



RESEARCH ARTICLE

INVOKING THE SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NIGERIAN YOUTHS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Education is an all-round exercise that has to do with the development of a holistic man. Social Studies education which is society-specific and multi-dimensional as it acts across different disciplines and investigates different aspects of human endeavour, is in a good position to develop the individual holistically, including instilling or invoking the spirit of entrepreneurship which is part and parcel of education. This study discusses the concept of entrepreneurship/entrepreneurship education, the rationale behind its introduction in Nigeria higher institutions, its objectives and ways of achieving the objectives of entrepreneurship education through Social Studies education, with emphasis on the cultural aspect of human endeavour. It made some useful suggestions and ended with a conclusion that entrepreneurship education remains a vital instrument for the actualization of the extrinsic value of education since it equips the individuals with the right skills for acquiring wealth.

Keywords: Education, entrepreneur, entrepreneurship education, invoke, social studies.

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

One of the cardinal objectives of every government is job creation as it helps an economy to achieve full employment and economic growth and development. Nigeria has been bedeviled with high unemployment rate and poverty. Report has it that, about 200,000 graduates are produced each year but only 25 percent are absorbed in the labour market. The remaining 75 percent are left in the labour market perpetually looking for jobs, with the resultant increased armed robbery, bombings, kidnapping and other social vices in the polity (Mezieobi, 2013).

In a recent report, Abdullahi (2022) established that Jobber man Nigeria has disclosed that over 50% of Nigerian youths are unemployed and unemployable. He went ahead to explain that for decades, Nigeria has been positioned as a global economic giant due to its youth population. Therefore, there is need for urgent measures to be taken so that this economic advantage does not become the albatross for lasting underdevelopment. In other words, there is need for urgent intervention to halt this trend of high unemployment rate of our youths who should be the power base of our economy. This trend is worrisome to both the government and the entire citizenry.

Education is an all-round exercise which has to do with the development of a holistic man. Assmann (2002) explained that education began in pre-history as adults trained the young orally and through imitation, in the knowledge and skills deemed necessary in their society. Education is usually defined as the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and habits (Thomas, 2013). It is also defined as the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life (Dictionary.com, 2016). These definitions and descriptions of education portray education as that which is expected to bring about inherent and permanent change in a person's thinking and capacity to do things. This is where entrepreneurship education comes into play.

Entrepreneurship education therefore should be a part and parcel of education/educational process. It is fact, a useful instrument for the actualization or attainment of the extrinsic value of education. It plays a very prominent role in job creation, economic growth and development and this role cannot be overemphasized. The current global economic realities



of the inability of governments to provide enough employment for its people continue to suggest or call for emphasis on entrepreneurship education in our educational institutions starting from the lowest to the highest level. This will help to foster skills acquisition, capacity building and the spirit of entrepreneurship and as such facilitate economic growth and development in Nigeria.

Social Studies Education remains the most veritable tool for inculcating and invoking the spirit of entrepreneurship in the citizens through the school as its objectives rhyme with those of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. Social Studies education is most suitable because it is tailored in such a manner that it takes care of each nation's needs, traditions, interests, culture, values, national aspirations, national heritage and achievements. Social studies is concerned with human beings and all ramifications of their environment or human endeavours ranging from economic, social, cultural, political, legal, educational, religious and science and technology.

The nature of this subject helps the individual to not only understand himself but also his environment, making it easy for him to identify the societal problems and also be able to proffer solutions to them. This paper therefore, discusses how Social Studies education can be used as a veritable tool for invoking the spirit of entrepreneurship in Nigerian youths for nation development.

2.0. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The concept of Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurship Education

Value allocation has been the primary factor that determines attitude of the citizenry towards the affairs of the state and how they interact among themselves on any background (Nwagbo & Abaneme, 2019). So invoking and nationalizing the spirit of entrepreneurship education is significant factor for sustainable national development.

An entrepreneur is defined as a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business usually with considerable initiative and risk. He is someone who organizes, manages and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise with the aim of making profit



(Dictionary.com, 2016). Entrepreneurship therefore is described as the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. It is the process of discovering new ways of combining resources (Scott & Venkatraman; 2000). Entrepreneurship education therefore is a learning process or series of activities which aim at enabling an individual to assimilate and develop knowledge, skills, abilities, values and understanding that allow a broad range of problems to be defined, analyzed and solved. It is meant to be enshrined in all levels of education starting from the primary to the highest level of education.

