

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELEVANCE OF CURRICULUM CONTENT OF  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM  
IN NIGERIA.**

**BY**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of higher education in Nigeria is to produce graduates equipped with generic skills necessary for the improvement of the nation's economy. Education therefore represents a significant medium of transferring knowledge, values, morals, culture and skills to succeeding generation. The curriculum contents of entrepreneurship education should

enable students to attain the society's expectations and needs. The objective of this paper is to analyse the relevance of entrepreneurship development in the curriculum content of Babcock University which is in accordance with Nigeria University Commission which is a regulatory body that ensures that the stipulated guideline are followed to the letter. The Department of Business Administration and Department of History and International Studies have been selected for this analysis. Secondary data, generated through documentation were used for the analysis and structural curriculum was adopted as a frame work of the analysis. It was discovered that, though entrepreneurship Development Courses offered in the entire department in Nigerian Universities, entrepreneurship courses have a less consideration in the time table, pragmatic curriculum not fully implemented, it is capital intensive among others. It was recommended that Universities should review their time table, review the entrepreneurship curriculum, improve funding of entrepreneurial development projects, establishment of Entrepreneurship Development Centers on the campus among others are recommended so as to reduce the high rate of unemployment.

**KEY WORD:** Curriculum Content, Entrepreneurship Development.

## INTRODUCTION

According to section 8 of Federal Republic of Nigeria (National Policy of Education, 2004), higher education is the education given after secondary education either in Universities, Colleges of Education , Polytechnics and other institutions offering correspondence courses. One of the goals of higher education is to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-employed and to be a useful member of the society .We live in a very challenging era and the solutions to these challenges are in the hands of those responsible for the training of the youths for subsequent generations. Selby (1991) asked the following questions.

- How should schools go about in the task of preparing young people to be more effective in solving societal problems?
- What kind of skills do students need, so as to be self- independent?

These questions demands for the strengthening of entrepreneurship education curriculum in the higher institutions .For higher education to secure a perfect future in Nigeria, the youths needs to be equipped with functional skills and a deeper knowledge in entrepreneurship development .Hence, higher institutions has a major role to play in transcending this practical knowledge to the students . Nigeria University Commission 2015 released list of 129 accredited Universities, 87 polytechnics and 82 colleges of education .If enterprise education is really given a priority with these numbers of higher institutions in Nigeria, unemployment will be reduce. Imam in Okpowa (2010) described unemployment and poverty as a very dangerous development that must be tackled to prevent it dangerous damage to the nation's economy. He opines that inability of graduates to secure gainful employment opportunities is due to the problem of former educational system which did not prepare them for gainful living.

It is observed that so many qualified graduates are roaming around the country searching for jobs .Due to the fact that, university educational system produce graduates without considering the economy, the needs of the people and the society or the curriculum content does not contain much of entrepreneurial education which entails self-reliance and self-employment. Olasunkanmi (2008) proposed the diversification of the curriculum to integrate entrepreneurial education as an integral part of the curriculum, so as to enhance human capacity building, reduction of unemployment and poverty alleviation and ultimately, eliminate incidence of cultism, prostitution, kidnapping and hostage taking which are sometimes associated with unemployment which is common with the youth.

Statistics shows that in the last couple of years, Nigeria's economy is one of the fastest – growing in the world while its people are the most impoverished in real terms. The event of March 15, 2014 in which thousands of youths scampered for about 4,500 job vacancies advertised by the Nigeria Immigration Service leading to the death of about eighteen (18) of the job seekers in an unwanted stampede.

National Bureau of Statistics 2015 published that as at first quarter, unemployment rate was 7.5% as opposed to 6.4% in the last quarter of 2014, and is growing slowly as at now according to World Bank, job creation in Nigeria has been inadequate to keep pace with the expanding working age population. Considering the present economic depression, high level of unemployment in Nigeria and the rising state of insecurity which have enveloped the country, it is apparent for Federal Ministry of Education to restructure the curriculum to accommodate enterprise education, so as to reduce unemployment and other social vices. This paper aims at identifying the relevance of Entrepreneurship development in the curriculum of higher institutions and to fill the gap between cognitive studies and psychomotor base studies for the students.

## **THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM CONTENT.**

A good curriculum is a foundation for any developmental projects in the educational system as it determines what should be learnt in addressing the aspiration of the learners and the need of the society.

