

Repositioning Entrepreneurship in Economics Education: A Veritable Tool for Achieving Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) In Nigeria

Ede, Maxwell O (Ph.D)¹ and Kingsley Akarowhe^{2*}

¹Department of Educational Management, Michael Okpara University Agriculture, Umudike Nigeria

²Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counseling, University of Uyo, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Global economic realities of recession, depression and unemployment tend to put nations in setback, in terms of retarding their sustainable development. The global community in recent times adopted entrepreneurial education as a tool to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs). The Nigerian government has overtime formulated, enacted policies and adopted varied strategies for a favorable sustainable development which have yield little or no benefits. Economics education play the role of inculcating skill and depositions on learners for managerial functions; self-reliance and in the long-run sustainable development. In same vein, entrepreneurship is an outfit whose benefit in sustaining development of a nation cannot be fathom. This however draws the attention of this paper which is directed on the need to reposition entrepreneurship in Economics education a veritable tool for achieving education for sustainable development (ESD) in Nigeria. The paper highlighted the concepts of entrepreneurship, Economics education, sustainable development, as well as the place of entrepreneurship in Economics Education in achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper recommended among others that government should provide soft loans to enable Economics Education graduates with entrepreneurship skills establish entrepreneurship outfits.

*Corresponding author

Kingsley Akarowhe, Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counseling, University of Uyo, Nigeria, Tel: +234-08137640978, E-Mail: kingsmith1172@gmail.com

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a risk outfit backed by financial abilities that is borne out of the need to meet certain needs of individuals in the society. Entrepreneurship is an innovation borne out for the purpose of satisfying societal needs through a sequential combination of factor of production with the aim of setting up a business and on the long-run earn a living. According to [22] entrepreneurship is the process of addressing uncertainty, innovation and resource allocation for the creation of personal wealth and social benefit. Entrepreneurship is the creation of new business, that is, namely start-ups [11,18,19]. Entrepreneurship is a dynamic and social process, where individuals, alone or in co-operation, identify opportunities and do something with them to reshape ideas to practical or aimed activities in social, cultural, or economical contexts [13].

Entrepreneurship is defined as an activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organizing, markets, processes and raw materials through organizing efforts that previously had not existed [22,24]. It is the act and process of discovery, establishing, financing, organizing a business and creating utility for members of a given society for purpose of enhancing development on

the aggregate. Entrepreneurship involves evaluating business opportunities, development of a business plan and determination of the required resources as well as management of the resulting enterprise [9].

Meaning of Economics Education

Economics education is an emerging concept in the world of learning and world of work. It is pertinent to point out that, Economics education is distinct from Economics of education which focuses on the Economics of the institution of education. Economics education is concern with inculcating specified, desirable, employable, skills and values on learners for the purpose of nurturing human resource and national development. Economics education or economic education is a field in Economics that focuses on two main themes; current state of, and effort to improve, the Economics curriculum, materials and pedagogical techniques used to teach Economics at all educational levels; and research into the effectiveness of alternative instructions techniques in Economics, the level of economic literacy of various groups, and factors that influences the level of Economics literacy [12,26].

According to [7], Economics education can be seen as a process, science and product; as a process economics education involves a time phase of inculcating the needed skills and values on the learners, in other words, it entails the preparation of learners for would-be-economics educator (teachers) and disseminating of valuable economics information on learners in other for them to

improve their standard of living; as a science, it means that it is a body of organized knowledge which is subjected to scientific proves/test; and as a product, economics education involves the inculcation of saleable values/skills/disposition on the learners which are desirable by employers of labour and the society at large. Economics education is inextricably linked to the discipline and that its problems often mirror problems with the wider discipline [23]. In relation to the forgoing, Economics education can be viewed as a special branch of economics that inculcate predetermined managerial and sustainable values of the limited scarce resources on learners or a group of people within a particular society. It is worth noting that the attention of Economics education tends to shift from merely managerial but also sustainability of same limited scarce resources.

