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THE NEED TO INTEGRATE ENTREPRENEURIAL CURRICULA CONTENTS INTO ALL SUBJECTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULA IN NIGERIA

by

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Abstract

Changes in social order, technological advancement, the need to adopt new research findings, upsurge/explosion of knowledge, high rate of unemployment and concerns about curriculum relevance have all led to the introduction of entrepreneurship studies as separate subjects/disciplines implemented at secondary school level in Nigeria. As single subject, not all learners will have opportunity to study entrepreneurship in detail. Meanwhile most educators have criticized single subject curriculum for many reasons which include learner's holistic perceptions of the world and the fragmentation of curriculum contents in single subject curriculum. This has rendered regular single curricula mostly implemented in our schools inadequate for the education of learners in this age. Since there could be entrepreneurial contents suitable for integration into all subjects/disciplines, this paper therefore stresses the need to update secondary school curricula such that entrepreneurial contents are integrated into all subjects to make these curricula more relevant to our learners. It also suggests some aspects of entrepreneurial contents that could be integrated into different subjects at the secondary school level.

Key Words: Entrepreneurial contents, curriculum, curriculum Integration.

Introduction

Nigeria as a developing country is facing poverty and employment as two major problems which are the root causes of other social vices such as kidnapping, robbery, insurgency bribery and corruption in all its ramifications. These vices have dented Nigeria's image at the international level. This has led to high demand for better schools, quality education and the need to relate the curriculum of

entrepreneurial education to the needs of the learners and their environments.

Entrepreneurship education had generated much impact in the late 1950's and early 1960s in Europe and is currently a commonly used term in USA and Canada is yet to be fully developed in Nigeria. Adidu and Olannye (2006) explained that entrepreneurship education is engaging the attention of every nation that hopes to inculcate the 21st century coping skills in its citizens.

Entrepreneurship education as defined by Agetu and Nnamdi (2011) is a kind of specialized education given to people that result in their acquisition of skills, ideas and the managerial abilities and capabilities for self-employment. It is purposeful effort toward providing the trainees with the relevant skills, competencies, right type of knowledge and attitudes to enable them manage business outfits effectively. Entrepreneurship education should encompass both academic and practical skills to prepare young people for responsible citizenship and the world of work.

It can be observed that the introduction of entrepreneurship education into the Nigerian school system is a welcome development. The students are by this strategy given the opportunity to develop their potentialities and prepare themselves as job creators and employers rather than job seekers if properly groomed by the teachers. Fostering entrepreneurship attitudes and skills in secondary schools raises awareness of career opportunities, as well as of ways young people can contribute to the development and prosperity of their communities. It helps to reduce young youth vulnerability, social marginalization and poverty.

Since 1969 till now, Nigeria has made several efforts to develop curriculum to address her demands. This has led to curriculum innovations at various times. One of such has been the current secondary education curriculum where entrepreneurial skills are included. Entrepreneurial skills taught at this level are introduced into the

curriculum as separate subjects/disciplines (Obioma, 2014); these are not integrated to cut across the whole curriculum. Whereas, the argument here is that there exist entrepreneurial contents suitable for integration into all subjects/disciplines to enrich them and afford every student the opportunity to learn and acquire entrepreneurial skills. Secondary school entrepreneurship curriculum could be made functional through the integration of entrepreneurial contents across the entire curriculum for effective implementation by the teachers.

This would aid the attainment of objectives of entrepreneurship education by exposing every student to entrepreneurial skills in every separate subject. Among the entrepreneurial attitude competences mentioned by Karmelic (2009) are self-awareness and self-confidence, personal responsibilities, flexibility and adaptability orientation to opportunity, pro-activity and persistence. Entrepreneurial attitude competences are dedication to duty and willingness to accept positive as well as 'negative results of business ventures' (Akudolu, 2000).

How can entrepreneurship education be presented to learners to ensure the acquisition of these knowledge, skills and attitude competences? What type of curriculum should be developed and implemented in this regard?

This paper tries to analyze secondary school entrepreneurship curriculum in Nigeria and stresses the

need to integrate entrepreneurial contents and skills into all single subjects/discipline as an approach to developing curriculum.

