Promoting Enterprise Culture among Office Technology and Management Students for Sustainable Living

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Abstract
Several attempt shave been made by Nigerian government in order to find solutions to graduates' unemployment without significant success. Nigerian graduates lack necessary skills, knowledge and ability to work in teams, think creatively or interact effectively with colleagues and potential customers. An enterprise culture which is a critical mix of success oriented attitudes of initiative, creativity, intelligent, risk taking, collaboration and opportunity recognition is the missing ingredient. To succeed in this period of job uncertainty, Office Technology and Management students should not rely on white collar job or paid employment on graduation but must maximize the use of the skills, knowledge and ability acquired while in school to create enterprises in order to earn a living and contribute to nation building. The researchers take a look at promoting enterprise culture among Office Technology and Management students for sustainable living. In doing this, relevant literatures were reviewed on the key words: Enterprise, Culture, Entrepreneur and Office Technology and Management. The paper

identified ways of promoting enterprise culture among Office Technology and Management students and concludes with suggestions.

Introduction

Despite the fact that Nigeria is endowed with abundant human and natural resources, the current economic situation has impacted negatively on the citizenry. This situation has constituted a great challenge to the peaceful co-existence of both the poor and the rich. In Nigeria today, most graduates are unemployed because of the limited vacancies available in the labour market and the type of training received while in school which seems not to lead to self-employment. Unemployment has become a major problem bedeviling the lives of Nigerian youths causing frustration, dejection, and depending on family members and friends (Lucas, Alaka & Odozi 2014). Corroborating this, Ajufo (2016) stated that high rate of unemployment among the youths in Nigeria has contributed to the high rate of poverty and insecurity in the country. In response to massive unemployment and under-employment with consequent negative implications for youth restiveness and insecurity of lives and property, the Presidency in 2006 directed all Nigerian higher educational institutions to include entrepreneurship education as a compulsory course for all students with effect from 2007/2008 academic session (Igbinedion & Ehirheme, 2015). The intention of the Federal Government was to inculcate enterprise culture in the learners.

Clarification of Concepts

Enterprise in a simpler term is a business venture or undertaking that lead to profit generation. It can also be seen as

of a company or business, a large project or development of business by the people of country rather than by a government (Komolafe, 2017). Ekpenyong (2015) viewed enterprise as a set of personal competencies and attitude such as creativity, innovativeness, analytical ability, initiative, interpersonal skills, self-awareness and achievement motivation.

Entrepreneur is the person who uses his/her ability to maximize his potentials through the discovery of new and existing business ideas as he uses proven principles in managing small and medium scale businesses until they grow (Oviawe, 2017). Also Oshorun (2018) defined entrepreneur as one who establishes and manages a business. Therefore, entrepreneur can be seen as an individual who organizes, operates and assumes the risk of a business venture in expectation of the profit. An entrepreneur can either be innovative or imitative. Innovative entrepreneur is the one who establishes and manages a business never done before, while an imitative entrepreneur is the one who establishes and manages an existing business (Oshorun, 2018). The Longman Active Study Dictionary (2009) defined culture as the ideas, ways of life, tradition, etc of a particular society or group of people. In this context, culture is an imbibed knowledge, skills, beliefs and ideas in an individual or group of individuals which drive such people to develop self- employment motives.

Office Technology and Management is an aspect of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) that equips an individual with the necessary skills, knowledge and ability needed for performance in the business world. Office Technology and Management expose the recipients to the practical applications of basic business skills for real work situations which plays a vital role in reduction of unemployment among Nigerian youths. Office Technology and management is an aspect of vocational and technical education aims to prepare its recipients for the world of work in order for the recipients to become self-reliant or self-employed instead of seeking for

paid-employment. Office technology and Management programme developed different types of skills in the students that can be of immense help to them in the world of work. It is a course of study where the students are exposed to the acquisition of vocational skills in office and management as well as enterprise. Office Technology and Management programme was designed to equip students with secretarial/office skills for employment into various fields of endeavour. In addition to the acquisition of vocational skills, students are equipped with effective work competence and socio-psychological work-skills, which are essential in everyday interactions with others (Akasi & Adebayo, 2016).

