

ENTREPRENEURSHIP CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT: A PANACIA FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The pressing issues of youth unemployment has become a matter of concern in today's society, consumed by factors such as the lack of white-collar job opportunities and the limitations of traditional education systems. Emphasizing the pivotal role of entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, it calls for a paradigm shift in educational management. The paper underscores the urgency of equipping youths with the skills and mindset required for self-reliance and job creation in the 21st-century landscape. Creativity and innovation are identified as linchpins in educational management, fostering effective teaching, problem-solving, and critical thinking. While acknowledging challenges in integrating entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation into youth employment, including the need for meaningful education and technological adaptation, the paper asserts that this integration empowers youths to transition from job seekers to job creators. This paradigm shift cultivates the mindset, practical skills, and networks necessary for navigating a dynamic labour market. The paper recommends the integration of entrepreneurship education into the curricula of educational institutions at all levels. By embracing this holistic approach, institutions can prepare youths to meet the demands of the evolving job market, stimulate economic growth, and effectively address the pervasive challenge of youth unemployment.

Key words: Entrepreneurship creativity, innovation, educational management, youth

employment **Introduction**

The need for entrepreneurship creativity and innovation is a key in solving the problems of youths' unemployment. This need cannot be over emphasized for a number of reasons like youths' unemployment, leadership traits, and poverty among others. The society of today also is such that poses a lot of obstructions that makes every individual person to be on his or her toes because survival has become that of the fittest. Therefore, everybody is not only expected to be doing something to earn an income and also be self-reliant, but to be doing something that will make him or her an employer of labour. However, it is not surprising that young men and women are their appreciation because it has become obvious that one need to be profitably engaged.

There is need to be profitably engaged as it has now become so obvious because of the absent of white-collar jobs in the country. Most of the graduates nowadays don't get work to do due to the

type of education they received and the curriculum of most of the school programmes does not create an avenue for self-dependency for the graduates unless if they are employed by some private or public organizations.

This paper seeks to produce and development of appropriate entrepreneurship creativity and innovation in educational management so as to ensure our youths, upon leaving schools will seek to embark on private enterprises thereby employing themselves and creating some job opportunities for others. Also, it creates opportunity, ensure social justice, instils confidence and stimulate the economy so, when its effectively implemented will produce the right thinkers amongst the youths who will go ahead to become jobs creators after school. This entrepreneurship creativity and innovation will also create most needed environment for employment opportunities.

Educational managers today are interested in looking for some measures that will tell them in advance, which of these persons are going to enlarge their wealth. The educational managers may be concerned with the questions of how entrepreneurial habits and skill can be imparted. So many people have continued to be drawn towards these individuals from both the privates and public sectors of many economies around the world. Baty in Echu, Goyit and Dakung (2010), Legions of people in government have begun securing ways to engage entrepreneurs in programmes of regional development, minority enterprise, leadership training, export promotion, and technological transfer. Form the above discussion, it is evident that entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation in educational management could turn around the economic fortune of the society through the provision of job opportunities and reduction of unemployment among the youths. This measure will not only decrease the incidence of various crimes but also contribute to lowering the poverty rate in society by creating employment opportunity. It could help an individual or a person to identify business opportunities and venture in to it, in order to provide good and services needed in the society. These efforts will support and inspire other young individuals to adopt and explore entrepreneurship. By alleviating the apprehension, they may have towards business, it will mitigate joblessness and deter potential involvement in criminal activities

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the process of creating, developing, and managing a new business or venture, typically with the goal of generating profit and creating value. Entrepreneurs are individuals who identify opportunities, take risks, and leverage resources to bring innovative ideas to life. Entrepreneurship is the willingness and the ability of an individual or group of individuals to seek out investment opportunities, create business enterprise and to run it successfully (Takaya, 2010). Entrepreneurship is actually concerned with creating

opportunity and meeting the needs of individual. Entrepreneurship is the pursuit of creating, managing, and scaling a business by taking calculated risks, and being innovative.

Entrepreneurship involves combining resources, skills, and vision to bring forth new products, services, or solutions that meet market demands and create value (Shopify, 2023). It is a process

of identifying gaps in one's immediate environment (community and society at large) and bringing together resources in an innovative way to fill these gaps. Entrepreneurship means an occupationally oriented approach aiming at giving budding entrepreneurs the requisite knowledge and skills (Martin, 2015) Entrepreneurship education is an indispensable ingredient for job creation. Muhamad, Jabor1, Kashif, Amir and Hanim (2019) asserted that Entrepreneurship is the medium that spurs the creativity and innovation. Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in economic development, job creation, and innovation. It is not limited to starting a new business but can also involve innovation within existing organizations (intrapreneurship) or social entrepreneurship, where the focus is on addressing social or environmental challenges alongside financial sustainability. Entrepreneurship is a dynamic and multifaceted concept that contributes significantly to economic and societal progress.

