. This definition finds support in those given by international agencies or their arms. While the European Commission [15],[14] sees entrepreneurship education as a process of fostering or developing entrepreneurial capacities and mind-sets of young people through education and learning, Wilson [28] described it as providing a mix of experiential learning, skill building and, most importantly, mindset shift. According to UNESCO, [12] entrepreneurship education is made up of all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. It goes beyond business creation. It is about increasing students’ ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes.

2.1 Entrepreneurship Education Policy – Background.

A nation’s education policy details or provides broad guidelines on the “what”, “why” and “how” of education at every level to ensure not only uniformity but adherence to standards, both local and international, especially in view of the fact that the world is now a global village. Nigeria has had volumes of educational policies formulated dating back to colonial rule, with periodic reviews. These reviews, however, did not result to many significant changes being effected especially in the fundamentals of the policy thrusts, particularly in the nature of the skills that were to be acquired in the process. Most policy thrusts for tertiary or higher education maintained the acquisition of competencies or skills, largely from academic subjects, for medium–high level manpower in the government and large industrial organizations as the points of focus [2,5,24]. There was scant consideration for technical and entrepreneurship skills, until the 1981 Policy, reiterated in the 2004 version, which made provision for technical education (Vocational, Technical Colleges, Polytechnics, etc) for acquisition of technical skills for craftsmen, technicians and other skilled manpower, and Science and Technology for Universities, with no provision for self-reliance but for the managerial and leadership needs of large organizations [5]. Even though the technical and vocational education was meant to make the beneficiaries self-reliant and enterprising, there were no vehicles for providing the needed orientation towards that, with the result that the skills acquired were still for employers.

This was the scenario, until 2006 when necessity knocked on the door of the Nation’s education policy makers who had apparently been oblivious of what had become established in the Western World, especially North America for more than 50 years [28] – entrenching entrepreneurship education in the Nation’s higher education curricula. This necessity was nothing other than the monster called unemployment, as revealed by the Minister of Education, through the NUC Director of Higher Education thus: “the best way we can deal with the problem

of unemployment is by ensuring that students in institutions of higher learning undertake compulsory entrepreneurship study...irrespective of course of study”.

Thus, the principal reason behind the shift in the Nation’s Education Policy is inculcating the spirit of self-reliance, thereby reducing unemployment and its multiple attendant consequences, notably poverty, armed robbery, violence and other social crimes. This strategy was a departure from previous attempts at solving the problem, largely through the creation of programmes among which were the National Directorate of Employment in 1986, Directorate of Integrated Rural Development, DIFRI, with emphasis on out-of school unemployed youths, principally aimed at providing the beneficiaries with employable skills [5].

The tertiary level of education is undoubtedly the most appropriate, considering that, among others:

- a. The students at this level are more mature than earlier levels, hence greater prospects for making more meaning out of the principles and practices of entrepreneurship.
- b. It is the final level of formal education, at which people are prepared for vocations/careers, hence the greater tendency to make use of the opportunity for an appropriate choice.

Besides, a lot of people, reading various courses other than those with traditional business orientation, have innate talents, capabilities, creative skills and other natural endowments that can ordinarily be maximized in the light of glaring opportunities, given the basic knowledge or orientation. Many trained medical doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc., who were not exposed to entrepreneurship or similar orientation, have successfully founded and managed ventures in areas even outside their training such as fashion designing, music, the movie industry, among others. Therefore, the introduction of entrepreneurship is meant to drive this phenomenon –the realization of people’s potentials – to the highest possible levels. This was aptly pointed out in the report of the Global Education Initiative in 2009, an aspect of which states thus:

Preparing today’s students for success and eventual leadership in the new global market place is the most important responsibility in education today... Entrepreneurship education is an important tool to achieving these objectives (and)... Should be universally available to provide all students with opportunities to explore and fulfill their potentials [12].

