

## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR NIGERIAN GRADUTES DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE SKILLS AND SECURITY: AN OVERVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Entrepreneurship and creative skill development are inseparable in the achievement of security and youth's holistic development after graduation. The rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria is alarming, resulting to insecurity; and most of its root tend to be attributed to lack of technical skill required for employability in the employment field. Entrepreneurship is expected to contribute measurable development to a country's economy. Unfortunately, entrepreneurship has not significantly affected the development of Nigerians especially among her youths. This paper looks at the concept of entrepreneurship education and creative skill development, the objectives of entrepreneurship education, the roles of entrepreneurship, concept of security, youths and insecurity and challenges facing the youth entrepreneur. Recommendations were also proffered to better enhance the skill development of the youths through entrepreneurship education curriculum.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Curriculum, Skill Development, Insecurity, Youths, Unemployment

### **Introduction**

Education is one of the promising ways of building creative skills and security in a nation. One cannot talk about education without talking about the curriculum that makes up the content of what education has to offer. This explains why a curriculum needs to be developed to help impact creative skills and imbibe the culture of security amongst graduates in a nation like Nigeria. Since curriculum is always changing to meet the emergent need and issues of the society, there is need to identify areas of education and situations that are challenging (Hannatu, 2019).

The Nigerian modern system of education since inception with the missionary system, the colonial education and indeed the present system of education (6334 system) has been bedeviled by a curriculum that has not target self – employment particularly among graduates, but has largely produced professional and the mass production of administrative clerks for the colonial administration who were no more than white collar seekers and employees (Nnadi; Madu and Ogadi, 2020). A typical Nigerian graduate in today's system of education that worked hard and earned a first class degree or second class upper is trained to take an employment and not to create one. It is a common experience that many youths from Nigerian tertiary institutions remain jobless even after graduation (Okeke and Onwuadi, 2021). The emphasis on entrepreneurship is very little, therefore, the productive capacity of the Nigerian graduate to add to the economy is very minimum if not missing (Ordu, 2019). Imagine a situation where a computer engineer occupies an office space with no computers, an agricultural engineer with no farm, a veterinary doctor with no single cattle, no sheep, no goat, no dog, no poultry unit, no fish pond, a surveyor with no surveying instruments, no empty land, and so the story continues with other professions. Although these analogies are not applicable in all situations, yet they seem to be credible as they can be found in some scenarios.

The above scenery is enough to create insecurity among young people, in the educational system as well as in the entire nation. Security is a priceless product of freedom and one cannot be free to execute any meaningful project in the midst of insecurity. When there is security in a nation, development is easy to achieve. Hence, we need to embrace a more holistic understanding of the concept of entrepreneurship in line with teaching that emphasizes skill creativity that leads to the culture of security among graduate students.

Consequently, it is a common experience that very many youths from the Nigerian tertiary institutions remain jobless after graduation every year; and this is partly as a result of the curricular of the institutions which emphasis is on training for white – collar jobs (Nwachukwu and Eze, as cited in Okeke and Onwuadi, 2021). In this situation, creative skill and security are the areas that require education and curriculum developers come into play to save the situation especially for economic and self-development. The rate at which insecurity is alarming in Nigerian environment today is not the same in the past. There was more communal living and caring among brothers and sisters, families and friends.

In precolonial Nigeria, every family was known for a particular skill or trade. They were either farmers, fishermen, blacksmiths and others. Akpan and Okoro, (2021); (Ugo, and Ugochukwu (2021). Akpan and Okoro, (2021). Young people were usually apprentices, learning from either their parents, relative or acquaintance, some skill or trade with which they earned a living as adults.

However, in today's modern educational system, Ordu (2018) stated that the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) included entrepreneurship

education in the Nigerian senior secondary education curriculum. The aim of this inclusion is supposed to impact the students of this level with the knowledge of trades, marketing and entrepreneurship in order for them to be part of economic activities taking place within their localities (Ordu, 2019). Even at the Basic Education level curriculum, entrepreneurship learning contents were included in anticipation of pupils to begin their own journey of possessing skills and competencies through trade and entrepreneurship at schools. Orji (2013) pointed out that entrepreneurship is one of the 4 compulsory core cross – cutting subjects in the new SSE curriculum. More so, as a means for reducing chronic unemployment and poverty, Idika (2021) reported that the National Universities Commissions (NUC) in (2004) recommended that Nigerian Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education integrate skills acquisition through entrepreneurship education as an integral part of the curriculum after the pattern of the U. S. A business schools.