Concept of Creativity

The word creativity is the ability to produce original and useful ideas, understanding, or solutions. It involves curiosity, thinking, and produce something new or innovative that goes beyond ordinary or common norms. This means anything new that is geared toward developing self or bringing solutions to existing problem is what creativity is talking about. The creativity can be seen in different ways. Entrepreneur primary concerned is developing new product, process market and the ability to break through the tough market. Creativity is a continuous process which required party to work hard and continually improve ideas and solution. Creative person will work hard by making gradual alteration and refinements to their work. Creativity in entrepreneurship also implies the organization environment such as team climate, teamwork and others. shehu (2015). Creativity is moving from the known to the unknown. Creativity is therefore, a fundamental aspect of human cognition that can be applied to various areas and disciplines.

Creativity is the ability of a person to introduce and develop new ideas and to discover new ways of looking at problems and opportunities. Consideri ng the definitions above, it could therefore, be said that creativity is bringing something new in to life, identifying new ways of solving issues disturbing human and the entire ecosystem.

Encouraging creativity often involves the creation of an environment that supports open-mindedness, research, and risk-taking. Creativity is a multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon that exhibits various characteristics such as generating ideas, concepts, or solutions that are unique and original, having a flexible and adaptive mindset. Creativity

also requires a willingness to take risks and step outside of one's comfort zone that is being open to failure, and learning from setbacks and or mistakes.

Sanda (2010) opined that Nigeria and other countries of the world are seeking to increase the entrepreneurship capacities of their citizens with the understanding that it will contribute to economic growth and development such as:

1. **Promoting Effective Teaching and Learning:** Transforming educational management encourages educators to adopt innovative teaching methods that engage students, enriching the enjoyment and efficacy of the learning process. This strategy enables teachers to design dynamic and interactive lesson plans tailored to cater to diverse learning styles, fostering a

deeper understanding among students. Additionally, creativity in educational management emphasizes the seamless integration of technology and multimedia, enabling educators to cultivate immersive and captivating learning experiences.

2. **Encouraging the Cultivation of Problem-Solving Skills and Critical Thinking:** Educational management that esteems creativity empowers students to engage in critical thinking and tackle problems autonomously. It motivates educators to create activities that prompt students to move beyond mere memorization, fostering the development of analytical and problem-solving capabilities. Creative educational approaches cultivate an atmosphere of inquiry, motivating students to pose questions, explore various possibilities, and reach well-reasoned conclusions.
3. **Revolutionizing Curriculum Development:** A forward-thinking approach to educational management involves revamping and crafting curricula that align with the evolving needs of both students and society. It promotes the integration of interdisciplinary subjects, project-based learning, and real-world applications to elevate the practicality of education. Through innovative curriculum development, students not only gain knowledge but also acquire the skills and competencies essential for success in the contemporary world
4. **Fostering Student Engagement and Motivation:** Embracing creativity in educational management transforms classrooms into dynamic and stimulating environments, promoting heightened student engagement. Innovative teaching methods have the power to ignite curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, ultimately boosting motivation for academic excellence.
5. **Fostering a positive school culture through creativity:** Creativity in educational management goes beyond the confines of classrooms; it shapes the overall school culture. Schools that prioritize creativity often cultivate a positive and supportive environment. In such settings, both staff and students feel empowered to express themselves and explore innovative ideas.
6. **Promoting Continuous Professional Development:** Creative educational management underscores the significance of ongoing professional growth for

teachers. It motivates educators to participate in workshops, conferences, and training initiatives, providing exposure to innovative teaching techniques and methodologies

7. **Navigating Educational Changes Through Creativity:** In a dynamic educational environment, creative management enables institutions to respond to evolving challenges and opportunities. Creativity cultivates a culture of experimentation and risk-taking, encouraging educators and administrators to explore new strategies and glean valuable insights from both successes and failure.
 8. **Nurturing Leadership and Decision-Making Abilities:** Creative educational management enables school leaders to innovate and make well-informed decisions that benefit the institution and its stakeholders. This approach promotes the involvement of teachers, students, parents, and the community in decision-making, fostering a collaborative and inclusive management strategies.
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Concept of Innovation

Innovation is the ability to apply creative solutions to those problems and opportunities to enhance and or enrich peoples' lives. Innovation, this could be the introduction of new methods of production, new production line or segment, an improvement in the existing product, new technology application and more. Amabile in goyit, ochu, and dakung (2010) defined innovation as the successful implementation of creative ideas within a business. It deals with the result or what is produced through creative activities. This means that innovation has to do with improving the quality of goods and services, product, change it, make it better and the best for customers in a given society, organization or institution.