Similarly, Akpomi [4] reports of the outcome of studies in the UK, where a reasonable proportion of non-business students, not only were prepared for self-employment, but had good business ideas. Moreover, the reports of empirical studies, some of which were stated in the section on Introduction, portraying remarkable

link between entrepreneurship education and the practice of entrepreneurship, are pointers to the need for this programme, which is timely.

3. Scope Of Entrepreneurial Education in Tertiary Institutions

What should be the scope or content of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian tertiary institutions? This is the question of curriculum, which UNESCO's International Bureau of Education [18] considers it in this manner: "Given the complexity of today's ever-changing world, contemporary approaches to curriculum development far exceed the traditional understanding of curricula as merely plans of study or lists of prescribed content", emphasizing that the development, management and implementation of this all-important document should be all-encompassing, involving specialists, practitioners and policy decision makers.

The Centre for Collaborative Education [9] presented six principles of curriculum design, which this paper subscribed to for adoption, as:

- i. Setting high standards that promote habits of mind and intellectual enquiry, utilize a wide range of instructional strategies and approaches.
- ii. Building Leadership Capacity and a Professional Collaborative Culture.
- iii. Utilizing and analyzing multiple data in making decisions aimed at improving areas that impact most on learning, teaching and assessment.
- iv. Creating structures that promote high achievement and personal development.
- v. Networking with like-minded institutions via relevant form such as conferences, seminars, etc.
- vi. Developing framework for community capacity and inter-relationship.

The issue of standards in curriculum development is also emphasized by the National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship Education thus: "Integration of the Standards into the curriculum, whether as subject-specific content or as context for a broader range of educational learning objectives, can help address many of the issues facing elementary, secondary, higher and adult education"

Thus entrepreneurship education curriculum should take cognizance of the forgoing principles and particularly "must be responsive enough to address the short-comings of our present school system, since it is a product of the rising challenges in the society" [12]. The necessity of this position was clearly brought out by Ingalla[2]thus: "*It is becoming increasingly clear that formal schooling in our society generally aims at creating sameness and not difference...it does not tend to produce individuals who can transform society itself*". Hence, the curriculum for the education of the individuals who can transform society, entrepreneurs, should be such that will encourage the development of individualistic tendencies of creativity, innovation, independent-mindedness, resourcefulness, flexibility, among others.

Enu [12], having extensively reviewed the positions of others, presents these broad areas of skills development, to which we subscribe and recommend to institutions' curriculum development teams:

- a. **Various skill categories**, encompassing personal care, domestic, recreational, employment and behavior management/social.
- b. **Personal/Personality Development Skills**, which include:
 - i. *Confidence*– Self-confidence building, individualism, independence, optimism, leadership/leadership dynamics, self-esteem, etc.
 - ii. *Originality* – Initiative, innovation, creativity, resourcefulness, versatility.
 - iii. *People-orientation* – Getting along well with others, flexibility, responsiveness to suggestions/criticisms.
 - iv. *Task-Result-orientation* – Need for achievement, desire to inspire action, profit-orientation, persistence, perseverance, determination, hard-work, drive and energy.
 - v. *Failure-orientation* –Foresight, perceptiveness.
 - vi. *Risk-orientation* –Risk-bearing, challenges.
- c. **Entrepreneurial Development Skills** –which include, in addition to most of those stated in (b) above, Opportunity-seeking, networking, creative problem-solving, interviewing, presentation, group leadership, community relations, interaction with governments and their agencies, disposition to/handling cultural and other local and environmental issues.
- d. **Business Development Skills** –*all functional areas of business management* – Finance/Accounting, Marketing/Sales, Human Resources and Production.

Having considered the content of the curriculum, it is also important to look at another aspect – the level of the tertiary education system at which the entrepreneurship skills ought to be imparted and duration or length of time, as well as the environment for practical learning experiences.

Currently, the programme is taught as two (2) General Study Courses, each for one semester at the second year in Universities, and the first year in Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. Considering the expectations from the programme –the objective for its introduction –this position appears inappropriate. Even key policy-makers on the issue seem not to appreciate the importance for the extent and duration of the programme, as typified in the reported position of the Commonwealth Ministers of Education in 1988 and reiterated by the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa in 1991: that the programme be taught to students in their final sessions [2].