Phenis (1962) defined the curriculum as what is studied, the “content or subject matter” of institution. According to Phenis, the content includes the whole range of matters in which the student is expected to gain some knowledge and competence. This range of subject matters includes practical studies that develops skills in the industrial and vocational purpose.

Curriculum content refers to what is taught in school, it is the subject matter that consist fact, concepts, ideas, knowledge within a particular subject.

Therefore curriculum content will be discussed under the following sub-headings:

### **The Pre-Colonial Era.**

Educational development during this period depended on the needs of the various nation-states that makes up Nigeria today. There was no uniform educational objectives, and so no uniform curriculum to meet the varying needs of each community, people acquired

indigenous education in their families, age group and some indigenous institutions. . Pre-colonial was major mark by the absence of formal schooling and hence unwritten curriculum. The informal methods included word of mouth instruction ,story-telling and dramatization .Skills were also learnt by observing and doing. Adedayo (2006).

### **The Colonial Era.**

This was the beginning of formal education in Nigeria, the beginning of documentation and formal schooling. The curriculum was essentially literacy, classical and with religious inclination. This period laid a bad foundations and precedents in educational practice in Nigeria. The curriculum therefore consisted mainly of reading and writing, and later, arithmetic was introduced to ease the problems of calculation and trade. Formal schools were established but the curriculum was meant to produce teachers, clerical officers, and middle level administrative officers that would serve the British Colonial master. Cognitive learning (i.e learning which promotes the intellectual functioning) was the main focus.

### **The Post Colonial Era**

There was an intensified effort to the development of the new curriculum and a new nation after independent in 1960. This was because the colonial curriculum was inadequate to prepare Nigeria for effective society. The bad precedents, the poor foundations acquired from the colonial period continue to paralyze our education enterprise; this was because the curriculum content have not been formed on realistic philosophical principles. A change of the curriculum in Nigeria School was imminent .Curriculum change is always an on-going process. Curriculum development is not static, but dynamic in nature.

Despite the innovations and changes in the school system in the restructuring of curricular to the 6 – 3 – 3 – 4 system, which is currently transforming into 9 – 3 – 4 entity could still be described by some academic as a new wine in an old bottle.

### **CONCEPT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT.**

According to UNIDO (1999), entrepreneurship is the process of using initiative to transform business concept to new venture, diversify existing venture or enterprise to high growing venture potentials. An entrepreneur is someone who practice or sense opportunity where others fear rejection. This confidence and potential should start in the classroom which would aid in the diversification of the economy and reduction of unemployment in Nigeria.

Hornby (2006), similarly, defines development as the gradual growth of something so that it becomes more advanced and stronger in him with the definition of an entrepreneur, entrepreneurship and development. UNDP (2010) also defines entrepreneurship development as referring to the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution building programmes .Entrepreneurship development concentrates more on growth, potential and innovation. According to Saka (2001), entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with knowledge, skill and motivation and to encourage the knowledge entrepreneurial success in a variety of way .The functional need for education is clearly stated on the National Policy on Education to be relevant, practical and acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies as equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute to the development of his/her society. (Albadekomo, 2004).

Odejegba (2005) reported that about 80% of Nigerian graduates find it difficult to get employment every year. What is the problem? And there is no much effort in collaborating entrepreneurs and its institutions. There is a weak kind of interactions or interrelationship between the entrepreneurs and the institutions, no entrepreneurship development center on campuses, lack train personnel, lack of funds among others. This shows the inadequacies and fallacies of the educational policies in Nigeria in attainment of educational objectives.

## **AN ANALYSIS OF BABCOCK UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT COURSES.**

The curriculum of Babcock University (B.U.) is in accordance with Nigeria University Commission which is the bench mark for all universities in Nigeria. Therefore, the following departments will be considered for analysis.

### **DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

The objectives, courses and programmes of this department are design to provide the students with the variety of skills necessary to succeed within the society. The programmes are also designed to give students broad background of knowledge of the free enterprise system within a frame of moral and ethical guideline. And the curriculum is to assist the students with a quality academic programme with basic business skills required for job placement.

The table below shows the summary of the Entrepreneurial Education courses in this department (EEC).

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE
GEDS 400	Introduction to Entrepreneurship skills
BSAD 401	Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial Education courses reflected in general education studies as 2 credit unit and also as one of the departmental course as 3 credit unit making a total of 5 credit unit for the four years programme.

### **DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

This depart is under the school of education and humanities. Department of History and International studies has the following as their objectives:

- to give students a thorough understanding of Nigeria history and historiography in the context of African history and historiography
- to educate students on historical movement of global importance which enables them acquire better knowledge of the world.
- Providing the students with the advantages usually associated with historical training.

