Renewing University Education Towards Edupreneurship for 21st Century Community Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria like other nations is a composite of communities; rural and urban. But, the situation of development expected in a real community eludes Nigeria environment due to the weakness of the education sector particularly the university. This paper proposed renewing university education towards edupreneurship for 21st century community development in Nigeria. Studies were reviewed in areas of university, community development, edupreneurship. Significance of edupreneurship in university education in twenty first century towards community development for national development, principles of community development and failure of strategic approaches pre and post-colonial era on national growth and development were discussed. Conceptual clarification was made to reinvent universities with the needs of the community through programs, infrastructures, delivery methods, technologies and philosophies that can reflect the community's demands and attitudes for 21st century. It suggests among others; environmental scanning, setting objectives, lead change, localization of knowledge, anchoring engagement, media advancement.

Keywords: University, University education, Community development, Entrepreneur, Educational Entrepreneurship.

Introduction

The current situation in Africa is far from political nor economic but rather a social issue that requires renewing the role of one of the major social institutions, education. The system of education in the last four decades continues to have different outcomes on the socio economic and

political well-being of the citizens. The continent is fast losing its grip on African indigenous culture which set the stage for the development of values in self-reliant, character development, sense of belonging, dignity of labour, community participation, and intellectual development. Africa, in the past, present and in the future is naturally endowed with natural resources with, a growing population in terms of enabling human resources. No wonder, Olaniran et al (2021) predicted 225milion increase in youth population within the age range of 15-24 in Africa by 2055. Despite these, Africa is challenged with dimensions of insecurity such as; climatic change, epidemic, food insecurity, kidnapping, brain drain syndrome, communal clashes, separatists' agitations and resources wastage, high cost of governance, poverty and unemployment. It is observed that the traditional indigenous system of education which had, in the past produced renowned and famous rulers, philosophers, traders, warriors, farmers, weavers and carvers as men and women of substance in various enterprises is imbibed with creative tendencies relevant for contemporary settings.

As a matter of fact, University education (UE) has proved beyond doubt the significance of education in the development of human and material resources in any society. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2017), one of the major role of UE is community development or community services. Developed countries and the emerging economies had their educational system renewed to improve the socioeconomic stance of their citizens using university resources. It continues to foster the production of literate and skilled population as foundation stone for development. In spite of the antecedence and growth, UE in Nigeria used to be leveler of social change, tools for economic prosperity and political emancipation. The proliferation of UE in Nigeria in recent years had fostered different outcomes on the image of the country and the citizens. Firstly, massive production of unemployable graduates; corruptions; poor national economies; dilapidated structures and incessant social vices among youths. Secondly, elitism in Nigeria is observed to be used as tools for divisive tendencies undermining the dividend of democracy (Bashir et al, 2022).

Despite the growing role of UE in the world, African universities Nigeria inclusive were observed to be misled with ill-informed strategies and ideas that are basically alien to environment. Bashir et al (2022) affirmed that Nigeria may continue to record low achievement on national growth and development due to non-involvement of relevant stakeholders in rural and urban communities in planning, consultation and implementation of policies. The scholars concluded

that, the question on UE relevance led to unethical behavior, self-deceptions of impossibilities, poverty, ego and wastages on the beneficiaries which slowed down development in Nigeria.

Previous and recent studies continue to envisage improvement in Nigeria university system to overcome challenges of the 21st century but overlooked the value in key elements that can shape students to be adaptive, innovative and contribute significantly to national growth and development. Bashir et al (2024) found out that untimely, unreliable and ill-informed populace are susceptible to poor indexes on governance which resulted to poor achievement on; gross domestic projects (GDP), Millennium Developmental Goal (MDGs), National Economic Empowerment Developments (NEEDS) and Vision 2020. The unfavorable outcomes of End Sars, Covid 19, strike actions, antisocial behaviours, cashless policy and removal of subsidy are realities in people's lives within Nigeria that displayed many reasons why UE in the country ought to modify courses content, equipped with contemporary knowledge and strategies for the would be future managers of societal institutions in consideration of Nigeria environment.

