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## **MANAGING ORGANISATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICY AT HIGHER INSTITUTION TRAINING: THE EXPERIENTIAL APPRAISAL OF NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research work is on the managing organisational entrepreneurship policy at higher institution training in Nigeria. The research identified organisational entrepreneurship policies in Nigerian higher institutions from the perspective of trainees' selection, training curricula, industrial practice, and assessment modalities. It also identified that organisational entrepreneurship policy and its management at the higher institutions training in Nigeria is militated by myriad of challenges. These include societal attitude to functional knowledge, "connection" syndrome, personality disposition, supervisory limitations, training facilities and environment. The null hypothesis investigated in the study examined whether the entrepreneurship qualities arising from the Nigerian higher institution training vary from one another in their effectiveness. The entrepreneurship qualities measured in the study are Initiative Ability, Pragmatic Ability, and Organizational Competency. Each entrepreneurship quality had 5 items that assessed entrepreneurship efficacy of the higher institution training in Nigeria. They were measured with a 15-item questionnaire on a 5-point scale of strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire for the study attained 80% Theme Analysis relevance,  $r = .71$  validity,  $r = .77$  test-retest reliability. The result found that organisational entrepreneurship policy as regards higher institutions training in Nigeria is functionally more effective in organisational competency manifestations, followed by initiative ability manifestations, and lastly by pragmatic ability. Consequently the following recommendations were proffered: More practical training of the trainees, counseling services for the trainees as regards their potentials, adequate funding of the higher institution, curbing corruption in the higher institutions, trainees and train selection based on competency and ability, focusing training at the higher institutions as goal-directed programme through which opportunities and wealth can be created.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurship is basically being productive and achievement oriented as a result of strategic thinking and acting. It is a fundamental socio-human behaviour that leads to socio-economic development due to the proaction, pragmatism, and adaptive attitudes cum approaches of individuals to challenges. World (2007) succinctly harmonized various perceptions of entrepreneurship as the ability and willingness to seek out and create opportunities that will meet the needs of individuals; by identifying gaps in their immediate environment and bringing resources in an innovative ways to fill these gaps. Being entrepreneurial is therefore synonymous with being able to combine dimensions of knowledge that is indispensable to carry out the necessary activities or operations that lead

to transformations. Essentially entrepreneurial transformation stimulates multiplier opportunities. An effective and functional entrepreneur is therefore very insightful and sensitive to knowledge management that encourages inventiveness, creativity, innovation, and general development (Nwankwo and Nweke 2008).

Undoubtedly, one of the major noble objectives of the higher institution training is to equip individuals with the skills for self-reliance. By implications the higher institutions of learning as training organizations are responsible for inculcating entrepreneurial capacity building in individuals. There are therefore inherent entrepreneurship goals in the training policies at the higher institutions of learning. This connotes qualitative, functional and relevant training that is attuned with the needs of individuals and the society (Odoemenam, 2008). Thus, there is a corresponding entrepreneurial challenge of managing entrepreneurship policies in the higher institutions organizations in Nigeria. While some of these entrepreneurial policies are inherent in the training programmes, others are formally initiated. Managing these various dimensions of entrepreneurship goal presents socio-organizational and entrepreneurial challenges for the higher institutions, as a training agency on one part, and the individuals as the human factor aspect of entrepreneurship on the other part. Efficacious entrepreneurship policy management at the higher institution training therefore needs to be based on knowledge-creation and conversion (Amaeshi, 2008).

### **Background of the Study**

As noted earlier, higher institution training in Nigeria has various elements of entrepreneurship zeal enshrined in it either explicitly or implicitly. However, the efficacious management of these entrepreneurship policies is not very impressive. Possibly, this could be due to the observation of Obagah (2002) that the training environment in the Nigeria higher institutions is not all that entrepreneurship stimulating. The unhealthy situation could be attributed to factors like very poor knowledge managements, poor qualified trainers, poor training facilities and methodologies, poor policy and educational funding etc.

It is therefore one of objectives of this research work to;

- (1) Examine some of the entrepreneurship policies in the Nigerian higher institutions. Again, this research work also
- (2) Examines the management effectiveness of the entrepreneurship policies. In the same vein
- (3) The militating challenges are highlighted. And recommendations are consequently proffered. This research work is of veritable relevance in appraising the entrepreneurship proficiency of Nigeria higher institutions in inculcating and stimulating entrepreneurship prowess in the citizenry and society at large.

