

# Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Art Education towards Achieving Sustainable Job Creation in Nigeria: Strategies for its Teaching

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## Abstract

Countless Nigerian youths within the country are unemployed, yet the problem of joblessness can be effectively tackled through the development of practical skills in Fine and Applied Arts and the entrepreneurial skills to manage it. What is essential for achieving the national objective of vision 2020 is for teachers to become more proactive especially as it relates to the strategies they adopt for teaching entrepreneurial skills in schools. It is pertinent for teachers to recognize entrepreneurship as a scientific discipline and employ new teaching strategies which will be able to help students move on with their entrepreneurial intentions or to take up entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts as a career.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial skills, Fine and Applied Arts, Poverty Eradication

## 1. Introduction

Although the Nigerian government has continued to assure jobless Nigerians that it will be able to provide jobs for them thereby raising the hope of helpless jobseekers abound in the country, however creating the stipulated number of jobs promised by the government has continue to remain a mirage. It is a misnomer for people to think that government can create jobs for millions of people within the country. Across the world, governments do not create jobs but only provide conditions under which millions of jobs can be created (Ayodele cited in Ikponmwosa 2010). The case of Nigeria can therefore, not be an exception.

The major dilemma that Nigerian youths are faced with is the inability to create jobs and businesses which will enable them not only become self-employed but also become entrepreneurs who are able to create jobs and employ others and this situation is without doubt, the cause of the incidence of unemployment in Nigeria today. Nnamani (2007) observed that many youths in Nigeria have almost lost focus of the future which has left them in a complete aberration. He further observed that graduates in skill oriented field of study (Fine and Applied inclusive) known for its capability for equipping learners with skills that enhances self-reliance and self-employment continue to search for paid employment instead of creating jobs that can employ others. He also added that the practices promoted by school are not enough to encourage the students to look differently to the local community needs as a potential for new work opportunities. This is what is essential for achieving the national objective of vision 2020.

This paper is of the view that the problem of unemployment in Nigeria requires a more radical approach than making promises of the provision of paid employment to the teeming youths that continue to flood the labour market. It is believed that the development of practical skills alone is not enough to make an entrepreneur out an individual. Equally as important is development of those entrepreneurial skills required for managing these practical skills. The main thrust of this paper therefore, is to provide the strategies for teaching entrepreneur in skills, required in Fine and Applied Arts with a view of repositioning the subject for the achievement of the national objective of vision 2020.

### 1.1 Rationale for Entrepreneurship Education

A number of studies have been conducted and a lot more are ongoing that seem to provide a rationale for the need to include Entrepreneurship Education in the school curriculum

Studies of scholars like McClelland, (1961), Begley and Boyd (1987), Bird (1989), Blanchflower and Oswald, (1998), Allinson, Cheli, and Hayes,( 2000), Baron and Markman,( 2000), Chattopadhyay ( 2002), Gatewood, et-al (2003)Baum and Locke (2004),Crane (2007), and were indicative that entrepreneurial success is linked, more than any other factor, to the personal characteristics of entrepreneurs. Another study conducted by Fernald et-al (2005) revealed that many of the characteristics attributed to leaders are also associated with successful entrepreneurship. The study also revealed that the characteristics that were most regular among entrepreneurs are visionary, risk-taking, achievement-oriented, being able to motivate, creativity, flexibility, persistence, and patience. These attributes are in consonance with Kuratko and Hodgetts (2007) conception of entrepreneurship which included the willingness to take calculated risks, the ability to formulate an effective venture team, the creative skills to marshal necessary resources, the skill to build a solid business plan, and the vision to recognize opportunity when others just see chaos, contradiction, and confusion. With the problem of unemployment on the rise, resulting in the need to include entrepreneurship education in the school system and with more entrepreneurial behavior been encouraged to initiate new business startups and in the established organization,

there is a strong need to expand the requirements for entrepreneurship education as well as develop adequate teaching strategies that will suit each subject.