With regards to the strategies/methods of teaching entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions, the traditional classroom knowledge-sharing processes, considered too mechanistic and focusing more on the theory than the practice

[24, 4] has been dominant, probably because it is a very recent development in the nation's education policy. Even in Europe, this seems to have been the case some ten years ago, going by the recommendations of Wilson, [28] Vincent and Farlow, [2] some of which have been put forward for Nigeria's tertiary education curriculum developers in the recommendations section of this paper.

4. Poverty Reduction and Economic Development.

As stated elsewhere, the main thrust of the shift in focus of education policy makers in the country is the need to combat unemployment, which has correlation with widespread poverty and economic development.

4.1. Meaning/Measurement of Poverty

Poverty, according to the United Nations [17] is, a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society – not having enough to feed and clothe a family, a school or clinic to go to, the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, or access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities, with high susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation. The World Bank [27] looks at it in similar fashion: pronounced deprivation in well-being, and comprises many dimensions, including low incomes and the inability to acquire the basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity, low levels of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate physical security, lack of voice, and insufficient capacity and opportunity to better one's life.

From these, it is apparent that poverty is looked at in several dimensions, notably economic, social, health and political, with the economic and social dominating, especially in developing countries like Nigeria.

Poverty is classified by the World Bank into two principal types: "Absolute or Extreme Poverty and Relative Poverty." [27] A person is said to be living in absolute or extreme poverty if s/he belongs to a household whose daily purchasing power parity falls below levels specified over time by the World Bank – \$1 (1990-1993), \$1.08 (1993-2005) and \$1.25 (2005). While an individual may be in relative poverty if his/her family's purchasing power parity rate is above the thresholds specified above, but not more than \$2-\$5, this measure is not generally employed, with emphasis, in some cases, rather being on measures based on income inequality and usually measured as the percentage of population with income less than some fixed proportion of median income [27]. The purchasing power parity rate means the local amount required to acquire the level of consumption equal to that obtainable in the United States with the dollar amount specified [27].

A third classification – Ultra-poverty which may have recently emerged - connotes being amongst the poorest of the poor in low-income countries, principally in Africa with a few in Asia, and defined by Michael Lipton [27] as a condition where one receives less than 80 percent of minimum calorie intake whilst spending more than 80% of income on food.

4.2 Incidence of Poverty in Nigeria, Poverty Reduction Measures and Economic

Development

Probably, in line with the World Bank report of Sub-Saharan Africa leading other regions of the world in terms of people living below the poverty line, [27] Nigeria's position is very precarious. Whereas the World Bank

report shows decreasing poverty rate globally, the reverse is the case in Nigeria, going by these insights, among others, which the Statistician-General of the Federation calls a paradox where poverty grows annually despite annual growth in the economy [26].

“Official statistics show that in 1980 the national (average) poverty incidence was 28.1 per cent of the population...By 1985, the national (average) poverty incidence had risen to 46.3 per cent ... as at 1996, the national average stood at 65.6 per cent with Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara (all old Sokoto State) recording the highest incidence of 83.6 per cent; followed by Bauchi and Gombe with 83.5 per cent. As at 2000, the incidence of poverty was believed to have risen to 70 per cent at the national level” [23].

According to the National Bureau of Statistics’ Nigeria Poverty Profile 2010, the average poverty rate of the states in the North-West geopolitical zone is the highest at 71.4 per cent, followed by North-East 69.1 per cent and North Central, 60.7 per cent.

The records also showed that poverty was least prevalent in the South-West, with an average of 49.8 per cent, followed by South-South, 55.5 per cent and South-East, 59.5 per cent, with a forecast that 71 million individuals would be living in relative poverty; 61.9 million would be wallowing in absolute poverty, while 62.8 million would be living on the global level of one dollar a day, in a total population of 168 million citizens in 2011 [1].