Having found these contents in the curriculum of these school level, what comes to mind is that the government must have created some employment vacancies for graduates with competencies in the field of entrepreneurship education. But the reverse seems to be the case. One thing is to plan and develop a curriculum, another thing is to implement and make a curriculum functional and relevant. The curriculum of entrepreneurship seems not have achieved its goal in the Nigerian system of education where majority of graduates are not skillful. Being skillful helps one to be engaged, and hence leads to curb some security challenges in Nigeria.

### **Concept of Entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneur is a French word which means “one who undertakes innovation, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovation into economic goods” (AbduLRahim, 2014). An entrepreneur is one who develops new ideas, products, services or improves existing ideas as a way of solving perceived problems faced by the society with the aim of making profits. Fresh & Young Brains Development Initiatives (2015) defined entrepreneurship as the ability to conceive new business opportunities and take on the risk required to turn that idea into a reality. Entrepreneurship is the scholarly examination of how, by whom and with what effects opportunities to create future good and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited. (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Berglund & Holmgren (2013) defined entrepreneurship as a dynamic and social process, where individuals, alone or in co-operation, identify opportunities and do something with them to reshape ideas to practical or aimed activities in social, cultural or economical contexts. It is a process by which individuals either on their own or within organizations, pursue opportunities. The entrepreneur’s central activity is that of business creation, which can be studied at an individual and/or group level, analyzing psychological aspects and social variables of education, background or the family, either at an environmental level using

variables that enable business development, or by analyzing aspects of the economic, social and cultural environments.

Entrepreneurship can be conceptualized as the discovery of opportunities and the subsequent creation of new economic activity, often via the creation of a new organization (Reynolds, 2005). Davis in 1983, as cited in Igbo (2005), sees entrepreneurship as the creation and running of one's own business. Timmons in 1987 also cited in Igbo (2005), sees it as the creation, building, and distribution of something of value from practically nothing to individuals, groups, organizations and society. Timmons summed up by stating that it involves planning and organizing small business ventures through the mobilization of people and resources to meet people's needs.

Entrepreneurship is often discussed under the title of the entrepreneurial factor, the entrepreneurial function, entrepreneurial initiative and entrepreneurial behavior which is often referred to as the entrepreneurial spirit. The entrepreneurial factor is understood to be a new factor in production that is different to the classic ideas of earth, work, and capital, which must be explained via remuneration through income for the entrepreneur along with the shortage of people with entrepreneurial capabilities. Its consideration as an entrepreneurial function refers to the discovery and exploitation of opportunities or to the creation of enterprise. Miller 1983 as cited in Ugo and Ugochukwu (2021) sees entrepreneurial behaviour as behavior that manages to combine innovation, risk-taking and pro-activeness. Reference to entrepreneurial initiative underlines the reasons for correctly anticipating market imperfections or the capacity to innovate in order to create a 'new combination'. Entrepreneurial initiative covers the concepts of creation, risk-taking, renewal or innovation inside or outside an existing organization. Lastly, the entrepreneurial spirit emphasizes exploration, search and innovation, as opposed to the exploitation of business opportunities pertaining to managers. Hence entrepreneurship is a key driver to innovation, risk taking, creativity, and skill development.

### **Concept of Entrepreneurship Skill**

What constitutes entrepreneurial skills is still a topic of debate. The controversy is whether entrepreneurs are born or made. Although there seem to be a generally acknowledged notion that there are natural born entrepreneurs. Yet, some scholars and researchers are of the opinion that entrepreneurial skills can be learnt. Drucker 1985 as cited in Haziq (2018) opined that entrepreneurship is a practice and not merely naturally born as people say. For Drucker, entrepreneurship is not magic, it is not mysterious, and has nothing to do with being exceptionally genes. It is a discipline and like any discipline, it can be learned. As such, there is no established, simple definition of the entrepreneurial skill set.

Nevertheless, entrepreneurship skills are identified as important because of their impact on people's economy, personal and social lives (EU skills Panorama, 2014).