Obviously becoming one of the leading 20 economies of the world by the year 2020 is a challenge which calls for Nigeria to be more pragmatic and proactive within the framework of national development, as well as in the context of a global economy. In 2004, the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo developed a strategic blueprint towards addressing the nation's development challenges the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (Centre for Democracy and Development 2008). Although the programme focused at developing reform strategy to address the economic, social, political and institutional issues and promised to implement a priority action plan of wealth creation, create seven million new jobs, alleviate poverty and eliminate corruption during its first four years of implementation cycle (which was to span from 2004 to 2007). However the programme failed in achieving these basic objectives (CDD2008).

The administration of late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua also proposed to provide a way forward for Nigerians by setting the target of catapulting Nigeria to become one of the top 20 economies in the world by the year 2020. They tagged this ambitious long term perspective plan; Vision 20-2020 and went ahead to inaugurate the National Council and the National Steering Committee on Vision 20-2020(CDD2008). This vision was therefore the Yar Adua Administration's Poverty Eradication Programme as well as economic policy and which was tagged the 7-point agenda. The 7-point agenda is outlined as follows:

- Energy Emergency
- Agriculture and Food Security
- Wealth creation and poverty alleviation
- Land Reform
- Security of lives and property
- Human capital development including compulsory education for children
- Transport revolution including improved mass transit

However vision 2020 of the late President Yar Adua which was also adopted by the present administration, must as a matter of urgency be connected to the mainstream of the global socio-economic aspiration in order to reposition Nigeria to be able to tackle the challenges of unemployment as well as take advantage of promising opportunities in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The You Win Nigeria of President Goodluck Jonathan focuses on the provision of jobs through the development of small scale entrepreneurship scheme while the first phase targeted the youths the second phase is focused on carrying the women along.

Indeed the educational sector has a role to play in achieving Vision 2020 in Nigeria. If this is done correctly, the future of Nigeria as a country will not only be secured, education will also be used to enhance job and wealth creation. Nigerian schools at all the levels therefore must demonstrate a commitment to the development of basic skills, and the entrepreneurial skills and values needed to achieve and sustain economic goals. Education remains at the core of national stability and security. It is also an instrument for political and economic growth and development (Abdullahi 2007). The role of education in providing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for Nigeria's vision 2020 as it relates to tackling the problem of unemployment would require a well-articulated and functional entrepreneurship education.

Presently, there is a strong recognition that development and poverty reduction should be closely tied to job creation through self-employment. Fine and Applied Arts education can play an important part in this regard. If the rudiments of art are properly manipulated, it has the capability to fend for the youths' interest as well as providing capable hands to viable sectors of the national Economy thereby creating stable and sustainable economy (Ikponmwo, and Ayuba 2009).

#### **1.1.1 Why study entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts education?**

According to Ikponmwo and Ayuba (2009), Art is an indispensable daily human activity whose knowledge has resulted in the designs and production of fabrics. To them, the appreciation of aesthetic values is what results in people's urge for the best ornament to adorn the body. Fine and Applied Arts is valuable for enhancing the aesthetic quality of the environment. More importantly, developing skills and competencies in Fine and Applied Arts can help prepare an individual for a useful living within the society. For centuries, Art had been a means of passing on skills from one generation to the next by the process of enculturation to ensure continuous existence of knowledge skills (Fafunwa, 1974 and Mbahi, 1999).

Wangboje (1975) defined Art as both process and product where serious and concrete assemblage of ideas and feelings about the world are put together and concretized. Ikponmwo and Ayuba (2009) saw the process as involving the utilization of people's creative minds in doing a thing. For them, creative minds produce originality, novelty, resourcefulness, flexibility, innovation and invention. What this connotes is that Art provides novel and new solution to problems, new methods or ways of presenting aesthetic objects or form for the development of a nation (Adedokun, 2000). The inexorableness of the fundamentals of Art in technology cannot be underrated. This is because Art as a tool for technological development has contributed to the development of the technology of many nations. It therefore means that without Fine and Applied Arts, there

would be no technology. Any resourceful entrepreneur can therefore capitalize on the entrepreneurial opportunity in Fine and Applied Arts.