Concept of Curriculum Integration

In order to understand the concept of curriculum integration, it is important to briefly examine the term curriculum. Curriculum can be defined as the document, plan or blue print for instruction which is used for teaching and learning to bring about positive and desirable learner behaviour change (Afangideh, 2009).

But according to Duru (2011) curriculum includes subject matter, objectives, personal experiences of the learner and programme of study. Therefore, curriculum could be seen as subject or subject matter taught by the teacher to learners under the supervision of the school. It consists of the topics (contents) which are selected and systematically organized to be taught by the teacher, objectives to be achieved, methods to be employed in teaching the selected contents as well as evaluation strategies to be used in measuring learning outcomes.

Curriculum integration is an approach used to design and organize contents of the curriculum around real life. Udosen (2009) defined curriculum integration as curriculum organization which cuts across subject matter lines to focus upon comprehensive life problems. Integrated curriculum is a broad based areas of study that brings together the various segments of the curriculum into meaningful association. In integrated curriculum, subject matter boundaries are ignored and all the

subjects offered in the school are taught in relation to broad area of study and in relation to one another as mutually associated in genuine relation.

In a typical integrated curriculum design, content selection cuts across subjects or discipline boundaries such that there is no clear distinction in terms of subject boundaries. One major advantage of this curriculum design is that it will enable the curriculum to be of maximum value to learners since it allow the learners to see connections between different subjects and be able to solve real life problems through the principle of 'transfer of learning'.

Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education at Secondary of Education Level

The objectives of entrepreneurship education is to increase the awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option and enhance understanding of the process involved in initiating and managing a new business enterprise. Utulu (2011) outlines four objectives of the entrepreneurship programme to include:

- entrepreneurship awareness;
- business creation;
- small business development; and
- training of trainers.

Entrepreneurship is often associated with such words and phrases as innovative, self motivated, confident, creative, dynamic, resourceful, ingenious, endurance, risk daring, pressure management ability and willingness to accept both positive and negative results of ventures. Also, Akudolu (2010) explained that the entrepreneurial skills and capacities that

learners are expected to acquire through entrepreneurship education include problem solving skills, team skills, as well as listening and empathy skills.

It would appear that the entrepreneurship programme as it is now has not been able to fully cover these objectives. The reason could be because at secondary school level, entrepreneurial contents are selected, organized and taught as separate subject rather than being integrated into all subjects across the curricula. Students undertake entrepreneurship as single-subject without the opportunity to make connections between entrepreneurial curricula content and other single-subject.

The Present Secondary School Entrepreneurship Curriculum and its Implementation in Nigeria

The new secondary school curriculum evolved as a result of major changes in the society. In order to relate education to the needs of the immediate and distant environment of learners and bring about national development, Nigeria as other countries of the world has engaged in curriculum renewals since the first National Curriculum Conference of 1969. As a developing nation, Nigeria is faced with a lot of problems ranging from social, moral, economic and political to technological problems. These have resulted in crisis even within the education sector and in the larger society.

Ironically, the instrumentality of addressing these ills is education. Curriculum and education have been described as Siemens twins that one cannot talk of one without mentioning

the other. If the curriculum goes wrong, the education system becomes doomed. To avoid this, nations find it necessary to modify or renew curriculum to make it relevant to the needs of its users (Kolawale, 2009).

The secondary school curriculum has been restructured into basic and senior. The junior secondary becomes part of the 9-year basic education curriculum which was approved for implementation by NCE in 2005. Among the weaknesses of basic curriculum observed after its first graduate were that it was over loaded and did not incorporate emerging issues and development in the subsector (Obioma, 2014). This led to its further revision which had to be implemented from September, 2014.

The revised Basic Education Curriculum now has ten subject listings. These include English studies, Mathematics, Nigerian Languages, Basic Science and Technology (BST) Pre-vocation studies (PVS), Religious and National Values (RNVE), Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA), Business Studies, French Language and Arabic Language. The pre-vocational studies include subjects like Home Economics, Agriculture and entrepreneurship. According to Obioma (2014), these subjects in the PVS are to be taught as separate subjects.

