

# Entrepreneurial / Functional Education: A Vital Tool for Human Resource Development

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**Entrepreneurship implies the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunity. A social environment can be transformed if the students and youths are motivated and encouraged on entrepreneurial education and abilities on a continuous and functional training and development; since functional education is an instructional strategy that integrates the teaching of literacy, skills and job content to move learners more successfully and quickly towards their educational and employment goals. This paper looks at entrepreneurship, functional education, characteristics of successful entrepreneurship, concept of functional education and sustainable entrepreneur/functional education for human resource development. It is recommended that government should provide an entrepreneurial village to train and develop young people on entrepreneurship. Government should do all it takes to encourage, motivate, build and promote an enabling environment that allows healthy competitiveness, inventiveness, creativeness and self-reliance for sustainable economic development.**

**Keywords:** entrepreneurial / functional education, human resource development and sustainable entrepreneur

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## INTRODUCTION

Education goes beyond literacy alone because for an individual, education means the provision of opportunity for him to realize his potentials, goals, and abilities in life. Education includes the acquisition of functional skills, moral identity, and ambition to succeed in life and thereby improve the society. Eunice and Zita, (2013), see education as having two ideas implicit in the world. One is that leading out into new knowledge and experience, the other is that of feeding and thereby growing and developing. Education is the fulcrum that propels meaningful development to any nation. There is no nation that can achieve any development when the

type of education given to the people at all levels especially at the higher level is that which makes the individual become a nuisance not only to himself but also to the society. This is because education is seen as the key factor for national development and empowering the citizens to master their environment in order to compete for survival, (Mbachu, 2013). Mbachu (2013) agrees that education has to be a powerful instrument and of good quality to enable the recipient grow into a functional member of his family and of his nation. It is obvious that several third world countries are enmeshed in poverty, disease infestation,

unemployment, and harsh economic conditions. Therefore, skills and knowledge acquisition through entrepreneurship are indispensable in ameliorating the aforementioned problems, (Ideh, 2013).

Entrepreneurship implies the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunities. The mind-set of most educated elites is shaped to seek and secure paid employment in the public sector of the economy. The average Nigerian undergraduate considers employment in the private sector as a waiting-strategy. Patrick and Felix (2013) stated that before the year 2000, self-employment was held in ridicule. A self-employed graduate was considered to be a mark of frustration not minding the profit derived from such ventures. Such graduates are often considered very inferior in the midst of other colleagues. This picture was so because higher education did not emphasize education for self-reliance but rather prepared their products to meet the needs of the public service.

The word "entrepreneur" is widely used, both in everyday conversation and as a technical term in management and economics. Its origin lies, in the seventeenth century France, where an "entrepreneur" was an individual commissioned to undertake a particular commercial project by someone with money to invest. In its earliest stages this usually meant an overseas trading project. Such projects were risky, both for the investor (who could lose money) and for the navigator-entrepreneur (who could lose a lot of money). The intertwining of the notions of entrepreneur, investors, and risk is evident from the start. A number of concepts have been derived from the idea of the entrepreneur such as entrepreneurial entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial process. The idea that the entrepreneurial is someone who undertakes certain projects offers and opening to developing and understanding of the nature of entrepreneurship, (John, 2015 and Beetseh & Ahima, 2012). Undertaking a particular project, demands that particular tasks be engaged in with the objectives of achieving specific outcome and that an individual take charge of the project. Entrepreneurship is then, what the entrepreneur does. Entrepreneurial is an adjective describing how the entrepreneur undertakes what they do. The fact that the adjective suggests that there is a particular style to what entrepreneurs do. The entrepreneurial process is what the entrepreneur engages. It is the means through which new value is created as a result of the project the entrepreneurial venture, (John, 2015).

The twenty first century has been tagged the "entrepreneurial age." This is because nations are being shaped by entrepreneurs, men and women who have taken their destinies in their own hands by risking their resources (time, money and energy) in establishing and running their own businesses. Patrick and Felix (2013)

noted that the impact of globalization and internationalization, driven by information revolution, has introduced change and competition for survival and prosperity in global business. Uncertainty, instability and the need for innovation and entrepreneurship for national survival and prosperity become imminent. It is this driving force that has propelled the budding elites to embrace entrepreneurship. As paid employment is in serious lack and there is the need for survival, the average Nigerian youth and adults are challenged to seek for innovative ways to ensuring good financial stand.