Community Development is an age long idea or concept in any society with intention to build; trust, shared beliefs, bond and ties. It is peculiar to Africans because of the composition of rural and urban communities spread over geographical entity and the absence of life improved amenities. Community development in the pre and post independent Nigeria according to notable scholars is described as a spirit of self-confidence, self-respect and personal independence as well as to safeguard human rights and achieve social equality through community capacity building, community participation, community vitality, empowerment and rural development (Adekola et al, 2022; Ramsey-Soroghaye, 2021; Aruma et al, 2018; Onyekwelu, 2018). It is observed that fulfilment of economic, social, technological, material and spiritual needs of each and every members of a community in present day requires the involvement of literate and skilled people.

Findings in Bappi et al (2018) revealed that poor enlightment caused low participation in community development due to religious, economic, political ideologies and cultural belief. Onyekewelu (2018) who sees community development as an option to forestall challenges in the rural communities using local resources in south east connoted that ill understanding of the localities and the realities of peoples' need by the political elites facilitating the programmes accounted for wastages of resources and duplication of agendas for the rural dwellers despite greed and its attendant on corruptions. Ovwasa et al (2021) also corroborated (Egbe, 2014) that in spite of abundant resources in the rural communities, absence of literate and skilled people among

members of the communities and their non-involvement in planning and implementation of government projects resulted to socio economic exploitation.

The objectives of community development in Nigeria according to Mbamalu et al (2021) are:

i. To improve life at the local community level based on available human and material resources.

ii. To develop all aspects of community living equitably so as to avoid in balance or neglect of any area of living.

iii. To achieve a self-generating breakthrough in productivity and to raise the production potentials by stimulating the human and physical process of change.

iv. To minimize poverty and unemployment in the communities.

v. To make families economically viable and to cross over the poverty line.

vi. To provide governmental services to communities.

vii. To explore and use technical assistance available from outside the community

viii. To cooperate with and coordinate state and national development plans etc.

Oyalowo (2021) corresponded that the significance of community development association (CDA) as strategic means of improving the lives of the people with or without government intervention structured it as mechanism with a legislative backing for mobilizing and integrating citizens in the grass root into democratic governance. The scholar opine that CDAs through inclusiveness, mobilization through service delivery project prioritizing and participatory approaches through local government enhanced service delivery. Accordingly, section 2 of the Lagos State law lists the functions and objectives of CDAs as follows: i. promotes self-help efforts within the community; ii. raise funds for the implementation of community projects and activities; iii. initiate, execute and monitor community development projects; iv. create awareness about and mobilize residents on their civic duties and community development generally; v. ensures peace and security within the community by collaborating with security agencies and government; vi. monitor and maintain social infrastructure provided by government for the benefit of the community; vii. promote and encourage compliance with government policies and programmes on community development generally; viii. collaborate with public and private agencies and non-governmental organizations for the promotion of community development ideals and goals; and ix. perform such other functions as may be recommended by the Ministry through the Local

Government. The report concluded that the programmes were effective but abused by the coordinating local councils who were struggling under the control of the state and often see CDA as competition.

Notwithstanding, UE as the apex learning institution in the world, and by law of establishment and their connectivity to every communities, sectors and institutions is obligated to carry out its mandate to achieve national growth and development. To overcome the challenges of the 21st century, recent works proffers educational entrepreneurship (EE) as solutions to unemployment, reduction of social gaps, alleviation of poverty and other dimensions of insecurity. Hayati et al (2024) connoted EE for an education entrepreneur as someone who transforms knowledge, attitudes, and skills into benefits for others through teaching, training, or providing services to the community. The reason being that lives are being shaped by entrepreneurs who are men and women innovators who make changes by translating various resources like time, money and opportunities into gainful ventures. Entrepreneur is fundamentally a catalyst for economic growth and social development as risk takers, innovators, creative and change agent found in different circles with intentions to create opportunities and career options on a positive mind set (Hayati et al, 2024; Janah et al, 2022; Nurjana et al, 2020; Makki et al, 2019). EE in Asian and European countries are uplifting employment options on their graduates. More so, its significant relations with stimulation of economic growth; employment generation; and empowerment of the disadvantaged segment of the population in educational institutions are evidently discussed across the world.