The table below shows entrepreneurship skill courses offered by students in this department.

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE
GEDS 400	Introduction to Entrepreneurial

Introduction to entrepreneurial skill is actually a general education studies course, with only 2 credit unit. Meanwhile, 28 credit units is allotted for General Education Studies courses and 129 credit units for departmental courses, making the total of 157 credit units in four years programme . It is clearly seen that entrepreneurial skill courses in Nigerian University curriculum is having less consideration. Indirectly the bookish colonial curriculum content is still influencing our tertiary curriculum content today. The university curriculum should help the student to develop strategic thinking and to channel their ideas into concrete actions.

However, Babcock University encouraged entrepreneurship skill by introducing entrepreneurship development centre, which objectives are:

- to develop entrepreneurship spirit amongst Nigeria and by providing insights into the tools, techniques frame work from functional business enterprise.
- To develop skills of frames to successfully start, manage diversify and expand business enterprises.
- to inculcate other departments within the university so as to provide the rapid innovation of entrepreneurship
- to facilitates easy access to start-up capital to trainees, especially funds from banks and allied financial institution
- catalyst for the industrialization by Nigeria.
- to provide employment opportunities for Nigerians in line with the global of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)

Leading Nigerian businessman and philanthropist Tony O. Elumelu, Chairman, Heins Holding, has encouraged Nigerian youths to secure their future by cultivating an attitude of learning, collaboration and entrepreneurship. He made this assertion while delivering the commencement address on the topic “Employee, employer and empower patterning to success and impact in an uncertain world”. During the postgraduate graduation ceremony of Babcock University in Ilisan Remo, Ogun state on June 4, 2015. According to Elumelu(2015) entrepreneurship can be define as a means by which one no longer wait to see who will give him a job, but rather seize the opportunity to secure his future and in the process creates job and livelihood for others .He charged Babcock University graduates to start now, they should not wait for the perfect time, the right time is now.

He acknowledged some Babcock graduate, who according to him are currently doing well in United Capital Plc. Adeola Oduntan who studied Computer Science and now working with the I.T Department of United Capital plc. Odiri Oginni who studied Accounting in Babcock University and is now leading the Financial Department of United Capital plc. He went ahead to remind the grandaunts that it is a leap of faith to jump from the class room to one’s own business ,and that even the jobber-man com which is now Africa’s leading website was co founded by three Nigerian students. they started the firm at Obafemi Awolowo University campus. He concluded by saying that out of 20000 applicant who applied for entrepreneurship programme from 52 African countries, only one thousand was finally selected by Pan-African selection committee and Babcock graduates were among those that were selected into the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship programme of 2015.

Olanrewaju Oniyitan Founder / CEO, Holistic Business Solutions Nigeria Management, was the best graduating student of Babcock University in 2004 from the department of Business Administration and Marketing. She was selected as one of the Diamond Bank Sponsored class of fifty entrepreneurs selected from nationwide competition. She was a local trainer, seconded with the international team from U.K. She trained awardees in Lagos, Abuja and Enugu. These were University students, the stakeholders in higher educational system has a role to play in invoking this spirit of entrepreneurship in them.

### **RECOMMENDATION FOR CURRICULUM REVIEW ON ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION.**

It is recommended for four years degree programme, that a minimum of 23 credit unit should be allotted for entrepreneurship courses, as follows, four in 100 level(two per semester), four in 200 level(two per semester) Six in 300 level(three per semester) and Nine in 400 level(three per semester) and three for final project work.

Basically the compulsory credit load in a four years programme is 120 at 15 credit unit per semester. If 23 credit unit is taken out for compulsory entrepreneurship development courses, the student will be left with 97 credit unit spread between the degree programme courses and the general studies courses (GSC).Entrepreneurial development courses develops student skills on how to operate the projects as actual business (ESSIA 2012).

Table two below shows how a curriculum of a typical four years degree programme can be restructured to achieve a good mix of General Studies courses(GSC), Entrepreneurial Development Courses(EDCs) and Degree Programme Courses(DPCs).

DPCs make up 53.33 percent of the courses taught in the programme, GSCs is 27.50 percent and EDCs 18.17 percent.

Table 2.Inclusion of EDCs in a four year degree programme.

