

## INCORPORATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT CURRICULAR IN UNIVERSITIES FOR JOB CREATION AND SELF RELIANCE IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Nigeria faces a lot of unemployment challenges which contribute significantly in the hike of insecurity and insurgency problems in every nook and cranny of the country. This might not be unconnected to the yearly turnout of hundreds of thousands of graduates being produced by educational institutions across the country that could not be absorbed in the labour market. This paper highlights the need for integrating entrepreneurship education in the curricular of Educational Management in Universities to prepare Educational Management students for self-employment and reduce over dependence on government jobs. To this end, the paper after conceptual clarifications, examines the factors that are responsible for unemployment in Nigeria such as population growth, skills mismatch, insecurity and social instability, among others. Further, the paper highlights the relevance of integrating entrepreneurship education in Educational Management such as enhancing employability, self-employment and fostering innovations. Skills in entrepreneurship education were also examined in the paper as well as challenges bedevilling the integration of entrepreneurship education in Educational Management curriculum. The paper concludes that incorporating entrepreneurship education in educational management curricular in universities helps in making graduates job creators instead of job seekers. Based on this, the paper suggests the need for adopting strategies such as curriculum review, teacher training, collaboration and partnerships, experiential learning, establishment of entrepreneurship clubs and competitions, in order to ensure effective integration of entrepreneurship education in Educational Management curriculum for job creation and self-reliance.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Educational Management, University, Job Creation, Self-reliance

### Introduction

Nigeria faces a lot of unemployment crisis which has contributed significantly in the hike of insecurity and insurgency problems in every nook and cranny of the country. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022) reported that the unemployment rate in the country, has in the fourth quarter of 2022 reached a staggering percentage of 33.3%. This

might not be unconnected with the yearly turnout of hundreds of thousands of graduates being produced by educational institutions across the country that could not be absorbed in the labour market. This might be due to lack of provision for employment by the government, inadequacy of the job opportunities or other reasons. Thus, if this trend is not overcome, unemployment will continue to threaten the peaceful existence of Nigeria as a nation. Based on this, students of Educational management in universities need to be exposed to entrepreneurial skills through entrepreneurship education in order to prepare them for self-employment and job creation because, entrepreneurship education has the potentials of equipping individuals with knowledge, skills, and mind-sets that are necessary for initiating businesses and creating job opportunities for self-reliance. Therefore, integrating entrepreneurship education in the context of Educational management as a programme of study can help empower students with entrepreneurial skills while also fostering innovation within the field. The main thrust of this paper is to advocate for integrating entrepreneurship education in the curricular of Educational management in order to prepare the students for self-employment and reduce over dependence on government for job. To this end, the paper after conceptual clarifications, explained the factors that are responsible for unemployment in Nigeria. Further, the paper highlights the need for integrating entrepreneurship education in Educational management, justifies the skills in entrepreneurship education, and challenges of integrating entrepreneurship education in Educational management curriculum. Finally, recommended strategies for integrating entrepreneurship education in Educational management curricular were justified and conclusion was drawn for consideration.

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

Entrepreneurship Education has been defined by Hisrich, Peters, and Shepherd (2017), as an educational approach that aims to equip individuals with the knowledge, mind-set, and abilities needed to become successful entrepreneurs. By providing theoretical knowledge, practical training, and experiential learning opportunities, entrepreneurship education empowers students and aspiring entrepreneurs to take initiative, think critically, and take calculated risks in the business world.

Educational management refers to the administration, organization, planning, and coordination of educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities. It encompasses various aspects such as budgeting, staffing, curriculum development, policy implementation, and overall improvement of educational outcomes. According to Bush and Middlewood (2013), educational management deals significantly with issues related to effective operations of schools and colleges which involve the application of managerial principles, techniques, and strategies to achieve goals and objectives in an educational setting. In essence, educational management focuses on providing a conducive learning environment, both physical and psychological, for students and ensuring that the institution operates efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, educational management involves leadership and decision-making skills. Thus, educational managers are responsible for guiding and motivating teachers and staff, as well as making informed decisions related to curriculum, resources, and policies.

Job creation has been defined by ILO (2012) as the process of generating new employment opportunities within an economy or a specific organization. It involves the establishment of positions or roles that individuals can engage in to earn income and

contribute to the overall workforce. Job creation is a crucial aspect of economic development and is often seen as a measure of the health and vitality of an economy (European Commission, 2013).

Self-reliance, on the other hand, refers to the ability of individuals, communities, or nations to meet their own needs, either through independent efforts or by reducing dependence on external support (UNCTAD, 2016). It involves developing skills, resources, and systems that enable individuals or groups to be economically and socially self-sufficient (Lutzenhiser, 1993).

