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**ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS AS A TOOL TO CURB UNEMPLOYMENT IN
A RECESSION ECONOMY**

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Abstract: The need to develop entrepreneurial skills in our secondary school students has remained a necessity in Nigeria considering the level of economic recession and unemployment. Economic recession is a period of general economic decline and is typically accompanied by a drop in the stock market, and an increase in unemployment. It creates wide spread unemployment, sometimes as high as 10%. As unemployment rate rises, consumer purchases fall off even more and increases every day, developing entrepreneurial skills could be a way of reducing, if not eliminating it. There is need to make students self-reliant right from secondary school. Entrepreneurial skill leads to job creation, self-employment and boosts earning that increase individual financial independence and these skills cannot be developed without efficient and effective knowledge form secondary school level because education is seen as the key agent in training the young for competent adult role performance and socialization. Any nation in the 21st century that wishes to aspire to prosper must have means of imparting entrepreneurial occupational skills in her students. Therefore, this work gives a brief concept of developing entrepreneurial skills among secondary school students as a means of surviving in the current economy recession in Nigeria. It was recommended among others that curriculum of post primary education should be designed to allow for some form of apprenticeship in the acquisition of skills and entrepreneurship education if general.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Post Primary Education Economy, Gross Domestic Product Depression.

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Introduction

The downward economic trend in the world affecting different countries have made it necessary for each country to go back to the drawing board for solution. Since education is the basic tool for the development of the individual and country in general, it means education must be functional to meet these goals. This means school programs need to be relevant, practical, and comprehensive while interest and ability should determine the individual direction in education for the organisation of appropriate skills and the development of mental social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the society. This supports that teaching and learning for these age needs a creative education based on individual needs and abilities. Agbowuor, Saidu & Jimwan (2017), opined that to cultivate and educate the 'right minds' we need educational curricula that include exploration, problem solving and diversity. It is important that the schools system respond to the changing world. There is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive and united nation, to this end school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive for the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental,

physical, and social abilities and competences as equipments for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek for investment opportunities, to establish and to run an enterprise successfully (Suleiman, 2006). Initially the Nigerian educational system direction was at producing graduates mostly for government employment with without taking recourse to the labour market. This system was controlled with soaring rate of unemployment. This was mainly because the graduates failed to possess sound knowledge of entrepreneurial education (Nwangwu, 2009). In response to this came the introduction of entrepreneurship education. Since it was believed that its introduction into tertiary education would lead to acquisition of skills that would enable its graduates to be self-reliant and consequently reduce unemployment problems (Unachukwu, 2009).

An entrepreneur is a person who possesses the ability to recognize and evaluate business opportunities, assemble the necessary resources to take advantage of them and take appropriate action to succeed (Meredith, 1983). Nwangwu 2009 outlined some activities associated

with entrepreneurship: These are as stated below;

- The ability to create and build something from nothing.
- The ability of having a vision matched with focus and determination of building an enterprise.
- The skills of seeing an opportunity when others fail to do so.
- The ability to build a working team and to compliment your own talents and efforts.
- The ability to aggregate, marshal and control resources judiciously.
- The willingness and ability of innovativeness and creativity
- The willingness to undertake personal and financial risks
- The ability to engage in activities despite all odds and in fact surmounting these odds and possibly turn them into your own favours.

From therefore mentioned activities it is clear that entrepreneurship is more than being smart. It also entails the possession of key skills and talents, innovativeness and the combination and usage of all these together with an entrepreneurship skill.

Lovrilsky (1995) in Unachukwu (2009) defined entrepreneurship education as opportunity recognition, marshalling of resources in the presence of risks and building a business sector, while Bechard and Toulouse (1998) defines it as a collecting of formalized teaching that informs, trains and educates anyone interested in business creation of small business

development. At the primary and secondary school level the aim is mainly to create awareness for a career option and thus it serves as a vehicle for the development of academic skills and emphasis on the importance of school subjects. At the tertiary level entrepreneurship education is perceived not only as a career opportunity but as a way of upgrading a growing person's abilities to succeed as an employee and also as well as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship education therefore seeks to prepare people especially youths to be responsible and enterprising individuals, to develop deep taught on entrepreneurship and consequently contribute to economic and sustainable development of their communities which is very necessary in the present recessive economy in Nigeria.

Economic Recession and its Effects

The National Bureau of Economic Research (cited in George 2017) defined economic recession as a significant decline in economic activity and spread across the country and lasting for more than few months, visible through the wholesales, industrial production, employment, real income, gross domestic product." In general, the economic recession declines occur as a result of long-lasting increase of unemployment, drop in the stock market, negative growth of GDP and decline of the housing market. Nevertheless, it's less severe than economic depression.

Nigeria is experiencing economic recessions because of a significant decline of GDP in the first and second quarters of 2016. The data shows that GDP decline in the first quarter of 2016 is -0.36%, while the second quarter shows -1.5%. Still, the numbers can be misleading as the economic recession and financial crisis can occur without Gross Domestic Product reports. Nigeria showed some growth in the GDP for the fourth quarter of 2016, which is 0.8%. Moreover, financial analyst expects that the first quarter of 2017 was going to have a positive growth in GDP. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the country will clearly get out from the economic recession.

