

# Career Guidance and Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurship education is a necessity in addressing the problem of unemployment of school leavers (secondary and tertiary education graduates) in Nigeria and the promotion of employment market for those who cannot employ themselves. Entrepreneurship education aims at preparing and equipping students of secondary and tertiary educational system with relevant theories, knowledge and practice of entrepreneurships. It is to prepare students to venture into job creation and nurturing of entrepreneurship successfully in emerging economies of Nigeria. The paper focuses on career guidance and entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship skills needed in careers, examples of entrepreneurs required in Nigeria, how to identify entrepreneurship skills and theories supporting career choice development. The role of self-concept and self-esteem in career choice. The paper concludes with recommendations on the need to place emphasis on entrepreneurship education in order to save the Nigerian school leavers and graduates from idleness and save Nigerian economy from diving downward.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Education, Career.

## 1. Introduction

Career is a chosen life time job one is interested in and has the ability and skills to perform such a job. Not all students in secondary and tertiary schools are aware of which careers they should choose. Guiding this group of students through career choices is the duty of the counsellor to help the each student find their right career. Career choice is often viewed along school subjects that a student has interest, ability and capability in them. Training for a career is one thing and finding a job to practice is another big problem, especially when there is a glut in the job market. To avoid being jobless after leaving school, it is important that secondary and tertiary schools prepare their products against any odds in the world of work by providing them with skills. Skills are practical know-how that are acquired through training. It should be a deliberate action by the governments (Federal, States and local) of Nigeria to provide skills to their students through entrepreneur education. The goal of entrepreneur education should be to enable secondary school leavers and tertiary school graduates employ themselves and become employers of labour in their entrepreneurships. Entrepreneurship education will benefit the individual students and government of Nigeria in that students after graduation from schools will engage themselves in worthwhile activities that will contribute to the growth and development of Nigeria's economy. This picture will be true if only entrepreneurship education is made compulsory to students whose chosen areas of studies and careers are not technical or skill oriented. Entrepreneurship education shall become a success story in Nigeria if its curriculum is developed and then integrated with other school subject curricula. The integrated curricula will benefit the students who will graduate from school with one or more skills in chosen careers and vocations.

## 2. Career Guidance and Entrepreneurial Education

Entrepreneurship and vocational education are used interchangeable in this paper. The two mean one and the same here. Entrepreneurial education is a deliberate way to sensitize the young people at different and at all school levels to acquire skills in any vocation of their choice so as to avoid unemployment in the future. Entrepreneurship education is the art of equipping a learner with relevant knowledge, theories and skills with the purpose of preparing a learner in establishing a small scale or big business for self employment, self development and possibly employing others. The term entrepreneurship is a concept often used to describe risk-taking behaviour that results in the creation of new opportunities for individuals and organizations. True entrepreneurs are usually occupied with "how to" rather than "why not". Entrepreneurship, even though viewed from different angles, is unanimously associated with common concepts such as newness, organizing, creating wealth, benefits and risk-taking. (Ehu, Goyit & Dakung, 2009). Therefore, no one definition can fit in for all of these concepts because entrepreneurs are found in all professions. Schermerborn (1993) defines an entrepreneur as a risk-taking individual who takes action to pursue opportunities in situations others may fail to recognize as

such or even view as problems. Muyil (2011) says of entrepreneurship as the process by which individuals pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control. The process is made possible when the individual has some relevant skills needed for a particular entrepreneurship. Skills required for any entrepreneurship are interest, foresight, abilities, capabilities and competences necessary for advancement in the profession. Entrepreneurship education in this paper has a different meaning from what the general meaning is. Echu, et al (2009), state that it is apparent we are in the age of entrepreneurship. In this paper, entrepreneurship is limited to vocations like carpentry, poultry, masonry, hospitality services, motor mechanic, ceramic/pottery, poultry keeping, bee keeping, gardening, painting, computer software development, shoe making and mending, music, acting and electronic maintenance, etc. Entrepreneurship education is a necessity in addressing the problem of school leavers and graduate unemployment in Nigeria and the promotion of employment market for those who cannot employ themselves. Entrepreneurship education aims at equipping and preparing the school leaver and or graduate with relevant theories, knowledge and practices of entrepreneurship. It prepares the students to venture into creation and nurture an entrepreneurship successfully. One of the major goals of guidance and counselling in Nigeria is for vocational guidance or career choice. (Damsa.2004).