<b>100 LEVEL</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>200 LEVEL</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>300 LEVEL</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>400 LEVEL</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
GSCs	12	GSCs	12	GSCs	6	GSCs	3	33	27.50
EDCc	12	EDCc	4	EDCc	6	EDCc	9	23	19.17
DPCs	14	DPCs	14	DPCs	18	DPCs	18	64	53.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.00</b>

## **NIGERIA UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT.**

It is apparent to note that at the eve of independence in 1959, the Ashby Commission was set up to review the earlier educational policy because there was a great concern to produce manpower to take over government jobs being vacated by the colonist. At the end of that report, an examination of that policy document reveals that the issue of entrepreneurship or self-employment after school, college and university education was not given adequate attention (Florence 2004). In fact sections 5 of the policy on higher education were absolutely silent on entrepreneurship or self-employment issue or options.

It is observed that the National Directorate of Employment has done a lot through its different products to target the graduate and the unemployed. However more attention is needed to integrate formal education and training policy with employment and entrepreneurship development. Aladekomo (2004), opines that part of the energies and resources of the supportive agencies for providing education and training for the unemployed out of school-youth can be directed to train and equip them on entrepreneurship development skills before they leave school.

However, little attempts have been made to translate the broad term of the university educational policy into consequences for the employment planning. (Florence 2004).

Nigeria's tertiary institutions are so concerned for acquisition of knowledge and skill in that they almost neglect its implication for employment (unemployment). It's a thing of concern the way Business Education, Accountancy, Business Administration are taught in some universities and polytechnics, there is no acknowledgement that the skills directly useful to students after schools as self-employed. I hereby suggested in the university curriculum course content that every possible outcome should be on entrepreneurship development skill (self-employment). This paper advocates on the need to bridge the gap between the Nigerian entrepreneurs and the university. Florence 2004 opines that very few entrepreneurs have been stimulated to have meaningful interaction in the university and polytechnics. There is a lot to be learnt by the university from the experiences of entrepreneurs who have toiled, failed and succeeded, and failed again and succeeded (Olufokunbi, 1995). At the same time the entrepreneurs need to harness and utilize the enterprise of people in tertiary institutions. This inter-relationship can be achieved by

- inviting some academics to spend some time in their establishment e.g sabbatical leave.
- Sending some of the staff for in-service training in tertiary institution.
- Visiting tertiary institutions on invitation to share their experiences with students and staff.
- Financing special research and consultancy especially those that are related to their business.

(Florence, 2004)

## **ROLE OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT SKILLS**

As stated earlier in this paper, little attempts have been made to translate the broad terms of the university educational policy into consequences for the employment planning. Entrepreneurship education is a challenge for developing countries since the content and leaving experiences are yet to be fully integrated into the curriculum in institutions of higher learning. However, the growing demand and popularity of entrepreneurship education in recent years has led to the establishment of special centres in the universities for the delivering of specific curriculum instructions on entrepreneurship and other innovative subject is new venture creation, enterprise development and capacity building. The real essence of entrepreneurship education is to ensure the improvement of educational quality by equipping the young ones with basic skills that will make them functional and productive in the society. (Enu, 2004) Universities are centres of learning and have always been places where the skills and knowledge of students are chiseled to suit the requirements and structure courses in a way that will help their students or graduates to be gainfully employed in the labour market. This acquisition of skill has much implication for the curricula, instructional procedures and on students as a whole. It is a thing of surprise, when considering an increasing attractiveness of qualification in the face of massive retrenchments in the formal sector of the economy and massive unemployment of the qualified. There is a need therefore to link qualification economy to self-employment and job creation. In this regard it is necessary to recognise and command the efforts of the following institutions:

1. Entrepreneurship and Development Centre, Business Administration Marketing Department, Babcock University.

2. Centre for Industrial Research Development of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.
3. Federal and State Ministries of Industries
4. The World Bank and the ILO
5. Non-Governmental Organisations devoted to assisting entrepreneurs.

The Central Bank governor, Mr. Godwin Emefule on this day during an interview in Channels Television remind Nigerians that for our country's economy to improve, we must consume less of import goods and strengthen entrepreneurial development skills hence consuming what we produce. Tertiary institutions definitely have a role to play in preparing the youth for the world of self-employment. This however is equally important for universities to also look inward at the millions of unemployed youths and devise a way of equipping undergraduates to be self reliant before graduating particularly since the dream jobs are no longer there. (Ikechi, 2014).This underscores the importance of the introduction of enterprise education in the curriculum of universities and other tertiary institutions.