### **SOME ORGANISATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICIES IN THE NIGERIAN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS**

Institutions of higher training play significant roles in inculcating capacity-building in individuals. To ensure the efficacy of their (higher institutions) training objectives of

developing resourceful entrepreneurs cum individuals, the following policies as discussed below are initiated.

### **Trainees Selection**

Training of individuals in the Nigerian higher institutions starts with selection processes. Efficacious entrepreneurs are developed when the trainees (individuals) are admitted into the higher institutions to acquire knowledge in the areas of human endeavour they are functionally inclined to. This is bearing in mind that in the present information-age, intellectual capital and functional competency (ability) are the major sources of competitive advantage (James, 2007) that leads to wealth-creation. An instance of trainees' selection policy in the Nigerian institutions is the University Matriculation Examination (UME). Through this common nation-wide examination, trainees (individuals) are enrolled into various fields of learning available in the Nigerian higher institutions for knowledge acquisition, capacity-building, and human resources development. Similar to the University Matriculation Examination are the various higher institutions post-University Matriculation Examination, and Supplementary admission policies of higher institution. All are aimed at enrolling trainees into the higher institutions for resource development.

### **Training Curricula**

These are the subject-matters that are to be covered in the course of the training period. They are the training guide that will assist in covering the training scope and objectives of the field of human endeavour concerned. A good training curriculum enhances transfer and transformation of culture, through formal and informal training of people (Oghuvbu, 2007). By implication, entrepreneurship oriented training curricula of higher institution leads to improvement in the mental, physical, psychological and social qualities of individual and the society. Presently in the Nigeria higher institutions a great attention is being focused on developing entrepreneurship-modeled courses, both as specialized and general training curricula. Entrepreneurship oriented training curricula must be geared towards enhancing self-sustainability and employability of graduates (Nwankwo, Nwankwo and Nweke 2009).

### **Industrial Practices**

This is an entrepreneurship program of sending students into the labour market as interms. They are attached to different productive ventures in the society for period of one year or six months. This exercise helps the trainees to get acquainted with the real-life situation of working. Through this process of learning-by-doing the trainees are exposed to the challenges of productivity in socio-human endeavours. Industrial practices or internship serves as entrepreneurship. Socialization for the trainees to experience what Ade-Ali (2008) called dynamic standard for integrating into the organized society. Industrial practices sum internship is therefore a formally organized pre-emptive entrepreneurship policy to practically prepare the students for the inevitable working life after their educational training. In the course of internship, the trainees live independently and within their resources, save income for possible investment, or at least engage in learning how to save income, adjust, and adapt to work situations/conditions. These are all among entrepreneurship attitudes which the higher institutions training in Nigeria should inculcate in her trainees.

## **Assessment**

The effectiveness of every training programme needs to be appraised. For training in the higher institution, the commonest assessment procedure is the examination taken at the end of every (each) academic semester or academic year (session). Expectedly, the assessment should help the trainers, trainees, and the higher institution as an organization evaluate the effectiveness of their training systems. This is synonymous with making the contemporary higher education training in Nigeria functional based (Iteku, Iteku, and Oku, 2007). The correlate between training assessment and entrepreneurship is that the weakness and strengths of the trainees are determined through assessment. The efficacy of training programme and system in the higher institution can be well appraised by evaluating the trainees and the training adopted. Poor result is an indication of poor training system, which is likely to give rise to poor competency. This can manifest in inability to embrace and cope with challenges as managing challenges is one of the major features of entrepreneurship.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A null hypothesis was tested in this study at  $P < .05$  significant level. The null hypothesis stated that entrepreneurship qualities arising from higher institution training have no performance variations in their manifestations. And the research question investigated whether there are variations in entrepreneurship qualities arising from higher institutions training vis-à-vis performance manifestations.