Also, NERDC proposed for the restructuring of the senior secondary education curriculum and was approved by NCE in 2007. The new curriculum has in group a four compulsory/core cross-cutting subjects that all students must offer irrespective of their chosen field of

study. Group B is made up of four fields of study namely: Humanities, Science and Mathematics, Technology and Business studies while C is made up of 34 trade/entrepreneurship subjects which students must choose one to add to their chosen field of study.

This curriculum has been implemented since 2011 and the first batch of students just sat for the WASCE, NECO and NABTEB in 2014. The curriculum appears like something that could take Nigeria out of the wood because of the various issues and entrepreneurship subjects that are built into it from the basic level. It is expected that students on graduation would acquire at least one trade/entrepreneurship to enable them create jobs for themselves.

Apart from these separate entrepreneurship subjects, there is no integration of entrepreneurial contents into various separate or single subject to allow students see and make connections across subjects in order to broaden their understanding of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial skills should not only be taught as separate subject or discipline in the curriculum if all students must acquire entrepreneurial skills. It should be incorporated into all subjects in regular curriculum to enrich students' experiences. Although entrepreneurship education could be taught as a single subject, this is not the most effective way of entrepreneurial studies. Its effectiveness could be enhanced if entrepreneurial contents are integrated into the entire curriculum.

However, experience from the field shows that many schools do not

have teachers to teach these subjects. The truth is that the implementation of the secondary school entrepreneurship curriculum is faulty largely due to ineffective and/or lack of teachers to implement them. This problem could be reduced by integrating entrepreneurial contents into each subject or discipline so that every subject or discipline teacher can teach. But this would call for training of serving teachers and updating of teacher education curricula for different courses to meet the entrepreneurial need of the country.

Benefit of Integrating Entrepreneurship Contents Across Secondary School Curriculum.

- (1) It would make students to see connections between subject.
- (2) It would help students to solve real life problems.
- (3) It would inculcate enterprising spirit in the student
- (4) It would make students to be "innovative ready".
- (5) It would make students develop entrepreneurial thinking abilities and to also have skills and tools to start their own business plans.
- (6) It would help students to translate problems into opportunities.

Recommended subject Areas for Integration of Entrepreneurial Contents at the Secondary School level in Nigeria

Science: (This includes Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Basic Science and Technology). Science is the bedrock of technological advancement. Objectives of science include

inculcation of process and inquiry skills. Entrepreneurial skills should be woven into science contents. Teachers should emphasize on development of these skills. Students should be made to understand that there is a relationship between scientific skills, scientific discovery and entrepreneurship. They should understand the relationship between laboratory and the markets. That is to say that whatever is invented or produced in the laboratory could be brought to the market for sales. Marketing skills should be integrated into science subjects.

Business Education/ Vocational Education: Entrepreneurship is not synonymous to Business education nor does it mean the same thing as vocational education. The enterprising nature of Business Education would allow for integration of entrepreneurial skills. It would be proper to introduce financial and human management skills that are necessary to set up and manage enterprise. This will also help students to acquire the potentials of becoming employers of labour.

Economics: Integrating entrepreneurship concepts into existing economics curriculum for secondary schools would bring out the reality of the courses. This will give students wider perspective of the subject.

Government: Entrepreneurial contents like taxation could be important in Government curriculum. It would also be necessary to introduce government actions, rules and regulations guiding establishment of new business in the country. This would help to prepare he

minds of student on requirement for new enterprise.

History: History curriculum could be a good place to introduce entrepreneurial contents. It would be necessary to discuss how entrepreneurs and enterprising has helps to change human lives.

Conclusion

Academic and practical skills of entrepreneurship education should be integrated into all subjects and disciplines in secondary school curricula to prepare students for responsible citizenship irrespective of the field of study. Fostering entrepreneurship attitudes and skills awareness of career opportunities and make students contribute to the development and prosperity of their societies. Therefore, it is necessary and highly recommended that entrepreneurship should cut across subject boundaries.

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