Findings in the works of Hayati et al (2024); Abbas, et al (2022); Muhammed et al (2021); Makki et al (2019) revealed that EE has been acclaimed as an alternative choice of profession after graduating from school; EE is not an inherited talent, but it is acquirable and trainable; universities have a major responsibility in considering employability of graduates as an indicator of success in achieving their programs' objectives; UE should be concerned with development skills and attitudes relevant to the demands of the times; variety of opportunities and career options in banking, transportation, education, marketing available to youths today; the success of a business model for an entrepreneur depends on quality of ideas such as market research, positioning, segmentation, targeting, promotion, branding, and familiarity with environment in terms of rules and regulation which helps in overcoming uncertainties; character building in tandem with environment is a necessary ingredient in getting entrepreneurial mind set of students in nation

building to achieve life success. Although, EE is as old as mankind, it is a component of African indigenous education that if combined with higher education could lead to creation of an effective, efficient, flexible and creative learning environment. And, it could contribute to employment generation and grooming of real professionals for the communities.

Distinctly, a university system is different from other forms of organization in terms of purpose, structure and processes. It is composed of employees (Academic, Nonacademic) who possess virtual life tenure and students' population which is replaced every four or five years. Therefore, with the impact of globalization and the search for knowledge-based economy, community development comes under the purview of universities. For instance, students are the future developers and managers of society's institutions. The university system through its products has great influence on societies, industries, government policies and decisions making in the country. Most often, results of university researchers are the main foundation upon which the survival of human populace depends (Bashir et al, 2022). Therefore, universities in Nigeria in considerations of environment have to evolve with the needs of the community through entrepreneurship; programs, infrastructures, delivery methods, technologies and philosophies that can reflect the community's demands and attitudes in 21st century. The paper suggested renewing university education towards edupreneurship in 21st century community development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

University Education: A university is the apex learning institution enacted by law; connected to other social institutions for performance; to provide a template through teaching, learning, research, dissemination of knowledge and community development for the provisions of civilized and well-informed men and women for national growth (Bashir et al, 2022). In this paper community development is a derivative of teaching, learning and research functions of the university. The development of communities in the developed world like United State of America, France, Malaysia, Russia, and China among others affirmed the significance of higher education, particularly university on students in either part time or full-time studies to become future managers of societal institutions influencing government policies and decision making; and usefulness of research for national growth (Bashir, et al 2022).

Educational Entrepreneurship (EE): The word entrepreneur is derived from a French word "enterpendre" meaning to "undertake a risk". Entrepreneurship is as old as mankind in quest to

take adventure rather in contemporary times combine with higher education leading to creation of an effective, efficient, flexible and creative learning environment by contributing to employment generation and grooming real professionals for the communities. Entrepreneurship is considered as the propensity of mind to take calculated risk with confidence to achieve predetermined business objectives. Accordingly, an education entrepreneur shorten for edupreneur (EE) is someone who combines concept of economics and practices of entrepreneurial activity in education to become a creative, innovative and guide to sustaining the environment. The term is defined as a set of ways, paths, and techniques used by educators to facilitate learning by combining economics with entreprenurship practices in order to develop a practical environment. That means EE is entrepreneurial learning in schools, carried out by executing substantial breakthroughs and revolutionary changes to improve the quality of education and generate new educational opportunities regardless of the resources, capacities, and limitations that may exist.

The goal of an EE programme anywhere is to equip the participants with relevant knowledge and skills to become entrepreneurs and solve some of the societal pressing problems. Therefore, an EE is an individual in an educational based public or private enterprise equipped with adequate knowledge, skills and competence, on an intention to identify and respond to challenges in education sector with a designed business model (Hayati et al, 2024; Janah et al, 2023; Olaniran et al, 2021; Muhammed et al, 2021).