### **Factors Responsible for Unemployment in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, several factors were responsible for unemployment. These include:

- I. **Rapid population growth.** Nigeria has experienced significant population growth over the years, which has resulted in increased competition for limited job opportunities. According to the National Population Commission of Nigeria, the population is projected to reach 398 million by 2050, creating immense pressure on employment generation (National Population Commission, 2018). Okeke, Odo and Ideh, (2019) further lamented that the country's workforce is expanding at a faster rate than the available job opportunities, leading to a substantial gap between the number of job seekers and the vacancies available.
- II. **Insufficient infrastructure.** Inadequate infrastructure, including power supply, transportation networks, and water supply, poses a significant challenge to job creation and self-reliance. The manufacturing and service sectors are particularly affected by unreliable power supply, leading to reduced productivity and constrained growth (Adeyemi, 2020).
- III. **Skill gaps and mismatch.** It has been observed that there is a significant mismatch between the skills possessed by job seekers (school graduates) and the skills required by employers, contributing to high unemployment rates. Oluwatobi, Efobi and Olurinola, (2015) contends that there is mismatch between the skills possessed by job seekers and the skills required by available job opportunities. Nigeria's education system faces challenges in equipping graduates with the practical skills and employability competencies demanded by the labour market. As a result, many graduates struggle to find suitable employment despite having academic qualifications. The World Bank reports that Nigeria faces challenges in providing relevant and quality education and fostering the necessary skills for employability (World Bank, 2020).
- IV. **Limited access to finance.** Many aspiring entrepreneurs and small businesses in Nigeria face difficulties accessing affordable and adequate financing options. This lack of access to capital hampers the establishment and expansion of businesses, hindering job creation and self-reliance (Ajefu, 2020).
- V. **Inadequate policy implementation.** Systemic challenges related to policy implementation, corruption, and bureaucratic inefficiencies impact Nigeria's job creation efforts. Despite the presence of policies aimed at fostering economic development and employment, successful implementation remains a major challenge (Adeleye & Conroy, 2020).

- VI. Insecurity and social instability. Nigeria has faced security challenges, including insurgency, terrorism, and communal conflicts, particularly in certain regions. These security concerns deter investment, disrupt economic activities, and hamper job creation efforts (United Nations Development Program, 2020).
- VII. Country's overdependence on oil as its primary source of revenue has contributed to the unemployment crisis. The volatility of the oil industry, coupled with insufficient diversification of the economy, has limited job creation in other sectors (Akpanung & Effiong, 2021). This leaves many job seekers with limited options and exacerbates the unemployment problem.

### **Sacrosanctity of Integrating Entrepreneurship Education in Educational Management**

Integrating entrepreneurship education in the context of Educational management in Nigeria has a multitude of benefits. This is because, several studies attested to this fact. For example, a study by Fayolle and Liñán (2014) found that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial attitudes, intentions, and self-confidence. Another study by Hatak, (2015) demonstrated that such education can enhance entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial alertness, and entrepreneurial intentions of individuals. Here are some specific benefits of integrating entrepreneurship education in Educational management:

- I. Enhancing employability. Incorporating entrepreneurship education in Educational management equips students with transferrable skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, making them more desirable candidates in the job market (OECD, 2016).
- II. Fostering innovation. By intertwining Educational management with entrepreneurship, students are encouraged to think outside the box, identify opportunities, and create innovative solutions that could address the societal needs (Fayolle & Liñán, 2014).
- III. Encouraging self-employment. Entrepreneurship education empowers students to pursue self-employment opportunities by leveraging their knowledge of Educational management. This can lead to the creation of new businesses, contributing to economic growth and reducing unemployment rates (Henry, Hill & Leitch, 2005).
- IV. Developing business acumen. Integrating entrepreneurship education helps students understand the core principles of business management, including financial literacy, marketing strategies, and organizational skills. This knowledge equips them with a solid foundation for successfully running their own Educational management-related businesses (Fayolle & Liñán, 2014).
- V. Promoting social impact. By combining Educational management with entrepreneurship, students can identify ways to address environmental or health-related challenges through entrepreneurial initiatives. This can lead to the development of sustainable solutions that benefit society (Pittaway & Cope, 2007).

## **Skills Obtainable in Entrepreneurship Education**

According to Hisrich, Peters, and Shepherd (2017), Kuratko, (2017), as well as Shane and Venkataraman. (2000), entrepreneurship education equips students with entrepreneurship skills. Entrepreneurship skills are the set of abilities, knowledge, and competencies possessed by individuals to identify, assess, and exploit business opportunities effectively, while also managing risks and uncertainties to create value and ensure the success of their ventures. These skills are essential for entrepreneurs to navigate the complex and dynamic world of business. Hisrich, Peters, and Shepherd (2017), Kuratko, (2017), and Shane and Venkataraman (2000) maintained that these skills include:

- I. Creativity and Innovation Skills. This is the ability to generate new ideas, think outside the box, and adapt to changing circumstances.
- II. Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills. Effective problem-solving skills and the ability to make sound decisions under uncertain and ambiguous conditions.
- III. Persistence and Resilience Skills. The mental fortitude to bounce back from setbacks, overcome obstacles, and maintain focus and motivation.
- IV. Opportunity Recognition. Skill. The skill to identify and spot market gaps, customer needs, and emerging trends that can be turned into viable business opportunities.
- V. Market Research Skill. This is the ability to conduct thorough market analysis, understand customer preferences, and assess potential demand and competition.
- VI. Risk Assessment Skill. Deals with assessing the risks and rewards associated with a business opportunity and making informed judgments to mitigate risks.
- VII. Leadership and Team Building Skills. This is the capacity to inspire, motivate, and lead a team effectively, fostering a collaborative and productive work environment.
- VIII. Financial Management Skill. Deals with the ability to manage financial resources, budgeting, forecasting, and financial planning, including understanding cash flow, profitability, and investment.
- IX. Marketing and Sales Skills. These are the skills related to effectively promoting products or services, understanding target markets, developing marketing strategies, and delivering value to customers.

