**A REVIEW OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION POLICY IN NIGERIA**

 **(A SHORT PAPER)**

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**Objectives**

As part of Nigeria Government policies to encourage entrepreneurial attitudes among the students and youths, entrepreneurship education introduced to all tertiary Institutions as a compulsory course to all disciplines. Aside from the theoretical aspect of entrepreneurship education, students are encouraged to participate in practical training, business seminars, conferences and other entrepreneurial activities. This paper reviews the current state of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, especially at the level of higher education by identifying the Government policies, current achievements, challenges and future development. More so, the study reviews various developmental policies adopted in few other developed countries that practising entrepreneurship education in their educational systems. The research and observations from researchers show that entrepreneurship education is a prime mover of youth empowerment, invention, innovation and economic sustainability, among others. The study observes that Nigeria Government financial support towards entrepreneurship education has continually increased. To provide a good result, the implementation of the policy needs review in terms of training and retraining of course facilitators, engagement of the professional and competent personnel in the discharge and direction of affairs of entrepreneurship education. More so, the availability of adequate materials and equipment for students training, and most importantly, the conducive business environment.

**Literature Review**

Traditionally, entrepreneurship education described as education that imparts the required skills to set up a new business (Rahim et al. 2015). Schumpeter (1984) argued that entrepreneurship is very significant to the growth and development of economies. Bechard and Toulouse (1998) define entrepreneurship education as formal teaching that informs, trains and educates potential entrepreneurs towards business creation and development. Entrepreneurship education is essential in many aspects as it can provide students with an understanding of business—its purposes, its structure, and its interrelationship with other segments of the economy and society (Cheung, 2012).

In his submission, Kourilsky (1995) states that entrepreneurship is the ability to recognise opportunity, marshal resources in the presence of risk, and set-up a business venture. Zhi-rong (2006) points out that entrepreneurship education, very need to establish entrepreneurship education system and to develop excellent teachers.

The Federal Government of Nigeria made entrepreneurship education compulsory for students of higher educational institutions irrespective of the area of specialization. The development concerns overall objective to continuously foster entrepreneurship culture amongst students and faculty with a view of not only educating them but to also support graduates of the system towards establishing and also maintaining sustainable business ventures, including but not limited to those arising from research (Prof. Rufai). Hytti and O’Gorman (2004) claimed that educational institutions play a role in providing entrepreneurship education. A study conducted by Kolvereid and Moen (1997) showed that entrepreneurship graduates have stronger entrepreneurial intentions than other business graduates.

The development of entrepreneurship has essential benefits in both; economically, by contributing to job creation and growth and being crucial to competitiveness, and socially, by unlocking personal potential, promoting societal interests and contributing to personal fulfilment and achievement of social objectives (The Green Paper on entrepreneurship in Europe 2003).

More so, Waldmann (1997) suggested that entrepreneurship education at the high school level would have a significant impact on the number of students who would seriously consider starting a business sometime after graduation. To obtain a meaningful result from entrepreneurship education, it should involve experiential learning, entrepreneurial training, work-related learning and action-learning (Kolb, 1984, Gibb, 1999, Dwerryhouse, 2001, Smith, 2001). Purposefully, entrepreneurship education should be able to provide the required skills that can impart through the educational system that enable individuals to develop new, innovative plans (Lundstro¨m and Stevenson, 2001; Klapper, 2004). According to Rahim, et al. (2015), entrepreneurship education should be able to provide students with an understanding of a business purpose, structure, and how the business interrelates with society and the economy.

**Methodology**

The research method chose for this study is a combination of primary data and secondary data.

The primary data is from a structured questionnaire. Nigeria has 43 federal Universities, 52 State Universities, 28 federal polytechnics, and 41 State polytechnics. The questionnaires were distributed randomly among the selected eleven (11) universities, fifteen (15) polytechnics and thirteen (13) National college of Educations in Nigeria. The secondary data obtained from Government policy statement documents, newspapers, Education agencies bulletin, and Entrepreneurship Education course curriculum. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) used for the statistical analyses. Descriptive, inferential bivariate and multivariate analytical techniques will use for the analysis of graduates’ responses.

  The study carried out in early March 2019 and late February 2019. In this research work, the technique of simple random sampling used to select a sample of 230 respondents across the selected higher educations. The research focuses on the HE education management, lecturers and students to establish their understanding of Entrepreneurship education policy, their contributions and possible solution to an identified challenges.

**Result and Implication**

Entrepreneurship is of considerable significance to the transformation of nations, politically and socio-economically (Matlay, 2005). Recognizing the importance of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurship development and the economy, Nigeria Government through the Federal Ministry of Education and Education agencies (National Council on Education, National Board for Technical Education and Nigeria University Commission) has taken the initiative by making entrepreneurship subjects compulsory to all students at the nation public higher educations. Findings show that the Nigeria Government support higher education through a scholarship for lecturers that deliver entrepreneurship education for higher degrees from Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention fund and also provides entrepreneurship development building and furnished with the training equipment. Despite the Government financial support, the policies have not been yielding fruitful result based on poor implementation. Most Higher Educations (HEs) do not appoint Entrepreneurship professionals to direct entrepreneurship programs as contained in the policy statement. At the same time, students are not encouraged to exercise their talents through the entrepreneurship activities at their respective HEs - training, seminars, short courses, conferences and entrepreneurship events. The expectation is that the policy review to develop the entrepreneurial attitudes and mind-set of students in the nation’s drive to reduce unemployment and increase in business opportunities which have been the major objectives of introducing the course.

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