Faced with the foregoing disturbing statistics, the Nigerian Government had evolved several steps and strategies to stem the tide. Even before the period referred to earlier when it was realized that a huge proportion of the population wallow in poverty, programmes had been conceived, such as the 1972 National Accelerated Food Production Programme by the then Gen. Yakubu Gowon regime. Since then, more than 20 poverty-reduction focused programmes have been initiated by succeeding governments, but with poor results, due to the insincerity in implementation. Among the many are the following:

- Operation Feed the Nation
- Green Revolution
- National Directorate of Employment, NDE
- Peoples Bank
- Community Banks
- Directorate of Integrated Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure, DIFFRI
- Better Life Programme for Rural Women, BLPRW
- Family Economic Advancement Programme, FEAP
- Youth Empowerment Schemes, YES
- National Agency for Poverty Eradication, NAPEP.

Of all these and others, only NDE, Community Banks (now Micro-finance Banks), YES and NAPEP still exist, but with sub-optimal performances.

This must have informed the policy shift in tertiary education, more so that this has had devastating effects on national development. With most of the desired reduction in poverty arising from increased access to funding of ventures in a bid to ensuring increased production of goods and services that enhance the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), an important indicator of economic growth, the government had to shift focus to employment generation, not in the mould of previous policies which sought to increase paid employment, but self-employment of the graduates first before others they may engage.

Thus with the self-employment, comes income-earning power. When the several millions of unemployed graduates roaming the streets in search of paid employment become self-employed, then several income-earning powers are created, with the attendant implication for higher consumption of goods and services, hence a widening and deepening of the productive capacity of the nation resulting to the desired economic growth. And when these self-employed persons float and run successful ventures, they engage others, which create a multiplier-effect of unimaginable levels in all the relevant indices, with the national economy being the ultimate winner.

Aside this earned income-consumption-economic growth triangle, the self-employment phenomenon leads to the creation of ventures that not only increase the goods production capacity of the economy, but also increase the variety of goods/services available to the society with the implication for deeper and wider choices, and hence more quality living standards of the members of the society.

Since most of these self-employed will most likely be setting up small and medium enterprises, SMEs, their contributions to national development cannot be lost sight of, considering the role SMEs play in the overall economic development, evidenced from the following:

- a. *The MSMEs sector is valued at approximately ₦13.6 Trillion and accounts for 75% of total employment. (BPSR, 2011).*
- b. *“Although the giant Corporations and mass production firms loom important in terms of productivity and capital investment, it is the small business that actually constitutes the backbone of the nation's (USA) economy...”[6]*
- c. *“Europe's economic success depends largely on the growth of Small and Mediumsized Enterprises (SMEs) achieving their potential. SMEs contribute more than half of the total value added in the non-financial business economy and provided 80% of all new jobs in Europe in the past five years” [13].*

Again, entrepreneurship engenders innovation, which drives competitiveness, and consequently growth [28]. A massive buy-in to entrepreneurial spirit entails floating of several innovative ventures that will result to higher quality and quantity of goods and services that could change the economic landscape of the nation for the better.

5. impact of entrepreneurship Education on Employment and Socio-Economic Development – Empirical Assessment.

5.1 survey Analysis

In order to validate the foregoing theoretical discourse on the role of Entrepreneurial Education in the realization of the objective of Nigerian Government's policy of reducing unemployment and in the process enhancing economic and social development, we carried out a survey involving students in three tertiary institutions in Plateau State – University of Jos, Plateau State University, Bokokos and Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin-Ladi, Jos Campus.

240 sets of questionnaire were distributed at random to the students, of which 187 sets of the questionnaire were returned, giving a response rate of 78%. Upon examination, however, 13 sets were found to have been improperly completed, thus leaving an effective rate of 73%.