Entrepreneurship development has been taunted as a means of stimulating economic growth through the generation of greater employment opportunities, the development of local technological base and conservation of foreign exchange earnings of national government, (Joy, 2013) and (Chorun, Beetseh & Ameh, 2015). The term entrepreneurship has been used by various authors to mean various things. Joy (2013) perceived entrepreneurship as something being at the heart of an economic development task. Entrepreneurship is driven by the motivation of individuals who are seeking to satisfy their personal goals by creating opportunities for personal fulfillment through economic activities. The prospect at which they look at entrepreneurship was its economic function. This implies that all action directed at securing and carrying out those economic activities that satisfy personal goals can be regarded as entrepreneurship. Patrick and Felix (2013) and Beetseh & Ahima, (2012) describe entrepreneurship as an alternative to unemployment. They noted that in a situation of high unemployment and other deprivation of social or economic matter, persons are frequently forced to choose entrepreneurship as the only alternative to no job, and no income. In this scenario, individuals may be pushed into entrepreneurship, as a last resort. From the definitions given above one can conclude that entrepreneurship has to do with economic development task, the initiative of change, the development of innovative and creative abilities and the creation of enterprise for successful self-employment.

Entrepreneurship education is a programme or part of the programme that prepares individuals to undertake the formation of acquisition of small business. Entrepreneurship education is a planned, systematic and sustained effort at inculcating and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among Nigerians so as to produce a pool of willing, able and successful entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial education is a purposeful intervention by an adult (the teacher) in the life of qualities and skills to enable the learner to survive in the world of business (Patrick and Felix, 2013). Oleabhiere et al (2014) opines that graduates are the worst hit by the spate of unemployment in our society today due to the fact that most of them lack the specific entrepreneurial skill that

will enable them to be self-employed instead of waiting for the government to provide paid employment.

### **Characteristics of a Successful Entrepreneur**

John (2015) sees successful entrepreneurs are most likely than other people to have parents who were entrepreneurs; they also tend to possess unique personality traits. Research reports suggest that successful entrepreneurs are most likely to be inquisitive, passionate, self-motivated, honest, courageous, flexible, intelligent, and reliable individuals. These good qualities are especially important for the would-be entrepreneurs. Successful entrepreneurs are also achievement-oriented; they like to take responsibilities for their decisions, dislike repetitive task, and routine work. They equally dislike doing things in other people's way. Creative entrepreneurs possess high energy and great degree of perseverance and imagination, which combined with willingness to take moderate calculated risks that, enables them to transfer what often began as a very simple, ill-defined idea into something concrete. They convey a sense of purpose and by doing so, they are able to convince others that they are where the action is. They know how to lead an organization and give it momentum.

### **Functional Education**

Functional education is seen by (Mbachu, 2013) as a process of learning which aids in the provision of skills, preparation of youths for economic, social and political function, transmission and transformation of social, economic and cultural structures from generation to generation. She sees functional education as that which provides students with the knowledge, skills, and motivations to encourage entrepreneurial success in variety of setting. It is that which provides for authentic entrepreneurial learning so that one can better equip students to be ready for entrepreneurial or self-employment. It has to be offered at all levels of education in developed or developing countries for sustainability. Functional education is an instructional strategy that integrates the teaching of literacy skills and top content to move learners more successfully and quickly towards their education and employment goals. Functional education is education for sustainable human resource development, (Mbachu, 2013). Functional Education is "the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Functional education must lead to solving day-to-day problems as they come, as well as improve living conditions of recipients for sustainable development

### **Concept of Human Resource Development**

Nwaham (2013) states that education is universally recognized as a form of investment in human capital, which in turn yields economic benefits and contributes to a country's future wealth by increasing the productive capacity of its people'. She opines that high quality education is believed to be an investment in human capacity for the purpose of yielding economic benefits, enhancing efficiency and productivity of the nation's economy. Therefore, functional education is needed for productive human capital. She also states that investment in human capital has positive effects on the supply of entrepreneurial activities and technological innovation.

Human resource development is the process of development of human skills or competence in producing goods and services in the society, (Nwaham, 2013). Nwaham (2013) citing Okafor (2005) refers to human resource development as the totality of the energies, skills knowledge and experiences available in a country. She also states that human resource development is the integrated use of training organization and career development efforts to improve individuals, groups and organizational effectiveness. Human resource development develops the key competencies that enable individuals in organizations to perform current and future jobs through planned learning activities.