Serious secondary school work begins in Junior Secondary School Two (JSS2). The authors of this paper will like to see entrepreneurship education being taught from Junior Secondary School 2 (JSS2), and as a minor discipline with the major degree discipline in the universities. After graduation, graduates may choose to seek employments in the area of their major or start an enterprise using the skills of the minor area in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education curriculum should be developed and made compulsory in Nigeria's educational system, beginning from JSS2 and moving to the tertiary level of the educational system. It should be geared at stimulating entrepreneurial skills development. Practical approach should be emphasized in teaching of entrepreneurship skills. The present work is interested at finding the possibility of integrating entrepreneurship education curriculum into that of the secondary school and curricular of different careers at the tertiary levels, where skills are not taught. Entrepreneurship education should be made a core subject. After leaving school, the graduate, whether from the secondary school or tertiary institution, will use the skills of an entrepreneur to employ self at the event of no employment opportunity out there.

## **2.1 Entrepreneurship Skills Requirement in Careers**

A skill is defined as the ability to do a thing very well. (Hornby,2006). It should be said to be an ability to exhibit some degree of competence in performing an act, through the use of knowledge and required skills. Skills are competences or attributes necessary for any venture. Skills must be acquired through formal and non-formal means. They are prerequisites for entry and success in any career venture. The European Commission (2009) in its contribution said that entrepreneurship skills are potentialities acquired and developed through relevant training to demonstrate competence. (It is) Application of the skills is expected to help in motivating and encouraging entrepreneurship success in many settings. Having entrepreneurship skills enhances and reduces chances of failure in entrepreneurship because skill is important in running an entrepreneurship. Takaya (2008) sees skills as catalysts to successful entrepreneurship. This is because entrepreneurship focuses on job creations which lead to self economic independence and development. School leavers and graduates from universities will require adequate entrepreneurship skills as entrepreneurs are bedrock of any nation's industrialization. There are general skills required in any type of entrepreneur, technical or managerial and these are:-

1. Self-motivation: For creative business ideas and set strategic plans.
2. Self-confidence: Mentally and emotionally prepared for the new ideas.
3. Ethics and Morals: Good ethics and morals are required if working with others or your clients/customer.
4. Effective Time Management: Prioritizing daily goals and using time effectively is important to becoming a successful entrepreneur. Flexible work schedules.
5. Sales: Your honesty, integrity, persistence and initiatives keep the market open for you to make sales.
6. Finance: Be able to keep track of expenses as well as over all progress of your business.
7. Persistence: Despite challenges and failures, persist to succeed. Never give up. Keep tolerance level high.
8. Communication: This is very vital in any and all life endeavours.
9. Flexibility and adaptability are requirements for success in entrepreneurship.
10. Initiatives: An entrepreneur must be initiative to succeed and stay in business and not be a copy cart.

## **2.2 Examples of Specific Entrepreneurs and their Skills**

Entrepreneurs are found in all fields of human endeavours. A few examples are listed below.

1. Tailoring: Clothes making. Ability to cut and sew cloth materials into clothes or dresses in addition to the general entrepreneur skills. Tailoring falls into Holland's RIASEC hexagon.
2. Mechanic: Ability to detect faults in machines/engines and fix them. Physical strength is a requirement in this field. Mechanics are Realistic (Doers) in Holland's hexagon.
3. Baking: Knowledge of baking ingredients and their nutritional values and ability to bake well. Good health is

needed too. Artistic (Creators) in Holland's hexagon.

4. Carpentry: Ability to know different types of woods and other materials needed for wood work. Physical strength and not being nervous are part of the requirements. Realistic and Artistic oriented people.

5. Computing: Knowledge of hard and soft ware in computers and ability to repair and understanding the workings of the computers and even developing simple programmes in soft ware. People in this field are those in Holland's Realistic, Artistic, Investigative and Conventional sides of the hexagon.

6. Hospitality services: Knowledge and skills in catering services; event hosting, interior decorations. They are helpers in Holland's hexagon.

Some of the general skills are inclusive among those listed against each example given above.