Graduates of both genders from various institutions of higher learning in the Eastern regional part of Nigeria constitute the population. It is a population of diversities in socio-human characteristics. The sampling was incidental randomization technique in which the participants for the study was sampled based on their availability and willingness (Nwankwo, Nwankwo, and Nweke 2009). In the same vein, 15-item questionnaire measured on 5-point scale was the measuring instrument of the study. It is evaluated on strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (4) and strongly disagree (1) the 5-point scale. The instrument was divided into 3 sections that depict Initiative Ability, Pragmatic Ability, and Organizational Competency of entrepreneurship. Each section has 5 items.

The validity of the instrument was achieved through Factor/Theme Analysis. This was done by rating of the items on their relevance or irrelevance for the study. And only items that attained 80% and above relevance (15 of them) were selected for the study. When correlated with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, the validity co-efficient of the instrument was  $r = .71$ . Again, the test-retest reliability coefficient of the measuring instrument was  $r = .77$  when correlated with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

The statistics for the study were One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) – inferential statistics and descriptive statistics. Again, the design of the study was 3-group survey. The control measures of the study were randomization and elimination. The measuring instruments were randomly administered to the participants based on their availability and willingness to respond to the instruments. Again, the instrument's administration was done in four States (two Igbo-speaking, and two non-Igbo-speaking

States) in the Eastern region studied. The elimination techniques were based on quality control of which graduates from high institutions with non-accredited courses were not used for the study.

The average age of the participants was 28.8years. Only graduates with 5 years post-national Youth Service Corp Service (NYSC) were used in the study. The essence of this is to ensure that their entrepreneurship performance appraisals have not been overshadowed by other practice/performance experiences.

**HIGHER INSTITUTION ORGANISATION’S TRAINING AND ITS ENTREPRENEURSHIP PERFORMANCE MANIFESTATION**

Basically, higher institution curricula have varied functional effects on the graduates (Nwankwo, Nwankwo, and Nweke 2009). This research thus aims at examining the nature of the entrepreneurship performance the higher institution training offers to the trainees. The hypothesis to this stated that entrepreneurship qualities arising from higher institution training have no performance variations in their manifestations. The collected data were analyzed with One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) as was presented in the table 1.1 below.

**Table 1.1  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP PERFORMANCE ARISING FROM HIGHER INSTITUTION TRAINING**

<b>Factors/Variable</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>F-Ration</b>
Between Group	760087.206	2	324087.653	1025.206
Within Group	231328.578	897	272.108	
Total	991415.784	899		
<b>Critical values</b> (df = 2,899) * F.05 = 3.00, P < 0.05} Reject Ho				

The results above show the calculated F-ratio (1025.206) being greater than the critical F-value (3.00). Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that entrepreneurship performance of trainees arising from higher institution training varied as regards their (entrepreneurship performance) manifestations. The nature of these performance variations is better appreciated with response characteristics table of 1.2 below:

**Table 1.2  
PERFORMANCE RESPONSE CHARACTERISTICS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP MANIFESTATION ARISING FROM HIGHER INSTITUTION TRAINING**

<b>Factors/Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>X̄</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>SD</b>
Initiative Ability	39	21.8	32.19	2.92
	4	02	1	8
Pragmatic Ability	23	19.7	29.09	2.41

	4	08	9	5
Organisational Competency	27	26.2	38.71	3.72
	2	18	0	0
Total	90	67.7	100	
	0	28		
<b>Critical mean = 14.0</b>				

Results from table 1.2 above showed that entrepreneurship performance arising from higher institution training manifested highest in the trainees in the areas of Organizational Competency ( $X=26.218$ ;  $\%=38.710$ ). And the least was Pragmatic Ability ( $X=19.708$ ;  $\%=29.099$ ). Essentially, higher institution training in the Eastern regional part of Nigeria has a high above average entrepreneurship performance manifestation. This was shown from the fact that the respective means ( $X_s$ ) of Initiative Ability (21.802), Pragmatic Ability (19.708), and Organisational Competency (26.218) were all greater than their common critical mean (14.0).

The outcome of the research (results) indicated that the higher institution training in Eastern regional part of Nigeria is entrepreneurship goal-directed. This corresponds with the observation of Odoemenam (2008) that training should be qualitative, functional, and relevant to the needs of individuals and society. However, the very high rate of unemployment among graduates in the region could be attributed to desire for salaried work. It is very plausible that very low per capita income could be the scaring impediment that inhibits or retards the application of high entrepreneurship training and qualities of the graduates. Basically, this is contrary to the paradigms of entrepreneurship which anchor on commitment, achieving persistence, strategic thinking, and motivation prowess.

### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONSTRAINTS IN HIGHER INSTITUTION TRAINING IN NIGERIA**

Large scale unemployment in Nigeria gives room to question the effectiveness of higher institution training in the country in stimulating entrepreneurship proaction. The constraining factors to the entrepreneurship proaction can be appraised from the following perspectives:

#### **Societal Attitude to Functional Knowledge**

The higher institutions in Nigeria have noble objectives of training individuals to acquire skills for self-reliance and societal development (Chilokwu, Eze, and Nwankwo 2007). However, the attitudes of many Nigerians vis-à-vis money and knowledge are more favourable to the former (money) than the latter (knowledge). Individual who have money and other material resources are adored and almost worshiped while those who have or seek intellectual capital are almost despised. Thus, intelligentsia without monetary manifestation is of no value in Nigeria. The Nigeria society therefore manifests the attitude of "having" rather than "being". And according to Aghamelu (2003) those frequently frustrated in their attempt to "have" destroy life and commit any crime in order to "have". Consequently, many people do no long perceive higher institutions training as avenue for sustainable socio-human development. By implication many trainees in the Nigerian higher institutions do not make motivated efforts to

acquire skills that will enhance their entrepreneurial development after their graduation. While many Nigerian youths are in the higher institutions because that is what is in vogue, they are at the same time over enticed by money and how to make premature wealth.

### **“Connection” Syndrome**

This is an excessive attitudinal disposition that social networking is too fundamental for an individual’s socioeconomic success. Pathological believers in “connectionism” relegate to the background the contributions of competency, skills and knowledge to socioeconomic success. Godfatherism prevalent in the Nigerian society (Nwankwo 2008) is an attribute of “connection” syndrome. Both concepts cum attitudes (godfatherism and connectionism) are founded on the belief that who one knows, or relates with determines the socioeconomic opportunities that can be accessible to one. Presently, most students in Nigeria are no longer living within the campuses of the higher institutions. They live in the urban areas, towns, and cities, and are therefore influenced by the prevailing societal trends. Rather than embracing their intellectual development ambitions tenaciously, trainees of higher institutions in Nigeria may develop the conviction that opportunities lie with getting affiliated with significant members of the society. Hence, these trainees may no longer comprehend any paramount necessity it may be for them to develop their potentials and create opportunities from intellectual development of higher institutions training. Consequently, “connection” syndrome in Nigeria inhibits creativity and ingenuity which are among the characteristics of entrepreneurship.

### **Personality Dispositions**

These are characteristics that are available in the human variables. The personality dispositions that affect the management of entrepreneurship policy at higher institution training in Nigeria are inherent both in the trainers and the trainees. For the trainers, the personality dispositions manifest in the form of competency, ethical standard, ability, knowledge, etc. For the trainees, the personality dispositions manifest in the form of motivation, ability, commitment, proficiency, etc. Some trainers (teachers/consultants) in the higher institutions in Nigeria may be incompetent, and unable to deliver the required knowledge necessary to stimulate entrepreneurship zeal in the scholars. Again, academicians in Nigeria are poorly paid, in addition to the fact that the profession is often looked at as “all comers” job, which indicates that everybody can teach (Aja, 2008), all combine to reduce the trainers’ devotion to functional higher institution training. On the part of trainees, their inability to cope with effective higher institution training influences them to engage in examination misconducts, bribing for grades, violence, intimidation, terrorism, etc. Akpagu (2008) therefore rightly observed that one of the major reasons why Nigerian students join secret cults is because of their inability and lack of confidence to cope with the rigours of academic work. Mal-academic behaviour shrouds positive action towards intellectual development as visioned in higher institution training. Trainers and trainees whose actions hamper functional intellectual development invariably retard entrepreneurial opportunities or advantages of the training programme cum curricula.