Prior to today, the teaching of art in Nigeria focused more on the provision of only practical skills without any form of entrepreneurial training to cater for the practical skills that have been provided to students. , we should however understand that for an individual artist to be an effective entrepreneur require much more than the possession of art practical skills alone. Equally needed is the entrepreneurial skill which can be effectively utilized to manager these art practical skills. The basic training in entrepreneurship is important assist the artists discover the entrepreneurial procedures so as to help them become entrepreneur who are able create job and employ others.

#### 1.1.2 Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts

Entrepreneurship concept describes the creation of new business ventures as an observable phenomenon. General Information of **College of Fine Arts (2003)** at the University of Texas stated that within the last two decades, entrepreneurship has transcended the bounds of business textbooks by becoming a synonym for progressive thought in a myriad of realms. The document under reference, further observed that what has transpired in these last two decades is an understanding that entrepreneurship is a paradox, stating that while the definitions of entrepreneurship are many, knowing *exactly* what entrepreneurship is however, is far from complete. The document equally observed that even with this uncertainty, entrepreneurship is emerging as an empowering philosophy in many aspects of western culture. Indeed, many societies are searching for new ways of solving the problems of unemployment and entrepreneurship seem to be the preferred method of find solution to the problem.

Authors like Forbes (2005), Alvarez and Busenitz (2003) observed that people with entrepreneurship behaviour have entrepreneurial cognition; they think differently and they use different strategies for taking decisions. According to Fayolle, (2005), the interest in creating new business, partnerships, self-employment and career by students of higher education is increasing. Heinonen and Akola,(2007) however observed that despite this interest, the concept of entrepreneurship learning is still not very clear in many institutions.

This paper will not attempt to define entrepreneurship different from the description above but instead, it will only attempt to understand the forces that lead to an entrepreneurial path in Fine and Applied Arts. In the Fine and Applied Arts education, entrepreneurship can be a very potent tool. However, instead of just buying into the concept of a business-based perception of the term, it expedient to explore entrepreneurship within the context of the Arts and Design based career. The goal should be to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success, in the management skills.

There are certain vital entrepreneurial skills which an Art student must possess to be able to function efficiently. These skills must be effectively developed in the individual if he is to be able to adequately manage manipulative practical skills inculcated in Art. Sultana (2002) provided the following as entrepreneurial skills required by students.

- working in groups
- Developing self-control in critical times
- planning and organisation
- developing one's own potential
- discussing issues and negotiating deadlocks
- time management
- project management
- evaluation of one's activities
- presenting projects or business plans
- finding solutions to problems at work
- concentration
- detecting dangers and concern for safety at work
- interpreting regulations, instructions, orders and directives
- choice of one's career
- handling an interview
- writing of a curriculum vitae and presenting one's portfolio
- financial management of one's earnings
- keeping up to date with one's field of work
- preparing for temporary unemployment
- awareness and experience of information technology
- literacy and numeracy

Sultan (2002), equally observed that students need to develop in them certain positive attitude so as to successfully operate as entrepreneurs. These attitudes are to appreciate:

- that business requires long term planning
- that motivation in education is important for one's future career

- and generate respect for all trades and professions
- the need of workers to join groups
- the importance of accountability and initiative
- life-long education.

### 1.1.3 The Challenges of Teaching Entrepreneurships in Fine and Applied Arts in Nigeria

Scholars like (Mbahi, 1997 and 1999) have identified some factors hindering the acquisition of Fine and Applied Arts skills by students as:

Poor state of infrastructure (and absence of studios and workshops), lack of Fine and Applied Arts equipment; poor state of maintenance of existing equipment, poor motivation of teachers and poor funding of art education.