### **2.3 Procedures for Identifying Entrepreneurship Skills**

Procedures for identifying entrepreneurship skills are logical steps taken to execute a task. These steps are, education and practice. Education exposes one to know his/her talents and gifts.

Interest and ability in a particular vocation is learnt through the exposure education gives him/her. Constant practice helps in sharpening the skills needed for the talents or gifts.

School activities like art and craft, sports, plays, club and freedom for the students to demonstrate what they love and can do. School should expose students to various activities they can train on and acquire skills for practice. Provision of instructional materials and how to maintain them is also a way for identifying entrepreneurship skills in students.

### **2.4 Success of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

Entrepreneurship education is synonymous with vocational education; it is skill and practically oriented. This type of endeavour shall succeed if the governments of Nigeria follow these steps:

- i. Get the teachers/instructors in place by sending them for training in several entrepreneurship subjects.
- ii. Develop or upgrade entrepreneurship curriculum.
- iii. Build and furnish workshops and laboratories in schools and tertiary institutions.
- iv. Train technicians for maintenance of the equipment in workshops and laboratories.
- v. Government should continually fund entrepreneurship education.
- vi. Provision for loans with little interest rates should be given to entrepreneurs to establish their ventures and entrepreneurships. Governments should stand as guarantors.

## **3. Theories of Career Choice and Development**

Career choice and development has many theories, among them are Super's Development Self-concept theory, Holland's Personality Theory, Parson's Trait-factor Theory, Caplow's (1954) Chance Theory and Schumpeter's (1949) Theory of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Motivation and Super's Development Self-concept Theory. Super in (1963) propounded the development self-concept theory which is the most comprehensive and widely used theory among other theories in the family of career theories. The theory states that one's attitude and beliefs, emotional factors and type of education one has, the environment and reality factors impinging on the choice, one's work experiences, ability to postpone satisfaction and rewards, one's socio-economic level, his/her personality, characteristics and those of his/her parents continue to influence the choice of one's career.

Super developed formalized stages and development tasks for each stage over life span. The stages are: Ages 0 – 14, growth stage, 15 - 24, exploratory, 25 – 44, establishment, 45 – 64, maintenance and 65+, time of reduced output. Growth stage is when self-concept is formed, interest, attitudes, needs, general understanding of the world of work develop. Exploratory is the period for "try out" through classes, work experiences, collection of relevant information and tentative choice of career is made. The establishment stage is the period when entry skill building and stabilization on the job begin to take place. Maintenance is a stage of continual adjustment process to improve position. The final stage is that of reduced output and preparation for retirement from work.

Super's development self-concept theory assumes that (a) each stage has its own development task and (b) one's self-concept is involved in the process of development. Counselling of people of this stage should be based on counsellee's age and the tasks he/she should be able to undertake. Any non readiness of the counsellee or student in Junior Secondary two (JSS2) in this work should be what the counsellor should set out to remedy.

3.1 Holland's Personality Theory Holland's (1959) theory states that the choice of a vocation is an expression of personality. His theory holds that people choose occupations and works that are akin to their personalities. This means that a person's choice of an occupation is an expression of his personality. The theory groups mankind into six different personalities which are Realistic (Doers), Investigative (Thinkers), Artistic (Creators), Social (Helpers), Enterprising (Persuaders) and Conventional (Organizers). He abbreviated the six personalities as RIASEC.

The theory is rooted on vocational satisfaction, stability, progress and achievements depend on the

congruence or agreement of one's personalities and work environment. Counsellors should consider each student's interest, ability, self-evaluation of different vocations and personality, while helping his students/clients in career choice making.

### 3.2 Parson's Trait-factor Theory

Parson's (1909) theory matches individuals with jobs in respect of ability, intelligence, interest, attitudes, beliefs and value. There is a direct link between an individual's ability and interest with the world's vocational opportunities. Values and needs of the individual are matched with relevant vocations. The counselling needs of the students are that the counsellor observes the individual's personalities so as to make the best prediction of his/her future vocation. Parson came out with 3-step processes for one to choose a vocation, and they are:-

1. The individual has to know himself, his characteristics, interest, abilities and capabilities.
2. The individual has to know the characteristics of occupations, the demands, the needs, requirements and qualities of the occupations and-
3. The individual now has to compare his/her own personal characteristics and needs with those of the occupation before selecting a career.