The current Office Technology and Management curriculum as reviewed in 2004 by National Board for Technical Education, lays much emphasis on computer and computer related courses. These courses are divided into: (a) Special Area, which includes secretarial studies, technique in office management and control (b) Information and Communication Technology Application, which includes computer appreciation, web page design, desktop publishing, database management, entrepreneurship, career development, just to mention a few and (c) general education relating to contemporary problems usually called general studies. The goal of OTM programme at both the National and Higher National Diploma (ND and HND) levels are: acquisition of secretarial skills, acquisition of general education and laying foundation for advanced studies. Entrepreneurship is one of the courses offered in Office Technology and Management programme and the goal of entrepreneurship education is to inculcate in the trainees the ability to:

- identify and solve problems using critical and creative thinking:

- work effectively with others as a proactive team member and cultivate the habit of achieving organizational goals and objectives:
- organise and manage one-self and ones activities:
- collect, analyse, organize and critically evaluate information (to make decisions that must be carried through):
- communicate and negotiate effectively:
- reflect on experiences and explore various strategies for effective learning:
- become curious leading to readiness to experiment and innovate i.e being never satisfied with status quo; and
- consider self-employment as a viable option upon graduation from their institutions (Igbinedion & Ehirheme, 2015).

The Federal government of Nigeria included entrepreneurship in the curriculum of all programmes in higher institutions of learning in order to enhance or promote enterprise culture in the learners and to enable the graduates to be self-reliant or employed instead of seeking for white-collar jobs that cannot go round the Nigerian graduates and in order to reduce the rate of unemployed graduates in Nigeria.

Office Technology and Management programme which is practical in nature lay much emphasis on courses such as computer appreciation, web page design, desktop publishing, database management, entrepreneurship and career development. Thus, the lecturers should inspire and equip the recipients with enterprise culture that will stimulate their creativity, creative thinking, innovativeness, enhance leadership skills, increase community/societal awareness and enhance educational experience of culture of future leaders. In consonance with this, Section 3 of Decree No 50 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) setting out minimum academic standards for the nation, the Federal Government spelt out the

goals of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) to include those of providing the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and giving training and impart the necessary skills to individual for self-reliance economically leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians, technologists and engineers and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant. Also, the Federal government gives implicit recognition to the type of vocational education curriculum that would give birth to a creative nation, a nation capable of solving its economic and technological problems and raising a self-reliant citizenry. This can be achieved through Office Technology and Management graduates that have developed enterprise culture, those who are not ready to rely on paid employment for a successful living (Komolafe, 2017)

Enterprise culture is the development based on creativity. The aim of enterprise culture is to move from a culture of dependency to culture of self-reliance. Enterprise culture is a major determinant in business success. It is a culture that is imbibes in an individual which drive such a person to develop interest in self-employment. Igbinedion & Ehirheme (2015) defined enterprise culture as an enterprising habit and practice that permits encouragement and makes initiatives and innovation in a social environment. Therefore, enterprise culture can be seen as a norm, value and beliefs in the act of initiating, doing, achieving and building an enterprise or organization rather than just watching, analyzing, or describing one. Enterprise culture improves the productivity of an individual and enhances success.

Promoting Enterprise Culture among Office Technology and Management Students
Based on these courses which are offered in Office Technology and Management programme: computer appreciation, web page design, desktop publishing, database management,

entrepreneurship, career development and other courses such as keyboarding, word processing, law and principle of accounting, the following are the means by which enterprise culture can be promoted by Office Technology and Management lecturers which will be beneficial to the students.

(1) **Awakening creativity in the students:** Creativity is a potential property of every individual. It is a pervasive factor that cannot be reasonably isolated from general intelligence. Creativity therefore can be seen as the capacity to originate, invent, reflect, analyse and synthesise. Ekpenyong (2015) stated that creativity is the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other hand. Creative act result in some observable products such as works of art, painting, invention, new or novel ideas, solution of social, personal or interpersonal problems.

It is in obvious awareness of the role of creativity that the national education policy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) had to refer to Technical and Vocational Education as the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Office Technology and Management courses should be taught with all sense of purpose in order to promote enterprise culture in the recipients.

(2) **Knowledge Exchange:** Knowledge exchange deals with sharing of ideas and knowledge to develop a multi-disciplinary approach to creativity that bring in different skills and approaches to business establishment. Knowledge exchange can be in form of alliance or networking among higher institutions of learning. The reason for this is for institutions to develop capabilities or competencies in non-core areas.

Through knowledge exchange students can visit other institutions to capture the different advantages of such institutions or organization, research and debate. Such network is a transformative force which promotes exchange of best practice among institutions which enhance the promotion of enterprise culture in the learners. Buttressing this, Oteh (2017) stated that transformative forces are people with new ideas to address major problems who are relentless in the pursuit of their vision, people who simply will not take no for an answer. Knowledge exchange lead to development of novel and creativity in Office Technology and Management students which foster development of business enterprise.

(3) **Exhibition:** Office Technology and Management is practical based because of the skill courses which characterized the programme and should not have rote memorization of facts in order for the students to develop the required skills, knowledge and abilities needed to be self-sustained (Ekpenyong, 2015). Office Technology and Management lecturers should organize exhibition on regular basis in which students will be mandated to participate fully by displaying their products: through this, enterprise culture will be developed in them.