The sample and sample size were largely convenience, judgmental and non-probability, deliberately chosen in view of the time and other key limitations and the expectation that the required information would be provided, as aptly put by Churchill.[11] "... because it is expected that they can serve the research purpose; they can offer the contributions being sought". Similarly, since we considered that the fundamentals of the population would not vary in view of the nature of the subject of survey, we considered the sample size to have adequately taken care of the cardinal issues of representativeness and adequacy, drawing support from the conclusions of an authority thus:

"The size of a sample depends on the basic characteristics of the population, the type of information required from the survey, and of course, the cost involved ... if, in fact a population had characteristics that were completely homogeneous, a sample size of one (1) would be adequate to measure those particular attributes" [8].

The survey instrument contained 8 questions, besides 2 bordering on personal information. Except for one which was largely open-ended, all the questions were analysed, using simple percentages, with the responses as summarized in the table below:

TABLE 1: SURVEY INSTRUMENT ANALYSIS

Question No.	Question	Responses	No.	%
1A	Sex	Male	114	66
		Female	60	34
		Total	174	100
2A	Field of Study			
		Economics	20	11.49
		Psychology	12	6.90
		Sociology	4	2.30
		Accounting/Management	14	8.05
		Political Science/Public Administration.	8	4.60
		Science Laboratory Technology	7	4.02
		Computer Science/Engineering	11	6.32
		History/International Studies	10	5.75
		Theatre Arts	7	4.02
		Microbiology	12	6.90
		Chemistry/Biochemistry	21	12.05
		Physics	10	5.75
		Office Management Technology	5	2.87
		Mathematics	5	2.87
		English/Linguistics	6	3.45
		Engineering/Architecture	9	5.17
		Medicine/Surgery	9	5.17
		Geography & Planning	4	2.30
		Total	174	100
2B	Preferred Employment Option Post-graduation	Paid Employment	59	34
		Self-Employment	115	66
		Total	174	100
2B	Preparation for Self-Employment	Business Idea	23	19
		Feasibility Study	59	50
		Entrepreneurial Education	70	59
		Business Mgt. Skills	68	58
		Funding	35	30
4B	Motivation for Self-Employment	Special Talent/Ability	21	18
		Self-Reliance	75	65

		Avoiding Unemployment	19	17
		Total	98	100
5B	Assessment of Current Entrepreneurship Education Programme	Adequate	57	34
		Inadequate	93	56
		Can't Assess Yet	17	10
		Total	167	100
6B	Why Current Education Programme is Considered Inadequate	Inappropriate Delivery Method	5	4.24
		Inadequate Content	8	6.78
		Too Theoretical	53	44.92
		Inadequate Time Allotted	21	17.80
		Insufficient Facilities	31	26.27
		Total	118	100
7B	Entrepreneurship Education Programme Changed Disposition to Self-employment.	Changed/Increased	120	73
		Not Changed	45	27
		Total	165	100
8B	Desire for Further Entrepreneurial Education/Training	Positive	106	61
		Negative	54	31
		No Comment	14	8
		Total	174	100

Analysis of the responses to the questions on personal data show the all-embracing nature of the survey involving both male and female students adequately represented –66% and 34% respectively. This adequate representation is also evident in the fields of study cutting across virtually all broad classes of disciplines – the Arts, Environmental, Management, Natural and Social Sciences – encompassing more than 20 individual categories.

While Question 1 sought to know the post-graduation goals of the students, question 2 sought the readiness of those whose goal is self-employment in realizing it in terms of such relevant factors as business idea, feasibility of the idea(s), entrepreneurial education/ training, business management skills and funding. Interestingly, more than half of the responding students indicated preference for self-employment to paid employment – 66% to 34% respectively. It is even more interesting to note that this overwhelming preference is emanating from students outside the traditional business disciplines of Management and Economics (34 vs 81, assuming that all chose self-employment, which was not the case). The denominator in each of the factors assessed was the total number of respondents who indicated preference for self-employment and a few others who chose paid employment (118).

Of those whose eyes are on self-employment, an average of more than 50% will be prepared by the time they graduate, going by the encouraging responses ranging from 19% for those prepared/preparing with a business idea to 58% and 59% for business management skills and entrepreneurial orientation respectively. Even funding which is normally touted to be the biggest challenge is encouragingly high at 30%.