Another major factor inhibiting entrepreneurial skill acquisition by Fine and Applied Arts students in school is the type of education provided by Nigerian education system which prepares its recipients for white collar jobs or paid employments. According to Okoli and Onwuachu (2009), this type of education is certificate-conscious and places much emphasis on knowledge of content and passing of prescribed examinations while skill acquisition is de-emphasized. Thus, employment into the work force is based on certificates obtained and not on what the individual can do or the skill he or she possesses. In order words, the education system prepares its graduates mainly for "white collar jobs or paid employment. The result is that the graduates from Nigeria education system are not equipped with appropriate skills and competencies necessary for self-employment and self-reliance. He also observed that this problem is further compounded by the exclusion of entrepreneurship education from school curriculum thus, graduates have no entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to set up small business ventures should they fail to secure paid employment on graduation.

The present situation demands for the inclusion of entrepreneurship education into the curriculum at all levels of education. The challenge facing Nigeria today is how to develop functional entrepreneurial skills in Fine and Applied Arts education through effective teaching and learning.

### 1.1.4 Strategies for Teaching Entrepreneurships in Fine and Applied Arts Education

To effectively teach entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts, three sets of objectives were developed by the College of Fine Arts (2003) at the University of Texas. The first sets of objectives were geared towards the development of intellectual and personal skills of the students. They were outlined as follows:

- To establish an entrepreneurial perspective that will serve you over your lifetime.
- To demonstrate how your innate creativity, intellect, training, and experience can be channelled to an arts (or arts related) career.
- To demonstrate the risks, rewards, satisfaction and power inherent in an entrepreneurial lifestyle.

The second sets of objectives were concerned with basic business as well typical professional skills critical for developing an arts career. These objectives are:

- A general understanding for- and non-profit business structures
- A basic knowledge of marketing and communications
- A basic understanding of what is expected of a professional artist in the marketplace.

However, the last set of objectives developed by the College of Fine Arts(2003) at the University of Texas outlined out a broader set of skills.

- A basic understanding of the context of the Arts: Arts culture, policy and management.
- How economic, political and world events affect Arts culture and the individual artist.
- How markets are shaped by the Arts, behaviour and perception.
- The challenges that face the Arts: audience development, financial support, popular culture, perception, etc.
- Successful practices in popularizing the Arts.

**Against this background, a structure which** provided students the opportunity to explore the feasibility of a self-chosen Arts or Arts-related venture (such as starting a gallery, studio or museum; selling your art on-line; creating a theatre company or other methods to produce theatre productions; a teaching studio; a community-based theatre, gallery; music venue; music ensemble; publishing a collection of poetry etc.) was developed.

The focus was to help the students make these Arts ventures a reality through classroom community development. All assignments, readings and discussions should be carefully chosen while principles of Intellectual Entrepreneurship guide the class.

Stanley (2009) was of the view that teachers must be able to present the adequate materials, provide students with an interactive learning environment as well as guide the classroom discussion. He provided two types of activities that students of entrepreneurship should be involved. They are: classroom activity and outside investigation. Indeed, within the classroom, the students aspiring to become entrepreneurs in Fine and Applied Arts should be guided on how to create a small enterprise or ways of becoming self-employed in a pragmatic and innovative way. They should be able to detect, evaluate, and implement entrepreneurship opportunities; define the goals and aims of the business they wish to run; do the business plan; market research; know the best sources for financing as well as manage the business. They should also understand the principles of concept attainment (Stanley 2009). To this end Stanley (2009) suggested that within the classroom, activities should

involve:

**Teacher Presentation:** This involves a formal presentation of the session's topic by the teacher. Talking points and overhead slides should be utilized as part of the instructional media.

**Students Interaction:** Time is provided for students to perform hands-on work or meet with teams. Worksheets are developed and provided for such student activity.