## ***Challenges of Integrating Entrepreneurship Education in Educational Management***

Scholars such as Odili and Anyanwu (2019), Nwagbara and Ezeh (2017), Obaje and Mbaeke (2020) are of the opinion that integrating entrepreneurship education into the Educational management curricular in Nigeria is an important endeavour that comes with its own set of challenges which could deter effective implementation of the said curriculum. These include:

- I. Lack of awareness and understanding. Many teachers, students, and policymakers may not fully grasp the potential benefits of integrating entrepreneurship education into Educational management. This lack of awareness can hinder the development and implementation of suitable programs and curricula.
- II. Limited resources and infrastructure. Nigeria faces various resource constraints, including inadequate funding, outdated teaching materials, and insufficient technological infrastructure. These limitations can impede the effective integration of entrepreneurship education into the Educational management curriculum.
- III. Teacher training and capacity building. Teachers play a crucial role in delivering entrepreneurship education. However, limited opportunities for professional development and training programs focusing on both entrepreneurship and Educational management can hinder the ability of teachers to effectively deliver high-quality instruction.
- IV. Curriculum design and alignment. Designing a curriculum that seamlessly integrates entrepreneurship with Educational management requires careful planning and collaboration between relevant stakeholders. Balancing the acquisition of management knowledge with entrepreneurial skills can be a complex task that necessitates curriculum redesign and alignment.
- V. Evaluation and assessment. Developing appropriate evaluation and assessment methods to measure the effectiveness of integrating entrepreneurship education in Educational management is challenging. Traditional assessment methods may not capture the full range of entrepreneurial skills that students acquire, making it crucial to develop new assessment approaches tailored to entrepreneurship education.

## **Conclusion**

It is worth concluding that unemployment in Nigeria continues to survive in that government alone cannot provide jobs for all the school graduates. Moreover, this will continue to affect the peaceful existence of the country as a nation until something is put in place such as entrepreneurship education to avoid over dependence on government job. The paper indicated how unemployment in Nigeria is occasioned by factors such as rapid population growth, skills mismatch, and overdependence on oil. To address the problem, there is need for policy makers to integrate entrepreneurship education in all subjects including Educational management so as to prepare students for self-employment and self-reliance after their graduation.

## **Recommendations**

In order to successfully integrate entrepreneurship education into Educational Management curricular in Nigerian universities, there is the need for:

- I. Curriculum Review. The curriculum planners and developers need to ensure that the curriculum for entrepreneurship education in Educational management aligns with national educational standards and includes relevant topics such as business management, marketing, and innovation. This will help students see the practical applications of Educational management in real-world business settings.



- II. **Teacher Training.** Government need to provide specialized training and professional development opportunities for Educational management teachers to enhance their understanding of entrepreneurship concepts and teaching methodologies. This will enable them to effectively deliver entrepreneurship education while maintaining subject expertise.
- III. **Collaboration and Partnerships.** This involves fostering collaborations between Educational management teachers, entrepreneurship educators, and industry professionals. By engaging mentors and experts from various sectors, students can gain practical insights, guidance, and mentorship, enabling them to bridge the gap between Educational management and entrepreneurship.
- IV. **Experiential Learning.** There is need to incorporate hands-on, practical experiences into the curriculum, such as internships, apprenticeships, or project-based learning. This approach helps students apply their Educational management knowledge in entrepreneurial contexts, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation skills.
- V. **Access to Resources.** Government needs to ensure access to relevant resources, such as textbooks, online learning platforms, and case studies that link Educational management and entrepreneurship. Additionally, provide adequate facilities and equipment for practical experimentation and application of Educational management concepts in entrepreneurial projects.
- VI. **Entrepreneurship Clubs and Competitions.** There is need to establish entrepreneurship clubs and organize competitions or business pitch events in universities. These activities create platforms for students to develop and showcase their entrepreneurial skills, fostering creativity, teamwork, and leadership abilities.
- VII. **Policy Support.** Advocate for supportive policies from educational authorities and stakeholders. Seek their endorsement and commitment to integrating entrepreneurship education in the Educational management curriculum and allocate adequate resources for training, materials, and infrastructure.
- VIII. **Investing in Vocational Training.** There is a need for prioritizing and investing in quality education and vocational training that align with the skills demanded by the labour market. This would enhance the employability of graduates and reduce the skills gap.
- IX. **Economic diversification.** The government should focus on diversifying the economy, promoting entrepreneurship, and creating an enabling environment for business development.

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