### **Supervisory Limitations**

Over population in Nigerian higher institutions has made it impossible to dispense adequate supervision on the trainees. The implication of this is that there is lack of objective direction and guidance for the trainees. The subsequent effects of these are that the trainees pass through their training programme without any role specification given to them on how to engage in community and self-actualization. Often the higher institutions as training organizations do feel that what happens to the trainees outside the campuses is none of their responsibilities (Nwori, 2008). This is erroneous because the quality of higher institutions alumni depicts the efficacy and quality of its training and human development programmes. Poor supervision also makes it possible for both the trainers and the trainees to engage in extra-academic activities in order to be successful in the training programme. Unethical conducts like bribery, corruption, violation of examination ethics, giving unmerited grades, truancy, etc reduce the quality of training in Nigerian higher institutions. It is not surprising therefore that at the end of the training programme, many of the Nigerian graduates become unemployable (cannot perform functionally, nor be efficacious in human endeavours). This is a great limitation to the entrepreneurship policies of the higher institutions training. Unemployable graduates form the bulk of employment seekers in Nigeria rather than employment creators.

### **Training Facilities and Environment**

Most institutions of higher training in Nigeria lack the requisite infrastructure to impart pragmatic knowledge in the trainees. The training curricula are overloaded with theoretical concept than practical experiences. This often makes transfer of learning difficult at the end of the training programme. Again, over population of the trainees makes any available facilities inadequate and not enough for the trainees practice or usage. Knowledge exploration that is based on concepts alone is not adequate. Experiential learning leads to creative imagination which makes feasibility appraisal of projects and challenges possible (Ifebi, and Achugbu 2008). And this is what training facilities and environment in Nigerian higher institutions should offer. Occasionally, the inadequate available facilities may not be used due to lack of skillful personnel to operate them. They therefore serve decorative purposes rather than resources for entrepreneurship training and experiences.

### **IMPROVING THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP QUALITY OF THE NIGERIAN HIGHER INSTITUTION ORGANISATION'S TRAINING: THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

So far, the higher institutions organizations remain the apex of formal training. This is why serious effort must be made to improve the quality of the training given at the higher institution level. Essentially, the following **recommendations** are proffered in that direction.

Basically, it is recommended that;

(1) The Nigerian higher institutions training curricula should be structured to be more experiential (practical) than conceptual. This will help open up the intellectual appraisal and feasibility, promote the creative and innovative attitudes, as well as open up the beliefs that



are critically constructive (Adefasin, 2008) and entrepreneurship enhancing. These will help the trainees be sensitive to the opportunities of wealth-creation existing in their environment.

It is also recommended that;

(2) Counselling programme should be well established and made functional in the Nigerian institutions of higher training. Such counseling services should be attuned with the trainees' socio-personal challenges, so as to help them resolve conflicts that hamper capacity-building and entrepreneurial opportunities/advantages.

Similarly;

(3) There is also the need for adequate funding of the higher institutions in Nigeria. This is a major way of making provisions for providing training facilities in the campuses. This will enhance immensely the trainees' transfer of learning from concept to practice cum reality. The focus of this goal anchors on the fact that entrepreneurs are not deterred by failures from trials.

Again,

(4) The management of the higher institutions of training should strive to curb corruption and other malpractices inherent in the training programmes. Checking those unethical practices will bring about both the trainers and trainees commitment to effective training at the higher institution. This will lead to an improvement in the functional value of Nigerian graduates (Nwankwo, Nwankwo, and Nweke 2009).

Furthermore,

(5) Selection into the higher institution either as trainers or trainees should be based on competency and ability. It is very bad that some candidates score high marks in the selection examination, yet they are not admitted in the higher institutions of training. On the contrary, some candidates are admitted with low marks because they or their parents have money and influence. Entrepreneurship qualities manifest very well where individuals have functional competencies and abilities, and not where they can bribe their ways through.

In the same vein,

(6) Entrepreneurship courses being taught in the higher institutions of training should be correlated with practical realities. The courses should be community-based, so that individuals can align their potentials with community potentials or needs to create wealth.

Ancillary to the above,

(7) It is very important to correct the wrong impression that entrepreneurship is all about economic engagements. Entrepreneurship entails creating viable and thriving opportunities for human endeavours as a result of strategic thinking and proaction. Such human endeavours can be economic-oriented or humanitarian-oriented. The important issue is that the endeavours enhance socio-human development through creation of opportunities. That is what should be the focus of higher institutions training.

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