The following are some of the goals of Economics education [7].
inculcating managerial skills and competencies on the learners.
promoting marketability of the learner for the world of work.
preparing the learners for self-reliance.
increasing standard of living/welfare of learners.
encouraging learners to make prior contribution to sustainable national development.

Concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

The concept of sustainable development was described by the 1987 Brunt land Commission Report [27] as the development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Sustainable development could also be described as an accelerating process of using resources to cater for the present need of man, through a deliberate cost-benefit-analysis on present resources with the aim of enhancing sustainability on the aggregate. According to [24] sustainable development is development that has a lasting and contributes to the quality of life through improvement in natural environments. Additionally, [24] submitted that the natural environments, in turn supply utility to individuals, input to the economic process and services that support life.

Sustainable development is geared toward advancing development in all facet of human endeavor and all strata of the society at large (ranging from political, economic, cultural and religious strata). In same [27] similitude was of the view that the principles of sustainable development programmers must consider three spheres of sustainability which include environment, society, and economy - as well as an underlying dimension of culture. The tenet of sustainable development revolves round the belief that what a given individual, society has is limited in supply, hence there is need to manage it properly for a futuristic purpose. Sustainable development refers to the many processes and pathways to achieve goal (that is, sustainable agriculture and forestry, sustainable production and consumption, good government, research and technology transfer education and training) [27].

The United Nations adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve sustainable development among committees of nations. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the global community in 2015 recognise the crucial importance of education in achieving their targets by 2030 [30]. In 2017, UN General Assembly Resolution 72/222 recognised Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as 'an integral element of the SDG on quality education and a key enabler of all the other SDGs' [30]. While target 4.7 of SDG 4 on education specifically addresses ESD and related approaches, it is clear that the role and impact of education on the whole 2030 Agenda goes much

further. In light of this, [29] supplemented that ESD contribute to the building of a more just and sustainable world through the achievement of the 17 SDGs through education. ESD is simply a tool/framework for the actualization of SDGs.

According to [30] policy, learning environment, training educators, youth and communities are the five priority action areas of ESD. Particularly, ESD emphasis on promoting transformative action, non-formal, informal education, socio-emotional dimension of learning, communities, citizenship in action for structural changes. Similarly, [30] supplemented that increasingly ESD also blurs the distinctions between formal, non-formal and informal education and brings into the process a diverse range of stakeholders from civil society, science, the arts and the world of business. ESD is thought of to have four thrusts, access and retention in basic quality education; reorienting existing education to address sustainable development; increasing public awareness of sustainability; and providing training for all sectors of the workforce [20].

Education for sustainable development (ESD) is also called education for sustainability (EFS)[27]. In other words, ESD is simply education as a means for sustainable development. ESD is an interdisciplinary measure of imparting disposition on individual(s) geared towards sustainability and development in the long-run. ESD is a broad concept bringing a distinctive orientation to many important aspects of education on the whole, including access, relevance, equity and inclusively[27]. ESD aims to provide a coherent interaction between education, public awareness, and training with a view to creating a more sustainable future[27]. ESD centres around inculcating positive values of sustainable development on individuals for a better society. ESD is generally explained as 'integrating the principles and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning, to encourage changes in knowledge, values and attitudes with the vision of enabling a more sustainable and just society for all' [28].

ESD is a learners-centered or learner-oriented approach to sustainable development which tends to impart and transfer positive knowledge of sustainable development on the learner for the latter benefit of the now society and futuristic society. ESD entails incorporating central issues of sustainable development into education and learning and supporting the acquisition of competencies that enable people to live and act in a sustainable way [15]. Globally, it is increasingly acknowledged that ESD represents the main element of high quality education [15]. ESD aims at enabling all people to acquire the values, knowledge and skills required to shape their own way of life and city in a sustainable way [15].

According to [16], ESD is education with a transformative agenda. It is about creating change towards more sustainable ways of living. The ESD perspective complements and broadens quality education in helping to develop the skills, values and attitudes that enable citizens to understand and respond to local and global sustainability challenges and create more resilient societies [19]. It tends to nurture an individual(s) on strategic ways of making rational decision which tends to preserve future generations without deteriorating the present generation.