Entrepreneurship skills can encompass a broad range of various skill set like technical skills, leadership skill and management and creative skill. Noor (2019) has arranged entrepreneurial skills in three sub- groups as Interpersonal skill; Critical and creative skills; and Practical skills. Personal skills include: learning and motivation skill, communication skill, listening, negotiation and ethics. Critical and creative thinking skills includes: creative thinking, problem solving and recognizing opportunities. While the practical skills are: Goal setting, planning and organizing, decision making and entrepreneurial knowledge. This means that successful entrepreneurs take hard work, dedication and a wide skill set. Entrepreneurship skill then could be seen as the combination of different life skills put together in new ideas, innovative thoughts and in imaginative ways for the purpose of human and societal development.

### **Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education**

The objectives of entrepreneurship education for youths clearly show that it is concerned with the development and survival of both the individual and society. In fact, it is a tool through which social, economic and political development could be achieved. If it is properly planned, funded and implemented. The objectives of entrepreneurship education are spelt out by Osuala (2010) as cited in Okon, and Friday (2015) includes:

1. To provide meaningful education for young people which could make them self – reliance and subsequently encourage them to drive profit and be self – independent.
2. To provide graduates with the training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size business.
3. To provide graduates with employable skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society.
4. To provide graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.
5. To stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed area.
6. To provide graduates with enough training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities.
7. To provide small and medium sized companies with the opportunity to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to management of the business center.

From the above objectives, it is evident that this type of education if it is given all it deserves and properly implemented will produce quality graduates that will foster job creation and reduce or eliminate poverty in Nigeria. To achieve this goal of entrepreneurship education demands a shift from the old way of teaching and learning, to a lifelong model of teaching and learning; which is aimed at developing in the learner the ability to be create, acquire and use the transmitted knowledge to be productive and self-reliance. In this regard, the instructional process of teachers, instructors and lecturers

requires not only teaching learners for examination, but also to prepare them for practical and effective life economy that is unstable and changing.

### **The Role of Entrepreneurship Education in Creative Skill Development**

Entrepreneurship education can positively impact a learner at all levels on a wide number of contexts. It is creative in nature. Through entrepreneurship education creative skills such as problem solving, artistic creativity, critical thinking, risk taking, decision making, inspirational thinking and others are developed in the learner. This may explain why there are such a wide entrepreneurship education programs, all of which can provide important outcomes at various stages of the learner's life. In fact, creative skill development constitute a necessary 21<sup>st</sup> century skill set and mind set because of the role it plays in individuals and in the society. According to Okon, and Friday (2015), the following are the essential roles played by entrepreneurship education in the society:

1. Entrepreneurship education is a key driver to economy, wealth and a high majority of jobs are created by small business started by entrepreneurship minded individuals. Thus it would make learners to be relevant in today's economy.
2. Entrepreneurship education equipped people with traits of creativity, innovation, independence and foresight or promoting local technology entrepreneurship activities are a real – life vehicle for developing academic skills. Hence, trained entrepreneurs are always empowered to tap from local resources in their immediate environment. This is a phenomenon that has been demonstrated in China, Japan, India and other emerging economies of the world.
3. Entrepreneurship education inculcates in learners the mentality of hard work, one of the keys to unlock poverty doors in developing areas. Entrepreneurs are trained to work hard to be able to run businesses profitably and successfully.
4. Entrepreneurship education provides a guide to empower the youth based on the belief that young people are themselves the best resources for promoting their own development in meeting the challenges and solving the problems faced in today's world and in the new millennium.
5. Entrepreneurship education developed good support skills including commenting, decision making, interpersonal abilities, economic understanding, digital skills, marketing, managerial and financial skills.

Entrepreneurship education also provide individuals with adequate training that will enable creativity and innovative relevance to skill acquisition which encourages self – employment, self – reliant and security.

In Nigeria, youth unemployment has reached a critical level. Looking at the kind of job most university graduates take suggests that a great number of them are lacking core creative skills. For instance, most graduates in Nigeria end up being Keke Drivers, Fast Food Cleaners, Gate men and Women, Food stuff sellers such as tomatoes, crayfish, groundnut and so on; Point of Sales Men and Women (POS), Supermarket Sales Men and

Women and so many others. At the end of the month, they end up receiving little amount of money that could not take care of their necessary needs. Some of them take up hawking on the high ways and others resort to unhealthy living such as arm robbery, kidnapping, agents of restiveness in their communities and their places of living. These unhealthy living lead to insecurity in the society.