Mbachu (2013) refers to human resource as the tonic experience, knowledge and abilities of an individual household or a generation which can be used in the production process. Zalakoro (2017) views human resource as "human capability and productivity acquired through knowledge and skills gotten from education, training, and experience and facilitated by enabling environment." She stresses that human resource has four cardinal aspects namely; educational system, health, social services and good government. She further stated that human resource can only be assessed by the growth of the nation's socio-economic system, which includes literacy rate, level of industrialization and quality of infrastructural provisions.

Gbamanja (2012) opines that education is human resources development. Education works as a self-contained system that strives to provide skills and knowledge that enables youths to engage in meaningful activities in the society. This makes it apparent that the critical assets of a country are its human resources. The effective utilization of its human resources is the crucial factor in determining the growth and prosperity of the economy of the nation. Apparently, the transmission of sustained functional skills and talents in individuals make education a cornerstone for national development and advancement. Gbamanja further stated that for education to play these roles and produce the needed human resource capacity some fundamental alteration

in national educational policies should be undertaken in some or all the following areas:

1. The national allocation of resources to the fields of education
2. The allocation of resources within the existing educational system to other levels of the system
3. The percentage of students completing different levels of the educational system
4. The percentage of students from different social strata
5. The percentage of female students the complete levels of the educational system
6. The objectives and delivery of the curriculum and content

Nwaham (2013) states that human resources development is a framework for the expansion of human capital within an organization through the development of both the organization and the individual to achieve improvement in the level of performance. Human resource deals with human beings whose behaviour and performance in any organization is influenced by at least four variables namely; capability/ability, motivation, role perception and environmental contingencies. Nnamani (2012) in Nwaham (2013) specially stated that human resources are different categories of personnel that provides different services in the teaching process. He grouped them into;

1.
  - a) Professional (which include specialists in different areas)
  - b) Highly skilled and experienced staff that provide administrative and other services
  - c) Other professionals like medical doctors, business executives etc.
2. Non-professionals; the non-professionals are those who lack professional skills of the job they do, but still provide, services in the teaching/learning process

### **Sustainable Entrepreneur/Functional Education for Human Resource Development**

With the increase in population and the subsequent economic meltdown, Nigerians are now faced with the realistic ways of designing several survival strategies to be able to cope with existing excruciating economic realities. Unemployment created an avenue for innovativeness and the pride of the Ivory tower was properly defined to face the realities of the time. Undergraduates are now made to look inwards to the job creators and not job seekers. This gave birth to entrepreneurship studies in virtually all the higher

institutions in Nigeria, (Patrick and Felix, 2013). A sustained entrepreneurial education that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is necessary to sustain the growing population.

Education no doubt, is human resource development. Gbamanja (cited in Sunday and Ngozika 2014) observed that education works as a self-contained system that strives to provide skills and knowledge that enable youths to engage in meaningful activities in society. This makes it vital that crucial assets of a nation are its human resources. Entrepreneur and functional education is vital for effective human resources which will determine the growth and prosperity of the economy of a nation. Humans (entrepreneurs) who possess the needed attribute are the foot soldiers who can do the work in trenches today and lead the troops tomorrow for sustainable human resource development.

### **CONCLUSION**

An entrepreneur is better taught when there is an entrepreneurial village which will serve as the workshop for the course. In most universities (Patrick and Felix, 2013) stated that since there is no workshop to actualize the knowledge of entrepreneur, hence most students perceive entrepreneur as a mere theoretical course. This application of the knowledge acquired is not properly harnessed. The society has greatly affected the perceptions of undergraduate students in entrepreneurial education.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It therefore recommended that:

- 1) Government should provide different services that will make teaching/learning of entrepreneurship education possible for every higher institutions
- 2) Government and its agents should provide an entrepreneurial village where students will benefit from workshop materials for human skill development
- 3) Entrepreneurship education should be made compulsory at all levels of education
- 4) There should be constant development and retraining of personnel who are assigned the responsibility of entrepreneurship education
- 5) Government should do all it takes to encourage, motivate, build and promote an enabling environment that allows healthy competitiveness, inventiveness, creativeness and self-reliance for sustainable economic development.

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