Entrepreneurship in Economics Education as a veritable tool for Achieving Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Nigeria: Challenges

In Nigeria, the following are some of the challenges facing entrepreneurship in Economics Education for achieving education for sustainable development (ESD).

Teacher-related challenges: The teachers that are to teach the subject Economics (Economics Educators) at different levels of education are inadequate. Adequate personnel/manpower is a driving tool to achieve a functional success of any institution. Similarly,[6] opined that sufficient manpower in terms of competent teachers is an essential factor that contributes to successful manning, management and optimization of set goals, in any institution of learning; be it in developed, developing and less developed countries. In Nigeria, most institutions of learning lack the adequate personnel to manned the educative process. Some Economics educators lack the needed skills and rudiment of the teaching profession. In line with this,[8] found that there is lack of qualified teachers to teach innovation, entrepreneurship and job skill. In same vein, [6] asserted that most institutions of learning in the less developed countries are faced with challenges of insufficient manpower in terms of teachers/lecturers to man their institutions of learning. This often in the short-run, retards learners' ability to understand a given learning objective in the teaching-learning process. This ugly trend has often giving rise to adoption of inappropriate teaching methods; lack of economics educators commitment to learners' academics needs; lack of innovative drive by most Economics educators; and adoption of unprofessional ethics by most Economics educators in the discharge of their jobs. Similarly, most teachers lack the needed knowledge of the subject matter in Economics, to be able to inculcated the right values on the learners, to make them useful to themselves and the society at large by involving in entrepreneurial venture.

Curriculum Deficiencies

Curriculum is a planned learning experience which learners are expected to be taught, which would help them to achieve a particular learning objective in order to contribute positively to the society at large, (before and after) graduation[5]. According to[1] curriculum is geared towards wealth creation, entrepreneurial development and skill acquisition training for self-employment. In most countries such as Nigeria there tends to be problem of curriculum deficiencies. In same similitude, [5] added that in the process of planning the curriculum, curriculum planners do not take into consideration the long term benefit of the curriculum to the learners after a period of learning to utilize the experiences gained to cater for their needs and as well be gainfully employed. In Nigeria, Economics curriculum at different levels of education are more of abstract and theoretical and less practical that would expose learners to entrepreneurial environment for them to be equipped with the saleable skills and competencies for sustainable employment. In light of this, [17] argues that what students learn in Economics classrooms is disconnected from what they would need to know as an economic practitioner in the real world. The resultant effect is inculcating partial knowledge on the learners that would make them not fully equipped for entrepreneurship set-up. Similarly, this hinders them from contributing their quota to societal advancement.

Lack of Professional Body Backing

In developed, developing and less-developed society, the pertinent value of a professional body that oversees the conduct of members cannot be over-emphasized. This is due to the fact that, it helps to ensure that the goals and objectives of the discipline or profession for which is set-up is achieved. A professional body tends to equip practitioners who are members to be efficient and effective in the discharge of their respective duties. In other words, it dictates the modus-operandi for which members are expected to follow for increase productivity and sustainability on the aggregate. In most countries of the world these profession body for Economics education is often ascribed with various names depending on the country it was established, in Australia for instance it is called

Association of Economics Education of Australia (AEEA); Association for European Economics Education (AEEE); National Association of Economics Educators (NAEE) in Chicago; Georgia Council of Economic Education (GCEE), among others. These professional bodies are recognized by the law of their respective countries for quality service delivery and assisting in sustainable development. In Nigeria, the reverse is the case of no strong professional body to help to fine-tune Economics education knowledge to the learners in institution of learning. This may be due to the fact that Economics education has not been accorded its professional recognition. Also, in Nigeria, Economics educators seem not to be united for a common goal of professionalizing the course. The result of this is their inability to form a forum where they analyze common identified issues in the teaching and learning of the subject. It equally eludes them the opportunity to utilize their competencies for the purpose of ensuring that entrepreneurship values and virtues are inculcated on the would-be learners for sustainable development.