The diagram below shows the difference in price of consumer prices of May 2015 and May 2016, its further explained using percentage (%) and price elasticity to explain their difference.

Goods	May 2015	May 2016	%	Price Elasticity
Tomatoes (Basket)	N12,000	N45,000	27.5%	Low
Pepper (Basket)	N6,000	N20,000	23.3%	Moderate
Yellow Garri (50kg)	N11,000	N18,000	63.6%	Moderate
Rice (50kg)	N9,000	N14,000	61.1%	Low
Beans (50kg)	N15,000	N16,000	6.7%	Low
Onions (Basket)	N4,000	N10,000	1.50%	Moderate

Source: FDC (George, 2017)

Some other effects and indices of a nation's economic recession according to George (2017) may include;

- reduced real salaries: It is connected with salaries adjusted for the inflation. Failing of real salaries

means that the workers can't buy the same amount of goods. The worker can make the same amount of money, but the purchasing power is reduced;

- reduced consumer confidence: If consumers are assured that the situation in the economic sector is bad, they are less prone to spend money. It's a psychological factor, but it has real influence on the economy;
- accumulation of debts: If the country cannot pay enough money to its citizens, the more debts are inevitable. Nevertheless, if the new stock of money will be spent with no planning about returning the money - it will cause more debts;
- increase unemployment rate: The normal unemployment rate is 5%. Any additional per cent in the unemployment rate provides the possible decrease in GDP for 2%, and
- general loss of confidence in the Government

Causes of Economic Recession

The present economic recession can be attributed to the following.

Poor economic Planning: It means no concrete implementation of economic planning connected with exchange rate policy and economic outlay. Nevertheless, the government manifested, that it's planned to implement some general indulges like:

- Encouraging Foreign investments
- Raising agricultural output
- Improving manufacturing sector and mining sector
- Diversifying of the economy

Prejudice Exchange rate: The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) exchanged one dollar for one hundred and ninety seven naira (N197.00), where people bought the dollar for three hundred naira (N300.00).this made many individuals to call for the banking industry to get the dollar for N197.00 and later resell it for the N300.00 Just try to think about millions of Naira accumulated for doing nothing. It means getting money out of nowhere.

Implementation of Single Treasure Account: This idea was created by the Government to stop the corruption and consolidate all funds of the Federal Government. Therefore, all departments, ministers, and agencies transferred their funds from all the commercial banks to the Central Bank of Nigeria. Any approach or voice against this decision was treated as corrupt. The banks who delayed the instructions from the Government were heavily fined.

Stoppage of Pipeline contracts: The intentions of the Government were simply to stop all bogus contracts of predecessors. That included the contracts with the Niger Delta warlords and the suspension of the Amnesty Program. That gave the militants the excuse to recommence the sabotage of the Nigerian oil assets. It caused almost the financial crisis as it provided the reduction of revenues from gas and oil plants.

Poor Fund: the result of inadequate resources led to the

inability of CBN to provide importers with the required foreign exchange.

Recession and Unemployment

A recession as an economic downturn in any country is associated with high unemployment, slowing gross domestic product, and high inflation. Unemployment remains one of the most critical problems facing every nation today, including Nigeria. Nigeria which is the most populous in Africa and the second largest country with a population of over 150 million is endowed with diverse human and material resources. Yet unemployment rate among the youths is over 38 percent with secondary school graduates mostly found among unemployed rural population, accounting for about half of this figure, while university and polytechnic graduates make up the rest (World Bank statistics, in Bakere 2013).

If the rate of unemployment is not checked, it will lead to more secondary school graduates and higher institution graduate being recruited into the rank of oil theft syndicates, armed robbers, kidnappers, militants and insurgents. Unemployment in an economy occurs when there are people who are both willing and able to work but do not have a job. Unemployment means being put out of job or a situation where the individual is willing to work but has none. For example, let's say that a person loses his/her job in a manufacturing firm. If this person

starts actively looking for another job, they are classed as unemployed.

Effects of Unemployment on society

Unemployment in an economy has many impacts on the government, firms and of course the unemployed people themselves and society at large. Some of these effects include the following:

- Lower standard of living - The people who are unemployed will suffer a loss of income and will either have to survive by private savings or on benefits. As a result they will be able to buy fewer goods and services and will see a fall in their standard of living.

- Loss of skills - When someone becomes unemployed they will stop working and will start losing their skills and ability to work. The longer someone stays unemployed the lesser employable they will be to firms because firms will need to spend money on retraining them.

- Loss of confidence/depression - People who are unemployed will also suffer a loss of confidence in their ability. Many people who become unemployed will also suffer stress related illnesses and depression.