(4) **Purposeful Teaching and Learning:** Learning is useless if it will not alter the behavior of the learners and be applied in future physical situation in solving identified or meeting real life situations. Office Technology and Management lecturers should therefore teach computer appreciation, web page design, desktop publishing, database management, entrepreneurship, career development with specific purpose in mind. Teaching and learning should not be for passing examinations with good grades; it should be a means for future living. It is pertinent for OTM lecturers to always stress the usefulness of any course they teach their students because all the courses taught during

the course of the programme are working together to make a qualitative product which is a means of promoting enterprise culture.

(5) **Knowledge of the Subject-Matter:** Professional teachers have often been criticized for paying attention to" how" of teaching and ignoring the "what" of their function. This is because both inputs are strong factors in determining the quality of a teacher's products. It cannot be overemphasize that the OTM lecturers should have a certain degree of mastery over what he/her teaches. Such knowledge would enhance self-concept and ensures that the students spend their quality time in school in a worth-while manner.

(6) **Industrial Visits:** Opportunities to acquaint oneself with real life situation is very essential for OTM students, because the programme is work-oriented because of the following courses which are offered: computer appreciation, web page design, desktop publishing, database management, entrepreneurship, career development, Office Technology and Management lecturers should form the habit of creating avenues for students to go for industrial visits as this idea would add value to the theories already thought in the class. The visit would expose these students to the skills and practice, modern office gadgets and other office facilities. The visit can also help in industrial placement during the one year industrial attachment and boost the creativity and innovative abilities of the students in order to promote enterprise culture in them.

(7) **Career Talk:** This is another vital instrument that can be used for promoting enterprise culture and this can be put in operation by inviting successful entrepreneur to share their experiences in their profession to students. Such career talk could be organized when students are still in school. The

essence of career talk is to serve as a platform to guide students in taking appropriate career in line with their interest, capacity and needs of the society.

(8) **Wide Exposure:** Office Technology and Management students should be exposed to a wide variety of texts including trade magazines, textbooks, case studies and journal articles that will widen their knowledge, innovative ability and arouse interest for establishment of business enterprise. Corroborating this, Komolafe (2015) opined that requiring students to read advanced academic articles help scaffold students to higher reading and writing levels which can increase student's sense of self-competency, their understanding of the process of knowledge creation and most importantly the link between theory and practice.

(9) **Recognize New Opportunity:** In order to promote enterprise culture, it is very important to teach the students how to conduct environmental scanning and needs for recognizing new opportunities within and outside their immediate environment. Hence the need to conduct Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis is very germane towards promoting enterprise culture that will lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Areas of Possible Enterprise in Office Technology and Management Programme

The following are possible areas of enterprise in Office Technology and Management programme:

1. **Word Processing Centre/Business Centre:** A business outfit that provides secretarial or writing and editing services. This centre could offer both general office and specialized documentation services using modern digital equipment such as

computers, photocopiers, printers, spiral binders, scanners, colour copiers, Rizo machines etc.

2. **ICT Training/Development Consult:** Here two or more entrepreneurs could register as an ICT training consultant and engage in providing training/manpower development in word processing, desktop publishing, webpage design.

3. **Publishing company**: Here the entrepreneur could register a small or medium scale publishing firm to assist clients to professionally type academic journals, type-set textbooks, annual accounts, magazines, pamphlets, etc for a profit.

4. **Digital Devices/Accessories Retail Outlets:** An entrepreneur could involve himself in the service of acquiring digital devices/accessories such as computers and house phones together with accessories such as power bank, phone chargers, USB cords, memory cards, modems, flash drives etc for retail at a profit.

5. **Internet Café/Cyber Café**: This is a place where internet services are provided for a fee usually based on time spent. An entrepreneur could capitalize on this and acquire a number of computers and internet connectivity to offer internet service to clients for money.

Conclusion

Promotion of enterprise culture among Office Technology and Management students is a vital issue in this period of job uncertainty. If Office Technology and Management students can develop enterprise culture, it will arouse their interest in self-employment that will make them to be self-sustained and contribute to economic and national development of this nation after graduation.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusion, the following suggestions are proffered:

1. School management should support the promotion of enterprise culture by providing resources and/or facilities and positive school environment that will give room for practical and exhibition.
2. Heads of Departments of OTM and lecturers should regularly organize career talk for the students from time to time and invite successful entrepreneurs as resource persons in order to share their experiences that will be a source of encouragement to the students.
3. Lecturers should not make entrepreneurship a course textbook, rather it should be taught using experiential methodology such as action learning, group-based learning and case study.
4. Lecturers should stimulate and sustain the interest of the students by way of motivation in order to imbibe enterprise culture that will make them to be self-sustained.
5. Students should endeavor to develop required skills and maximize the use of such skills by establishing self-owned business in order to become employers of labour.

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