Community Development

The concept of community development is an age long practice invariably discussed under different nomenclature with related approaches. Both community and development are terms relative to human convergence under a well-defined socio economic and political structure in the attainment of collective goals. Community development is associated with terms such as self-confidence, self-respect and personal independence as well as to safeguard human rights and achieve social equality through community capacity building, community vitality, empowerment, rural development (Adekola et al, 2022; Ramsey-Soroghaye, 2021). The efficacy of a good education system has proved beyond reasonable doubt that humans become the objects and subjects of their own improvement in aspects of raising the quality of living levels; facilitating condition for improved self-esteem through the establishment of social, political, and economic system and institutions which promotes human dignity and respect; increasing people's freedom of choice by enlarging the range of their choice variables Advocates of community development

theorized the social system with set standard of behaviours in terms of; relationship, structure, power, shared meaning, communication for change, motivation for decision making, and integration for paradoxes that pervade the field (Mela et al, 2023; Ramsey-Soroghaye, 2021; Aruma et al, 2018).

Conclusion

Community development literally means; self-confidence, self-respect and personal independence as well as to safeguard human rights and achieve social equality. Reports unveils the major impediments of communities in African, Nigeria inclusive to be underdevelopment with minimal availability of basic social amenities and infrastructural development. Such reports indicate irreplaceable roles of these communities to national cohesion and integrity through agriculture and propagation of value system. These communities depend on natural resources and cultural values. Most of these indigenous communities have minimal basic infrastructural development to meet up with their counterparts in the urban areas, hence the continued practice of rural-urban migration which is amongst the banes for national economic planning and development. Prevalence of poverty and its attendants on corruptions, conflicts, self-deceptions of impossibilities etc were observed in series of findings and linked to weakness of Nigeria education system particularly the university which is connected to educational institutes, levels and sectors for performance. It is therefore significant that the role of universities in Nigeria, in context of environment, be renewed to meet community needs. This implies new strategies, approaches, instruments, and practice for sustainable goal achievements in view of community developments.

Suggestions

Environmental Scanning: university should have in-depth understanding of Nigeria in terms of socio-cultural diversity, regulations, technology, economic, international forces, regional ties, and politics from different perspectives. This is critical and consciously important for knowledge generations, transformation and preservation.

Setting Objectives: university in line with its vision and mission should set objectives that are specific, quality, realistic, measurable and relevant to meet the needs of communities.

Leading Change: promoting change agenda should be a major role of the university by creating sense of urgency, development of an appropriate vision and strategy and creation of supporting infrastructure.

Response to Structural Capabilities and Capacities: university should promote the culture of rapid response to structural capacities and capabilities in various sectors to overcome greater challenges in events, fashions, trends and issues.

Induction of Localization of Knowledge: promote the use of local resources in manpower planning and approaches, availability, provision, utilizations and maintenance culture of facilities.

Anchoring Engagement: promoting engagements in different fields of disciplines or groups sharing status of experts that function in a fairly similar manner with related field of professions to support practical knowledge in work-related learning, internships and career management and skills development.

Promoting Ethics in System Processes and Procedures: **Universities in promoting ethics should be sensitive to address consciously, critically and publicly variables such as values in teaching-learning processes. University lecturers should admit being a teacher irrespective of status as professors or doctors. What is expected of them is display of professionalism by adherence to rules and regulation of the system.**

Media Advancement: promoting awareness through bottom up approach by siting faculties or departments in areas of resources brings classrooms into communities' particularly rural areas. Media approach includes weekly or monthly feedback on specific discipline platforms and forums, radio or television programme, extension and consultation at reduced fee to target wide audience as beneficiaries.

Funding and Funds Management: promoting leadership and management skills in funds generation and funds management to address major questions on cost allocation on the basis of needs in consideration of key issues in the system on societal needs.

Measurable Outcome: promoting students' expectation of outcome provides a foundation for effective personal development which are self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills; responsible decision making. It necessitates a fundamental look at systems and processes relevance to create awareness among parents, teachers and students of school rules and regulations and achievements.

Curriculum: promoting relevant curricula that reflect solutions to issues in Nigeria. This is such that provision; availability; utilization and maintenance of specific infrastructural and instructional facilities can provide learners with experiences that address their development in the cognitive, academic, emotional, social, and moral domains.

Performance Appraisal: promotion of performance-based indicator or mechanism considering; the openness of the sectors to blended and e-learning; relevant courses to sectors employment; future management employment requirement and skills shortage; research and knowledge transfer investment; presence of professional bodies and sector skills and relationship; access capabilities and capacities again each employment sector.

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