Development of creative skills through entrepreneurship education could help Nigerian graduates. Entrepreneurial training provides learners with the ability to recognize business opportunities, self – worth, knowledge and understanding of how to venture into a business and successfully manage it. It also helps learners to have confidence in their ability to actualize a business idea.

According to Howard (2021), the following are ways creative skills can be developed:

1. **Practice:** It is said that “practice makes perfect”. It is important to spend time building creative skills. Practice helps learners to prepare for future goals. The more one practice a skill, the better he/she becomes.
2. **Discover Quality in Quantity:** Creativity is a fun process. It is developed gradually. It is a step by step process that leads to a perfect finishing. In this regard, one can come up with many ideas that could be used to build better ideas that could be a success in future.
3. **Look to the Ordinary:** Try always to be creative through everyday life experiences and inspirations.
4. **Collaborate with Others:** Collaboration is a powerful tool to creative skill development. Collaborating with those who are creative opens up more ideas. It is said “two heads are better than one”. Collaborating with others help brainstorming and group discussion. It helps individuals to build teamwork.
5. **Experiment with Different Styles:** It is important to think outside the box or outside your field of study. For example, a graduate of Fine and Applied Art can collaborate with bread bakers and learn how to bake bread. Experimenting with mixing flour, sugar, butter, eggs and other ingredients together might help you gain creativity as a Fine artist.
6. **Have Confidence:** Be not afraid to try new things. Learn to take risk and have confidence to come out successfully. Having confidence means believing in yourself and in your ability. Confidence boasts creativity and helps one not to be afraid to share ideas.
7. **Give your Brain a Refresh:** If ideas are not forth coming, you can go for things you enjoy doing like your hobbies such as walking, swimming, shopping, reading and others. By engaging in these leisure, great ideas can flow. In fact, it is good to take a break.

Creative skill development supports graduates and helps them to be innovative; learning in a manner that is engaging. It also supports development by helping young people realize

their potentials, strengths, and abilities for self-development and that of the society. It is also a way of addressing the rising challenges of unemployment among graduates and insecurity in the country.

### **Concept of Security**

The rate of insecurity in Nigeria is becoming alarming. Insecurity remains the most challenging problem in Nigeria. Almost on daily basis, reports of killing, kidnapping of both young and old, assassination among others, each leading to scores of lost lives and properties. Security implies freedom from danger, encompassing measures put in place to safeguard lives and properties from any harm or loss (Shu'ara, 2019). Insecurity implies the absence of protection and safety. It is the direct opposite of security. Security is seen as freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile (Stone, 2009). It also involves diligent in matters of intelligence gathering and secrecy, and the protection of resources and rights considered critical to the existence of states (Hasan, 2014). According to Nwanegbo and Odigbo (2013), citizens expect governments to protect and safeguard their lives and properties and improve their economic securityz status through established institutions. Security is vital for educational achievement and sustainable development. Modern day Nigeria has numerous challenges such as poverty, hunger, illiteracy, corruption, bad governance and unemployment; but the greatest concern recently is insecurity. The rate of insecurity in the country appears unsurmountable, and this causecitizens to live in constant fear. Aggrieved groups and persons involving mostly young people resort to violence. The emergence of Boko Haram; ethnic groups like MEND, IPOB, MASSOB, BACASI, Farmers and Herdsmen, Cult gangs fighting for supremacy and national separation are all indication of insecurity in the country. Insecurity is an opposing force to development especially among young people because they are mostly used to carry out these threatening activities affecting the well-being of citizens.

### **Youths and Insecurity**

Life causes insecurity. It could be deducted from 'life causes' that the life and situation of youths in Nigeria in relation to insecurity could be seen as a result of high rate of unemployment, grievances based on political rights, cultural rights, religious rights among others (Ezemenka, 2021). For instance, October, 2020, thousands of youths were peacefully protesting at Lagos, Ibeju toll gate, calling for good governance. Instead of listening to their cry, military by government order attacked them. At least 12 people were killed, hundreds severed injured and CCTV dismantled to cover murder. This developed into subsequent protest to end police brutality and the police opened fire on them. The opening fire on peaceful youth protesters is a blatant violation of people's rights to life, dignity, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.