2.1.2 Rationale behind the introduction of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria higher institutions

Unemployment is currently one of the most serious problems in Nigeria. The country has battled with the menace for decades and it seems to be getting worse on daily basis. The huge unemployment problem has led Nigerian society into high rate of poverty, increased crime rate, poor economic growth insurgencies etc. (Ejiei-Ezeibe, Abaneme & Ezeibe, 2024). Youths are the vehicle that drives development in a nation, they are the most populous and vibrant persons within a nation and they account for the most part of the labour force (Ogwuche, Abaneme, & Nwaneri, 2023).

It is evident that some graduates lack the required skills for self-employment or self-reliance since our educational programme lacks the entrepreneurship skills needed. Ojeifo (2012) identified some of the problems facing the country that form the rationale behind the introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria as ranging from, acute poverty, youth and graduate unemployment, dependence on foreign goods and technology. Others include low economic growth and development among others. Also in line with the reason for the introduction of entrepreneurship education, Akanwa (2013) explains that Nigeria obtained her educational curricular from the colonial masters some of which no longer suit the needs and aspirations of the nation. Some courses done in the Nigerian universities today, do not address the problem of Nigeria any longer thus the need to re-structure the educational curriculum to reflect on or address some of the nation's needs and aspirations.



Therefore, the rationale behind the introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is to produce citizens or individuals who will align with the world of work, create trades and mercantilism, create labour and employment, build stalls and boost innovative drives with inherent intent in production of goods and services for the nation's economic diversification (Onyene, 2014).

2.2. Theoretical Foundations

Albert Bandura's theories of Social Learning and Cognitive theory of 1977, and Self-efficacy theory of 1977, provided the theoretical framework in this study. The Social learning and cognitive theory emphasizes on learning through observation, imitation, modelling, and reinforcement. In the context of this study, the theory helps explain how youths learn entrepreneurship behaviours and mindsets.

Self – efficacy theory on the other hands suggests that the individual's belief in his ability to achieve a task or goal, influences his motivation and performance. invoking the spirit of entrepreneurship in Nigerian youths through social studies education can enhance their self-efficacy thereby encouraging them to take risks and purse entrepreneurial ventures.

3.0. METHODOLOGY

The study made use of secondary data which include but not limited to ; textbooks, journal, newspapers, magazines, and internet materials. Descriptive design was adopted. Data was presented thematically and systematic content analysis was employed from which conclusion was drawn from inferences

4.0. DISCOURSES

4.1. Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education for Higher Institutions in Nigeria

According to Ayatse (2013) president Obasanjo mandated that all students in Nigeria regardless of their major, will need to study entrepreneurship. In 2006, the presidency under Obasanjo, directed all Nigeria Higher Education institutions to include Entrepreneurship



Education (EED) as a compulsory course for all students and this was to be effected from 2007/2008 academic session.

The Objectives of entrepreneurship education for higher institutions as stated in Akpan, Effiong & Ele (2012) include;

1. To create employment
2. To reduce high level of poverty
3. To create smooth transition for traditional to modern industrial economy.
4. To serve as a catalyst for economic development and growth of the gross domestic products (GDP)
5. To provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish an occupation in small and medium sized business.
6. To inculcate that spirit of perseverance in the youths and adults which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on.
7. To reduce the high level of rural urban migration.
8. To offer functional education for the people
9. To provide the youth with adequate training that will enable them to be more creative and innovative in identifying noble business opportunities.
10. To offer tertiary institutions graduates with adequate training in risk management.

4.2. Achieving the objectives of Entrepreneurship Education through Social Studies

Youths are the vehicle that drives development in a nation. They are the most populous and vibrant group within a nation and account for the most part of the labour force. According to the National Population Census (2006), the youth population constitutes over 70 percent of Nigerian population (Ogwuche, Abaneme & Nwaneri, 2023). In a nutshell, the objectives of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria tertiary institutions hinges on creation of employment or engagement of the youths, who constitute over 60% of Nigerian population, gainfully, to avoid unhealthy alternatives from this group of people thereby curbing such social vices like kidnapping, robbery, human trafficking, drug trafficking, etc. and eradication of poverty through making education functional or efficient.



Social studies education also has similar objectives of training out citizens, who are fully aware of all aspects of their environment, who are also functional so as to be able to participate meaningfully in the solution of problems posed by the human environment. These it achieves through its rich methodology which is basically learner centred, activity oriented and holistic in approach such as; activity method, problem solving method, and expository method.