Question 4 sought to bring out the driving force for the self-employment option which 118 respondents chose. The desire for self-reliance was the dominant force with 65% respondents indicating so. When combined with the 17% who will prefer it to unemployment, the rate is outstanding at 82%. Of significant note too is the desire of 18% of the respondents to realize the potentials in their special talents/abilities, which might not be optimally exploited in paid employment.

Question 5 centred on the assessment of the appropriateness of the current entrepreneurship education programme the students are being exposed to vis-a-vis its ability to equip them with the required skills and orientation to realize their self-employment goals. While 57, representing 34% consider the programme adequate, the majority of the students consider it otherwise, with 56% out rightly thinking it inadequate, with a further 10% unable to assess for now. Prodded further to adduce reasons for their considering it inadequate, 45%, 26% and 18% of those who thought it inadequate and some of those who considered it adequate (20 respondents) attributed the situation (inadequacy) to the programme being too theoretical, with little or no provision for practical exposure, insufficient facilities, including teachers and inadequate time allocated to it respectively. Other reasons put forward were inadequate content of the programme and inappropriate method of delivery posited by 7% and 4% of the respondents respectively.

Question 7 dealt with the all-important issue of impact of the entrepreneurship education on students. The programme is apparently on course in view of the overwhelming indication of having positively changed or increased their disposition towards self-employment by 120 respondents, representing 73%, with the remaining 27% (45 respondents) indicating the programme has not changed their disposition. Interestingly, of the 27% who indicated there was no change, 30 or 77% were among those who had indicated preference for self-employment, and thus responded that the programme has not changed their earlier positive disposition towards self-employment. Consequently, the overall positive impact response rate becomes 91%.

The last question sought to assess the willingness of the students to undertake further entrepreneurship education in the light of their having considered the current programme defective as their responses to Question 5 show. 106 (61%) students indicated their willingness to seek further entrepreneurial education in order to make up for the defect in the current programme while 54 (31%) stated otherwise, with the remaining 14 students (8%) refraining. Two interesting aspects of this result are that a good many of those who indicated willingness for further exposure to entrepreneurship education were those whose post-graduation goal is paid employment (18 or 31% of 59) as well as some of those who rated the programme adequate (22 or 39% of 57). These underscore the importance and seriousness of the latter category to the self-employment goal, while the former category might be swayed by further exposure to later change their stand and thereby opt for self-employment.

5.2 Summary of Survey Findings

From the analysis, the survey found out that:

- a. There is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education at the tertiary level of education in Nigeria and the disposition among majority of the students to take up self-employment after their studies.
- b. Entrepreneurial education has a positive impact on unemployment reduction and by implication, poverty reduction as income will be earned.
- c. Entrepreneurship education has positive impact and socio-economic development.
- d. Majority of the students that are likely to take up self-employment are prepared/preparing to take up the challenging task by being ready in terms of business idea, feasibility, business management skills, entrepreneurship education/orientation and funding, soon after graduation.
- e. The students who chose to take up self-employment are fired by the desire to be self-reliant thereby creating rather than looking for jobs.
- f. The entrepreneurial education has availed many of the students the platform to realize their special talents/innate abilities, which ordinarily might not be optimally exploited or possibly stifled in the course of paid employment.
- g. The current entrepreneurship education programme being run by tertiary institutions in Nigeria is defective in many key respects, notably the depth and practical exposure, availability of facilities, including teachers, and the time allocated to the programme –only 2 courses in one session. .
- h. In view of the inadequacy of the current entrepreneurial education programme, and considering its importance, students, even without self-employment on their minds, are willing to undertake further education at their own expense.