The strengths and weaknesses of the individual are the cardinal points the counsellor should use in counselling each student in career choice.

### 3.3 Caplow's Chance Theory of career Choice

Caplow's (1954) chance theory is also referred to as Accident theory. The theory states that the degree of freedom which a person has is for occupational choice is hunted by chance factor. Meaning, what is available in the society is what one is exposed to and is bound to choose what is available and not what one is interested in. The theory is very true in today's situations in Nigeria where school leavers and university graduates accept jobs that are available even if they did not prepare for them. What chance brings is what is taken as a vocation. Implication of this theory to counselling is that counsellors should prepare their students for both their chosen careers in life and occupations that may come to them by chance. The chance situation can be avoided by means of providing students with skills in some vocations of which they can develop into entrepreneurs.

### 3.4 Schumpeter's Theory of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Motivation

There are theories propounded to increase the understanding of what entrepreneurship is about. One of these theories is that of Joseph Schumpeter, propounded in 1949. Schumpeter believed that entrepreneur helps the process of development in an economy. He said that an entrepreneur is the one who is innovative, creative and has a foresight. According to him, innovation occurs when the entrepreneur:-

- i. Introduces a new product.
- ii. opens up a new market.
- iii. finds out a new source of raw material supply.
- iv. introduces new organization in any industry.

The theory emphasizes on motivation, ignoring the risk and organizing abilities of an entrepreneur. Schumpeter's entrepreneur is a large scale businessman who is rarely found in developing countries, where entrepreneurs are small scale businessmen who need to imitate rather than innovate. The present work is on development of vocational skills and how to use the skills in setting up small business and or entrepreneurs. Economic theory of entrepreneurship states in parts that, entrepreneurship and economic growth take place when the economic condition is favourable. Economic incentives are the main motivators for entrepreneurial activities

## 4. Self-concept, Self-esteem and Locus of Control in Career Choice

Self-concept is a requirement in career choice. It comprises self image, self acceptance, self perception, self identity, and self-worth. A person who has positive self-concept thinks about his/her successes and good qualities, whereas, a negative self-concept thinks about failures and his/her inadequacies. It is therefore important for individual in the verge of deciding for a career to develop a positive self concept and believing that he/she will succeed in making the right choice of a career, vocation and an entrepreneur and grow well in it. Self-esteem is the feelings of worth one places on him/herself. Self-esteem gives the individual some sense of identity and awareness of competence. It is a mirror that gives the individual a sort of feedback from the external world. The International Encyclopedia of Social Science, volume three (3), explains that career guidance, career exploration, and career exposure are vital before deciding on which career best suits the individual. Pattanayak (2009) emphasizes the need for career planning. He warns that planning a career is not a guarantee for success. Pattanayak sees career and marriage as institutions where compatibility is important in each. Achieving high in a career requires compatibility between the employee and the job.

## 5. Conclusion

The unemployment market situation in Nigeria calls for quick attention in the area of entrepreneurship education. School leavers and university graduates and especially those who do not possess any skills are among those whose faith in securing jobs in Nigeria now is very limited. The picture is so gloomy and discouraging to those in secondary schools and tertiary institutions.

The unemployment situation can be reduced if not solved by providing skills to those in educational institutions and those that are out of schools but ready to learn some skills. The introduction of entrepreneurship education in the country will provide many with skills for self employment and making them possible employees in the near future.

Entrepreneurs are known to contribute much toward the growth and development of any country's economy. Enhancing the unemployed with skills and adopting entrepreneurship education in Nigeria will reduce unemployment and less dependency on governments to provide employments for citizens that are unemployed.

## 6. Recommendations

For the benefit of the unemployed school leavers and graduates and Nigeria as a country, these recommendations are made:

1. Both Federal and State government should embark on training of teachers/instructors in the area of skill development for entrepreneurship education.
2. Equipment and tools for entrepreneurship education should be provided in schools.
3. Technicians be trained for maintaining the equipment.
4. Entrepreneurship education should be well funded.
5. Entrepreneurship education should have centers for training people who are no longer in school but wish to benefit from the education.
6. A sound curriculum should be developed for entrepreneurship education.
7. Secondary school leavers not continuing with education should be granted loans (with government as guarantors) to establish their businesses.

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