### **CHALLENGES FACING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

In Nigeria, more than half of the Nigerian populations are under the age of 30 according to the National Population Commission (2001). So it therefore means that the economy of Nigeria is a youth economy. This reality leaves them without any meaningful means of sustainable livelihood. To make ends meet, they simply indulge in armed robbery, kidnapping and so on. This is why the former president, Obasanjo, mandated that all students in Nigeria, regardless of their major, will need to study entrepreneurship. Despite these efforts, entrepreneurship education still not fully blown in Nigeria, the following problems hinder entrepreneurship development in Nigeria (Ojeifo, 2013).

- (a) Less consideration of entrepreneurship courses in the time table.
- (b) Inadequate funding .There is need for substantial funds for teaching in practical terms for entrepreneurship education;  
For financing startups and expansion of business ventures in order to produce successful entrepreneurs.
- (c) The challenge of drawing up course content to be included in the curriculum of entrepreneurship-related education programme in Nigerian University will require a very long educational process (Blanker, Dreisler)

Lack of effective implementations of pragmatic curriculum which could lead to qualification economy instead of self-employment and job creation economy.

- (g) Faulty foundation: Education is a continuous process, but the introduction of entrepreneurship education in the universities without first doing so at the primary and secondary levels, tend to suggest that the new curriculum lacks the necessary foundation (Charlie 2013)

### **CURRENT PROGRESS BY NIGERIA UNIVERSITY COMMISSION ON ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES:**

Some of the strategic goals set for entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities according to Okafor (2013) include:

1. Promoting entrepreneurship consciousness
2. Addressing the poverty and unemployment problems of the country.
3. Providing new knowledge and spread of enterprise leading to the content delivering excellence in the field of entrepreneurship.
4. Providing the students with ample opportunities favorable environment for hands on training that will enhance their self confidence in the world of entrepreneurship.
5. Enhancing the university's contribution to society by sharing best practices with the wider community through networks and collaborations.
6. Developing linkage with the commercial world e.g industry and Research Centres.
7. Coordinating with all centres of excellence for the development of multi-functional skills.

Universities are therefore expected to achieve these through a well coordinated centre of entrepreneurial studies that is to be headed by a director with expertise in the area. It was in view of this that a round table meeting with Vice Chancellors of Universities and Honorable Minister of Education, Prof. Rukayyatu Ahmed Rufai was convened in Nigerian University Commission in January, 2011. (Sam 2014).

The minister directed public universities to ensure establishment of functional entrepreneurship study centre. The meeting also agreed that Bachelor of Science Degree in Entrepreneurship be introduced as well. The issue of graduate unemployment and under-employment through relevant job creation and poverty reduction mechanism was also addressed, hence the commission has been able to achieve the following:

- (a) Development and entrenchment of Entrepreneurship Education in the Universities.
- (b) Creation of awareness for stakeholders through national workshop for educators and policy makers.
- (c) Development of curriculum (B.Sc and GST) for Entrepreneur Education.
- (d) Facilitation of academic and non-academic staff of universities to train both locally and abroad.
- (e) Capacity building for teachers and other management staff of the programme.
- (f) Development of guideline for the establishment of entrepreneurship study centres including guidelines for the operation of the centres.
- (g) Encouragement of the emergence and inauguration of the Association of Entrepreneurship Education.
- (h) Encouraged the emergence of national club of students of entrepreneurship educators;  
and
- (i) Collaboration with relevant institutes for the establishment of Institution-Based Technology Incubation Centres in Nigeria geared towards creating the required synergy emanating from research output available at universities for a sustainable productive sector.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS.**

For effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian Universities, the following factors should be considered:

Priority should be given to entrepreneurship development courses in the time table

Restructuring of the entrepreneurship curriculum with a view for effective adaptation, so as to solve the problem of unemployment in our society.

Entrepreneurship education should be introduced at both primary and secondary schools so that a solid foundation will be laid at a lower level before University education. This will provoke the interest of the students.

Adequate funding: Entrepreneurship development should be a major part in the University budgets. This will enable the programme to flow at ease.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper argued that Universities should review their curriculum on entrepreneurship development, more consideration should be given to entrepreneurial courses in the time table of each department of higher institution, psychomotor curriculum should be fully implemented, capital and infrastructures should be made available so as to bridge the gap between cognitive learning and psychomotor learning. This is because there is need to link qualification economy to self-employment and job creation economy. This will drastically reduce unemployment in our society.

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