6. Recommendations/Conclusion

On the basis of the foregoing findings and others especially as contained in the outcome of the research by the European Research Foundation (Wilson, 2008), the following recommendations become pertinent:

1. The Federal Ministry of Education, through the National Universities Commission, NUC, the National Board for Technical Education, NBTE and National Commission for Colleges of Education, NCCE, to periodically review the minimum standards of entrepreneurial education to be run in the Nation's tertiary institutions, in liaison with the relevant professional bodies.
2. The individual tertiary institutions to ensure strict adherence to the standards set by the regulatory authorities, besides ensuring that they periodically review their curricula in line with developments in the local and global world of entrepreneurship especially, and business generally. Particular note should be taken of the guides stipulated by the Centre for Collaborative Education and Enu highlighted under Scope of Entrepreneurship Education.
3. Tertiary institutions should ensure enough attention is given to the teaching of entrepreneurship education, with the comprehensive course content broken down into four (4) parts spread over two (2) sessions of 2 semesters each or their equivalent, such that students of non-traditional business disciplines can be given sufficient orientation to nurture and realize the potentials in their talents/special innate abilities.
4. Tertiary educational institutions, in liaison with or guided by their respective regulatory agencies, should provide appropriate institutional and other mechanisms for adequate exposure of the students to practical entrepreneurship. Business ventures/projects could be set up exclusively for such purpose, to avoid and minimize the unpleasant experience where private enterprises place lots of restrictions to operations of students on industrial attachment. The Entrepreneurship Centres funded by Tertiary Education Trust Fund, TETFUND, being set up in educational institutions nationwide is a welcome development, but we recommend that these be run largely as commercial concerns, independent and devoid of normal government administrative structures.
5. Government should reinvigorate the numerous agencies responsible for facilitating entrepreneurial development, especially the funding facilitating vehicles, to ensure the current high hopes being raised in the students are not only sustained, but eventually made to materialize.
6. Government should provide appropriate linkages between current strategy and other poverty-reduction strategies/agencies for a higher rate of attainment of poverty reduction and economic development goals.
7. Tertiary Educational Institutions should engage enough entrepreneurship teachers/researchers, who together with those in traditional Management Disciplines, should be periodically exposed to seminars, workshops, conferences and higher educational programmes, especially Doctoral, both locally and internationally. In this regard, TETFUND should consider sponsoring PhDs in the Management Disciplines, especially Entrepreneurial-oriented, in the same or even more proportion than Natural Sciences/Technology-based courses, rather than the current position where virtually all sponsorships go to the latter.
8. The key stakeholders – Educational Institutions, their Regulatory Agencies and the Private Sector –should develop appropriate mechanisms for the periodic evaluation of not only the output of the entrepreneurship education policy, but particularly its impact.
9. Among others, the methods of teaching should be intensive interactive discussions, project-based learning, intensive use of case studies of both failed and successful local and international

entrepreneurs/enterprises, internships and other experience gathering programmes, and emphases should be on both start-up and growth stages.

10. A strong, mutual relationship should be created between educational institutions and entrepreneurs/private ventures, such that entrepreneurs periodically teach entrepreneurship courses or part of them (share experiences), teachers take up sabbaticals in companies, as well as companies help to provide funding of entrepreneurship education and research, besides providing outlets for internship and other practical exposures to students.

11. Educational institutions and funding agencies, such as TETFUND, create opportunities for teachers and researchers to work on projects with others from other institutions and countries, especially those with entrenched entrepreneurial culture, notably North America and Western Europe.

12. TETFUND and other Entrepreneurial Development Agencies to sustain promotion and funding of teaching/research of entrepreneurship through workshops, conferences and projects developed by the Entrepreneurship Centres for sustained practical exposure of students to complement the theoretical content, which has been adjudged inadequate, even by the students.

In conclusion, though our theoretical discourse and survey provided insight into the positive role entrepreneurship education plays in the development of the entrepreneurial spirit which is known to be the foundation and driving force of economic and social growth in any nation, the challenges and consequent recommendations are pointers to the fact that this desirable role could be enhanced for the common good with the sincere effort and total commitment of every stakeholder – the Government, the Educational Institutions, their Regulatory Agencies, Private Sector Establishments and the Students.

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