Unemployment affects not just the person himself but also his/her family and in the long run the society where he lives. Unemployment brings with it despair, unhappiness and anguish. It forces people to live their lives in a way they do not wish to - The life expectancy is negatively affected. Life expectancy is the ease

by which people living in a time/place are able to satisfy their needs/wants. Some of these aspects are stated below:

1. Mental health: Mental health problems like; Low self-confidence, feeling unworthy, depression and hopelessness, because of the lost income and the frustration involved in it, the recently unemployed will develop negative attitudes toward common things in life and may feel that all sense of purpose is lost. Frequent emotions could be - low self-esteem, inadequateness and feeling dejected and hopeless.

2. Health diseases: The overall tension can increase dramatically and leads to general health issues of individuals.

3. Suicide cases: Increase in the rate of suicide attempts and actual suicides as well. E.T.C.

Entrepreneurship Education and Senior Secondary School Curriculum.

Entrepreneurship education broadly refers to education that enables learners to imbibe innovative ideas which they can transform into profitable activities Omolayo (2006).

The objectives of Entrepreneurship education according to Paul (2005) are:

- to offer functional education to enable the youth become self-employed and self-reliant;

- provide graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities;

- serve as a catalyst for economic growth;

- offer graduates adequate training in risk management;
- reduce high level poverty;
- inculcate the spirit of perseverance in youths and adults.

In view of the objectives, the importance of entrepreneurship education to the development of the economy has been the subject of increased attention in Nigeria and the world over recent years.

The National policy on Education (FRN, 2004) states the broad aims of secondary education as;

1. diversify its curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and roles possessed by or open to students after their secondary school course;

2. equip students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology;

3. raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, and appreciate these values specified under our broad national aims, and live as good citizens, and

4. inspire its students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and in later life.

Therefore, the primary objectives of senior secondary education is to ensure that every senior secondary school (SSS) graduate is well prepared for higher education as well as acquired relevant functional trade/ entrepreneurship skill as to prepare for useful living, The curricula focus is on value re-orientation, job creation, wealth

generation and poverty eradication. (Obodo, 1997).

In the new senior secondary school curriculum the compulsory core subjects are English studies, General mathematics, Civic education and one trade/ entrepreneurship subject. The first set of senior secondary student graduates where entrepreneurship subject is now compulsory were examined in June 2014. (Uka, 2015).

Entrepreneurship education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit, of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in wide contexts. These behaviours or skills can be practiced, developed and learned.

The Basis for Entrepreneurship in Nigeria's Economy Recovery

Nigerian education system during the colonial period was geared towards serving the interest of the colonial masters in term of supply of man power for their effective administration of Nigerian colony and protectorates (Aladekomo, 2004). The policy at that period was aimed at producing Nigerians who read and write to enable them hold certain positions such as clerks and interpreters. These Nigerians had no professional skills to enable them stand on their own or even establish and manage their own ventures. The Nigeria industrial policy that came after independence placed emphasis on and paid attention to the establishment of big industries neglecting small scale sectors (Aladekomo 2004). This neglect affected entrepreneurship at the

beginning and negatively influenced its importance for economic growth and development. However, Nigerian university Education is at a cross road as far as producing graduates who will work and bring creativity into their work place is concerned. The results of a survey jointly sponsored by the NUC and Education Trust Fund (ETF) on need skills like literacy, oral communication, information technology, entrepreneurship, analytical problem - solving and decision making rated Nigerian graduates as poor. This view of Nigerian graduates further explains why there is an increase in the unemployment rate of Nigerian graduates (Oviawe, 2010).

Conclusion

Education is seen as the chief agent for training the young for competent adult role performance and for socialization. Any nation in the 21st century that aspires to prosper must have means of imparting technological occupational skills in her students. One of the major goals of National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) is to equip every individual with skills and job competences for gainful employment. This is meant to help cement the partnership between education and labour as we prepare a competitive workforce with entrepreneurial skills.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to overhaul our educational system to be able to minimize the problems of graduates' unemployment by inculcating or developing the right type of entrepreneurial skills in them. This

is because Nigerian graduates can no longer rely on the Nigerian labour market to provide them jobs. They have to invent an alternative source of employment which is self-employment. That is they have to be entrepreneurs.

Considering these importance of entrepreneurship education, it becomes necessary that it should be included and taken very seriously in Nigeria secondary school education.

Recommendations

The following recommendations will be useful if well implemented. These are as follows:

- There should be provision of adequate teaching and learning facilities to help in effective teaching/learning process of entrepreneurship education.

- Curriculum of post primary education should be designed to allow for some form of apprenticeship in the acquisition of skills and entrepreneurship education if general.

- There should be more emphasis on entrepreneurship education to create awareness of the functional role in self-employment and discourage endless search for paid employment in the ever increasing labour market.

- There should be value reorientation among teachers and learners to discourage over dependence on government for every need but inculcate attributes that will create desire to generate one's own fund through entrepreneurship education.

- Experts in various business skills role models of entrepreneurship should be made to give regular talks success in life. in various institutions and serve as

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