Lack of Financial Assistance

Financial assistance which may also be called financial aid is a means of providing monetary support to people to ease their standard of living. Financial assistance may involve issuing loans, and other credit facilities. In any given economy of the world, financial assistance such as small/medium scale loans and other credit facilities are veritable instruments for individuals to embark on entrepreneurial venture. In light of this, small/medium scale loan and other credit facilities are facilitators for those venturing into entrepreneurship. When such loans and credit facilities are provided to learners, they tend to be encouraged to venture into entrepreneurial outfits. In Nigeria most undergraduate and graduates are faced with problem of lack of small/medium scale loans and credit facilities to bring to bear the entrepreneurial values they have learnt especially in Economics. Corroborating to this fact, [2] submitted that financial institutions tend to frustrate aspiring entrepreneurs with some of their ridiculous requirements which tends to discourage young entrepreneurs from obtaining loans from financial institutions. This is often depicted in lack of access to sources of loan; while in some other cases high interest rates are involved if such loans are available. Due to this fact, most learners and graduates resort to personal saving which is not always sufficient to set up any business venture they intended to explore.

Government Policies

Government policies may influence the level of actualization of any institutional mandate. In other words, government policies (fiscal or monetary) may either be favourable or unfavorable in achieving the goals and objectives which an institution is set to attain. Entrepreneurship in Economics education is faced with lack of well-defined government policies on entrepreneurial ventures for her graduates especially Economics educators with required entrepreneurial skills. According to [21] the budgetary allocation set aside to assist and that are available for SMEs (small and medium scale enterprises) growth and development in Nigeria is very small. In light of this, government policies seem to pave little way for the actualization of entrepreneurship in Economics education among graduates. The simple analogy is that, government fiscal policies in terms of its' decrease spending and increase revenue through taxation, tend to have an adverse effect on Economics education, given the fact that most Economics education students have reframed from engaging in entrepreneurial venture due to inadequate government spending on the aggregate. This been that when government spend, people tends to invest more and high taxation dissuade people from investing. Similarly, government monetary policies for small/medium scale enterprise is often not too

favorably in recent times. According to [2] incessant change in the policies of government is one of the major challenges being faced by Nigerian entrepreneurs. In time past, we found out that there's inconsistency in the policies of government which is attributed to the constant change of government [2]. The light of the forgoing give rise to most graduate and undergraduate students of Economics education not to involves in entrepreneurial outfits [2, 21].

Repositioning Entrepreneurship in Economics Education for Achieving Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Nigeria

The followings are ways of repositioning entrepreneurship in Economics education as veritable tool for achieving education for sustainable development (ESD) in Nigeria;

Establishment of Professional Body

For any profession (discipline or field of study) to attain its optimal height and achieve its' set goals, it must have a strong professional body to direct its affairs. This professional body seeks to oversee and direct the activities of her members. Similarly, such a professional body formulates policies; implement rules/regulations; organize workshop and symposia for members which enables them to discharge their professional responsibility effectively which will in turn helps in the actualization of its goals and in the long-run contributing to sustainable development. A professional body for Economics education in Nigeria should be established to assist in organizing, researching and formulating policies for the teaching and learning of Economics at all levels of education. This professional body facilitates the attainment of its set goals of entrepreneurial values and skills on the learners. Similarly, it will help in facilitating entrepreneurial strive among Economics educator for the benefit of the learners and the society at large. Also, this professional body will help enlightened Economics educators to be on suitable ways on how to inculcate entrepreneurial values on the learners in other for the learners to set-up entrepreneurial venture before/after graduation.