Social studies being society-specific, inter-disciplinary and integrative in nature, gives the learner a holistic view of the world, in its classroom which could be with or without walls; within and outside the school environment. Social studies utilize such teaching skills or techniques which facilitates learning and encourages independence or self-reliance such as field trip, project/ assignments, observational techniques/ skills, and simulation skills.

Through these practical skills, the individual is exposed to different areas of human endeavours viz; political, social, economic, educational, cultural, religious, legal, science and technology.

Field trip enables the individual to have a real life experience which gives him/her the opportunity to observe, discover and explore, thereby giving room for self-reliance. Also through projects and assignment, they learn how to do things independently thereby invoking the spirit of creativity, innovative thinking and independence. Also workshops and seminars equip the individual with knowledge, skills, values and the right attitude. Therefore, social studies education trains individual to be functional, creative and innovative, thereby encouraging or evoking the spirit of entrepreneurship and perseverance.

4.3. Invoking the Spirit of Entrepreneurship in Youths through the cultural aspect of human endeavour under Social Studies Education

Unemployment is currently one of the most serious problems in Nigeria. The country has battled with this menace for decades and it seems to be getting worse day by day. The huge unemployment problem has led Nigerian society into high rate of poverty, increased crime rate, poor economic growth, insecurity and insurgency. (Ejjeji Ezeibe, Abaneme, & Ezeibe,



2024). This therefore requires the invocation of the spirit of entrepreneurship in Nigerian youths. Merriam Webster Dictionary (2023) defines the word “invoke” as to bring about, cause, implement or to put into effect or operation. Therefore, this section discusses ways through which the spirit of entrepreneurship can be brought about or aroused in the citizens through the cultural aspects of human endeavour under social studies education. Culture is one of the aspects of human environment and endeavours. Other aspect includes political, social, economic, religious, legal, educational, science, and technology.

Culture involves language, type of music played by a people, festivals and ceremonies, dressing, food habits, worship system, shelter, occupation, greeting. Culture affects other aspects of human endeavours in one way or the other for instance, every cultural group has peculiar ways of governing, or organizing its members (politics); spending leisure time and communication (social); earning their living through farming, buying, selling, etc. (economics); worshipping supreme being and worship systems (religion); setting disputes and quarrels (legal); informing or training its members informally or formally (education); and finally ways of applying knowledge or using things found in their environment to solve their problems (science and technology).

Therefore, here, we shall consider different aspects of culture activities/ cultural skills that can be employed to achieve entrepreneurship and these include:

- a. Music: social studies students who are talented in singing or dancing cultural music are encouraged to sing or dance for money, for instance, through bongo music, and other cultural music, perform at occasions and make their money.
- b. Festivals and ceremonies: Social studies students can make money by writing books on festivals, experience gathered from field trip or notable ceremonies of people which could be sold for money or even film/document such festival and make money out of them nationally and internationally.
- c. Dressing: In social studies laboratories we have traditional wears and so students are encouraged to learn the skill of dress making especially cultural wears, bead making, weaving of cloths, plaiting of hair, tie and dye, face craft etc. these generate lots of money these days.



- d. Food types: Social studies students on graduation are encouraged to apply their knowledge on different food type which they can prepare or cook to make money, for example such cultural pastries like Akara from beans, Ugba (African Oil Bean), Abacha (Cassava, tapioca), Ofe akwu, yam and plantain chips, etc.
- e. Worship, Shelter, Occupation: A social studies student as a resourceful, creative and innovative individual can learn and apply the skill of using palm leave to make mats, brooms, basket, etc. for sale which could be used for worship, in the house or work places. Also farming, extracting palm kernel oil for sale, etc.

5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

Finally, social studies teachers at all level of education must wake up to the expectation and challenge of being at the fore front of invoking the spirit of entrepreneurship in the Nigeria youths through the school so as to encourage or facilitate national development.

5.2. Recommendations.

1. The objectives of entrepreneurship education for any level of education namely primary, secondary or tertiary educational institutions can be achieved through social studies education because the two share similar objectives.
2. Entrepreneurship education cannot be overemphasized; it is very vital because it serves as an instrument for the actualization of the extrinsic value of education since it equips the individuals with the right skills for acquiring wealth.
3. Social Studies education remains the most appropriate discipline for fostering or invoking the spirit of entrepreneurship in the youths at the different levels of education in Nigeria because it is society-specific and loaded with the essential ingredients needed for efficient, functional and productive citizenry such as creativity, critical thinking and problem solving skills which make way for self-reliance and a progressive economy.



Competing Interest

The authors have declared that no conflicting interest in this manuscript.

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