**Class Discussion:** This includes class discussion of current events, journal entries and any other work that has taken place outside the classroom.

**Book Discussion:** Time is allowed for a Book Discussion where students are able to compare notes and share their impressions of the book Fine and Applied Arts or entrepreneurship that they are studying.

**Previewing Next Class Sessions:** Time is provided for previewing the next class. This activity provides the teacher the opportunity to introduce the topic for the next class as well as provide assignments for students.

Stanley (2009) also suggested that there was need for students to process new experiences through outside investigation. He stated that beyond the classroom, it is important to be proactive where the lessons learned from the theories are translated into practice. Students (either as small groups or individually) may be involved with simulations or placed in actual situations by developing a logical planned activity. The following ideas/activities were suggested by Stanley (2009):

**Field Trips:** The closest Fine and Applied Arts outfit serves as an inspiring experience to the prospective entrepreneur. Students will be able to benefit from trips within and outside their environment. After such field trips, teachers can ask students to prepare a summary report of the services and products they learned about.

**Interviewing Entrepreneurs:** Art entrepreneur teachers and their students can equally identify local entrepreneurs who the students (individually or as a team) can interview. A format for reporting back on the interview should be provided by the teacher.

**Internships:** This is another valuable outside-the-classroom experience which can be very valuable in helping to place students in part-time or holiday job, Industrial Training (IT) or Students Industrial Works Experience (SIWES). Schools should plan to leverage the contacts made through mentors to make internships a reality for the students.

**Teamwork:** To simulate the business world, students are expected to work as teams whenever appropriate. This would help to build critical communication and negotiation skills, as well as allow students to share difficult and time-consuming tasks. Through team work, students would also be able to learn how to use critical thinking and communications skills to evaluate opportunities identified by others within the team. This can help build self-esteem and promote an in-depth understanding of this aspect of the entrepreneurial process.

#### **Concept Attainment**

Evaluation is very vital in determining if the aims and the objective of any programme have been met. This can also be referred to as assessment or concept attainment. During the assessment exercises, the focus should be on students discovering a concept. Assessment is expected to focus on students' application of skills (i.e. were they able to categorize? classify? and distinguish?); synthesis skills (how well did they explain? show relationships?); and evaluation skills (how did they judge? justify? draw conclusions?).

#### **Computer Technology**

Technology skills are vital to today's business operations. It is therefore imperative to incorporate technology as a teaching medium. The computers, will enable students to complete writing assignments in a Word document; use Excel ( i.e. spread sheet) for developing budgets; use Power Point to give presentations and also explore the vast amount of current information on the internet when performing research (most business and interior decoration publications are available on-line subscription). Students can also develop their Fine and Applied Arts using Computer Aided Design application software.

#### **1.1.5 Conclusion**

It is necessary that Nigerian schools provide an answer in an efficient way, to the challenges of unemployment in Nigeria. It is imperative for students to be furnished with adequate entrepreneurial skills if they are to become successful entrepreneurs. Above all, teachers in Institutions should be able to recognize entrepreneurship as but an artistic and a scientific discipline and implement effective teaching strategies which will be able to equip students with the entrepreneurial skills needed to take up entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts as a career.

#### **1.1.6 Suggestions**

The following recommendations were also made:

- Colleges of education and education faculties in the universities should develop an Fine and Applied Arts teacher education programmes to include pedagogical content knowledge and entrepreneurial skills acquisition which seems lacking in the present Art teacher education programme.
- Art education curriculum developers should restructure the current Fine and Applied Arts curriculum which has strong focus on learning of content in the curriculum to include entrepreneurial skills to cater for the unemployment problem presently been experienced in the country.
- Government should reform the curriculum to be proactive, competency based and interactive so as to be able to provide students with the necessary skills for future employment and self-reliance.

- Government should Invest in professional development of art teachers in order to up-date their knowledge and skills in Fine and Applied education and entrepreneurial skills.

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