Favourable Government Policies

Sustainable development of any nation to a large extent hinges on government policies. In other words, government policy is a double faceted coin, which is used to determine the success of any organization or agency. Government should retool its' monetary and fiscal policies for the purpose of encouraging Economics education graduates in setting up enterprises after graduation. This is could be done by government providing soft loans to graduates that have entrepreneurial skills to establish their own productive ventures. Also, its revenue policies should be such that encourage small/medium scale enterprise and giving tax holiday to new enterprises especially those ones established by young graduates. Those Economic policies of the government are capable of encouraging Economics Education graduates to put much interest on their entrepreneurial aspects of Economics especially when they are aware that they will be gainfully employed on graduation thereby contributing their quota to sustainable development in their immediate society and the nation at large.

Revitalizing Economics Education Curriculum

In Nigeria, Economics education curriculum in institution of learning need to be revitalized to include those necessary basic entrepreneurial skills which could not only make them be self-reliant but be employable at the point of graduation. In other words, Economics curriculum should be design bearing in mind the needs and aspirations of inculcating entrepreneurial, managerial, sustainable skills and competencies on the learners. This may involve the inclusion of

internship programme in the curriculum, which is often geared towards engaging students in practical entrepreneurial venture while in the institution of learning. This will help Economics education students to be acquitted with the necessary skills to set-up and manage a business. This according to [13], could be done as university department will need to change their curriculum every two or three years in order to ensure that the content of their teaching, reflects the rapidly advancing frontiers of technological knowledge. Similarly, this will assist in raising the quality of Economics education graduate for national sustainability which is a prior key in ESD. Curriculum revitalizing should also consider more of practical oriented curriculum in teaching and learning in Economics and less of abstract driven curriculum which is usually geared toward passing examinations. This is due to the fact that quality learning is achieved by doing a particular thing over time repeatedly.

Provision of Loan and Credit Facilities

Loan and credit facilities are keen prerequisite for a person to embark on setting-up an entrepreneurial outfit. In a situation where students are expected to set up a business outfit, the role of credit facilities cannot be overemphasized for them to be fully engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Hence, benchmarking or planning for availability of loan and credit facilities, is an incentive for student to bring to bear what they have been taught. When loans and other credit facilities are provided for Economics education students, it will help them to engage in small/medium scale entrepreneurial businesses exactly at the point of their graduation. Additionally, it will help Economics students to bring to bear what they learnt in practical terms. In a contemporary society or learning environment provision of loan and credit facilities for Economics students will in the long-run enhance societal sustainable development.

In-service Training

In-service training also known as on-the job training is an avenue for teachers to upgrade their skills and knowledge [4]. It is an avenue to improve the productivity of given workers. In educational enterprise, in-service training avail Economics educators of the opportunities to increase their competencies in the teaching/learning process. This in the short-run does not only help the learners but also the society and the nation in the long-run by contributing their quota to sustainable development. This is due to the fact that after quality teaching by the teachers as a result of in-service training, the learners tend to utilize the skills and values learnt and engage in entrepreneur set-up for their benefit and the society at large which will subsequently guarantees education for sustainable development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Despite the economic challenges of recession, depression and unemployment facing Nigeria, which has retarded her developmental strives, repositioning entrepreneurship in Economics education can meet the multifaceted challenges and pave way for education for sustainable development (ESD) which is a framework for achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). This is hinged on the fact that, the Nigeria government as well as other stakeholders are willing to consider and take into cognizance of the following recommendations enunciated by the researchers.

The Nigeria Government should ensure proper remuneration of Economics educators which will motivate them in working out modalities in catering for learners' entrepreneurial needs in the teaching/learning process.

There should be a strong Association of Economics Educators who should be charged with the responsibility of checking the activities of their members in Economics instructional deliveries,

help solve identified instructional challenges in Economics and as well as advise the government appropriately in the area of Economics curriculum contents that are capable of meeting the country's socio-economics developments.

There should be collaboration between Economics teachers in the institution of learning and employers of labour through internship programmes for Economics education students. This will create an enabling environment for learners while in institution of learning relate their theoretical experience with the practical requirements in the labour environment.

The government should through the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) provide soft loans to students on their graduation. This will assist economics education graduates set up their respective entrepreneurial ventures for sustainable development.

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