The youths, who are supposed to be the futures of this country, Nigeria seems not to be secured. According to Francis (2006) as cited in Ezemanka (2021) security has recently shifted from the emphasis on national security and state sovereignty to human security. Ezemanka continues to inform that scholars are of the opinion that security of the individuals within a state is more profitable and appears to be a better way of ensuring security of the state. This means that consideration of the general well - being of the citizens, ensuring that they come to a good standard of living is security.

One way to ensure that young people are secured and free from actions that threaten security in any form is to keep them engaged through employment, creativity and skill development through entrepreneurship education. Ukpe (2021) reported that the rising insecurity in Nigeria is as a result of unemployment. Accordingly, in an interview with Atiku, the former Vice President of Nigeria, the fastest way to reduce unemployment rate in Nigeria is through increased incentivized education because education has been scientifically linked with lower rates in crime and insecurity. Idleness is the worst feature of unemployment because it channels the energy of young people away from production to destruction.

### **Problems Facing Youths for Entrepreneurship Skill Development**

Accordingly, entrepreneurship studies from onset till date have offered inconsistent empirical findings on the influences and challenges associated with entrepreneurship education among young people (Alaydi, 2021). Nigeria is faced with myriads of problems among which is graduates entrepreneurship skill development. According to Okeke (2016), the perceived challenges facing youth entrepreneurship development are as follows:

**Lack of credit facilities:** Potential Nigerian entrepreneurs go through many hardships when trying to access credit for their businesses. Though there is a wide range of financial institutions that offer business loans, they usually charge high interest rates deterring aspiring entrepreneurs.

**Corruption:** Widespread and all present corruption that makes the procurement of licenses, permits goods and services from government agencies and even the payment of taxes and levies difficult without playing the game of bribing.

**Inconsistent government policies:** Government inconsistency is really a challenge an entrepreneur will have to tackle if he must succeed in Nigeria; all entrepreneurs can do is to influence government policy with respect to enhancing favourable business laws.

**Multiple taxation:** One-hour sensitive challenge that is encountered by majority of Nigerian entrepreneurs is multiple taxation. Although entrepreneurs in a country have a responsibility of funding the government through paying taxes, most of the taxes they

charge entrepreneurs are not lawful and have the effect of increasing the cost of doing business.

**Poor state of the country's infrastructure:** The state of Nigerian infrastructure can be described and deemed to be a nightmare to both entrepreneurs and the rest of the country's population. With the existing infrastructure deteriorating and in some places it is non – existent, the cost of doing business has tremendously gone up because of the country's road network.

**Lack of entrepreneurship education:** Education in Nigeria from the recent, past till date is largely theoretical. Laboratories, and workshops for practical exercises are either ill – equipped not in existence. As a result, Nigerian tertiary institutions are only equipped with theories without any practical orientation due to inadequacy or unavailability of the needed equipment for the teaching and learning.

**Cumulative bad governance:** Those who took the leadership of the country from colonial masters are still holding on to power. The few who are retired and letting go by replacing themselves with their unskilled and unproductive children that were poorly groomed of ideas that could bring about development and good governance.

## **Conclusion**

Entrepreneurship education appears to be a perfect educational solution providing a clear way onto youth employment and security. It's heavy emphasis on skill development makes it a potentially attractive option for individuals and graduates who are seeking for a greener future. Entrepreneurship is a key driver to economy, wealth and high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneurially minded individuals. When entrepreneurs are exposed to technical skills, they are equipped with traits of creativity, innovation, independence and foresights in promoting local technology, entrepreneurship activities which are real – life vehicle for developing life skills. Hence trained entrepreneurs are always empowered to tap from local resources in their immediate environment.

For entrepreneurship education to be effective, efforts must be made to equip the present day students with appropriate skills and competencies for the task. This equally means that teachers and lecturers must develop new strategies of teaching to inculcate in students the necessary skills for the world of work that they are graduating to meet. This will help them to develop the required knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that would enable them to play their own roles in the economic activities of their societies.

## **Recommendations**

- Technical education in Nigeria is almost treated as a foot mat. Federal government must ensure that it is reoriented and the importance of entrepreneurship is fostered.
- Entrepreneurship culture is still under developed in Nigeria. There is still great quest for white – collar jobs among the youths. Young people needs to be sensitized by entrepreneurs that they can still be great when involved fully in entrepreneurial activities.
- Federal government should make provisions to access adequate resources (including capital) to graduating students to enable them start their own business.
- Parents and the significant others in the society should give of orientation to the young people on the implications of indulging in acts that leads to insecurity.

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