Innovation is seen as introducing something new, whether it is a service, product, process, or a business model. Innovation can occur in different domains, such as educational management, guidance and counselling, art, humanities, science, business education, technology, economics and more. It also plays a significant role in driving progress, societal growth and development, economic growth and development by challenging the status quo, nurturing creativity, and bringing about positive change in the society.

From the preceding discourse, it becomes clear that entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation in educational management have the potential to reshape the economic prospects of society by creating employment opportunities and curbing youth unemployment. Consequently, this can lead to a decrease in various forms of criminal activities and a reduction in overall poverty levels. This initiative can also serve as sources of employment for others. It could help an individual or a person to identify business opportunities and venture in to it, in order to provide good and services needed in the society. These will help and also encourage other youths to embrace and venture into it, as it will do away with the forbear, they have for business hence joblessness that may result to crime will be chase away.

The Roles of creativity and innovation in educational management

Creativity and innovation play critical roles in educational management, helping to enhance the quality of education, adapt to changing needs, and prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century. Here are some significant roles of creativity and innovation in educational management:

- i. Curriculum development: Creative and innovative approaches in curriculum design can lead to more engaging and effective learning experiences. Educators can incorporate new teaching methods, interdisciplinary subjects, and real-world applications to make learning more relevant and existing for students.
 - ii. Problem solving: Educational leaders can encourage creativity and innovation to address various challenges in schools, such as improving student performance, reducing dropout rates, and enhancing teacher effectiveness. Creative problem-solving can lead to the development of novel solutions and strategies. Entrepreneurs often encounter various challenges and obstacles when starting and growing their businesses. Creativity enables them to find creative solutions to these problems, whether they relate to product development, marketing or operations.
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- iii. Teachers professional development: Promoting creativity and innovation among teachers can lead to more dynamic and effective teaching methods. Offering professional development opportunities that encourage educators to explore new teaching techniques and technologies can positively impact students learning outcome.
 - iv. Students engagement: Creative and innovative teaching methods, such as project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and gamification, can boost student engagement and motivation. When students are actively involved in their learning, they are more likely to retain information and develop critical thinking skills.
 - v. Adaptation to technology: Educational management should embrace innovative technologies to facilitate learning. This includes the use of digital tools, online resources, and adaptive learning platforms to personalize education, reach a wider audience, and keep up with the digital era. Markets and customer preferences evolve over time. Innovating and adapting to these changes is crucial for business survival. Creative entrepreneurs can spot emerging trends and modify their offerings or strategies accordingly.
 - vi. Diversity and inclusion: Creative approaches to educational management can promote diversity and inclusion in schools. Developing inclusive curricula, supporting diverse teaching methods, and fostering a culture of respect and acceptance can create a more equitable learning environment.
 - vii. Market niche identification: Entrepreneurs often find success by identifying underserved or niche markets. Creativity helps them recognize these opportunities and develop tailored solutions that cater to the unique needs of these segments.

- viii. Attracting investment: Investors are often drawn to innovative and creative start-ups. A compelling and innovative business idea can attract funding from venture capitalists, angel investors, or crowdfunding platforms.

Importance of Entrepreneurship Creativity and Innovation in Educational Management The significance of entrepreneurship knowledge within educational management cannot be overstated, as its advantages go far beyond the businesses they create. Therefore, entrepreneurship has been widely recognized as the cornerstone of industrialization and economic progress. Herein lies the importance of entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation in educational management:

- i. They serve as catalysts for employment generation, offering an essential starting point for inexperienced youth to acquire valuable experience and training.
- ii. Entrepreneurship creativity and innovation in educational management has impact on society and community Development: this means when youths are trained and innovative, the society becomes safe and greater if the employment base is big and diversified. Hence it brings about changes in the society and promotes facilities like higher expenditure on education.
- iii. Entrepreneurship creativity and innovation in educational management assist the youths towards a more stable high quality and quantity level of youths' employment. It introduces youths to marketing products with an aim of making profits, sales promotions, and teach individuals to become efficient and good salespersons.

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- iv. Embracing creativity and innovation in educational management ensures that institutions remain globally relevant in producing graduates who can thrive in a rapidly changing, interconnected world.
 - v. Helps entrepreneurs generate value, useful unique products, services, ideas, procedures, or new business processes (Mark,2023).

Factors mitigating the challenges of youth unemployment in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation in educational management can undeniably function as a remedy for youth unemployment. The following key factors can contribute to mitigating the challenges of youth unemployment in Nigeria:

1. Provision of meaningful education for youths which could make them self-reliant and subsequently encourage them to drive profit and be self-independent (Joseph and Esther, 2012). This means introducing entrepreneurship education in schools equips youths with the skills, knowledge and mindset needed to start and manage their businesses. Through inculcating business spirit and proving practical training in financial discipline and marketing, educational institutions can empower youths to become entrepreneurs and then creates employment opportunities on their own.
2. Fostering creative thinking: creativity is a key component of entrepreneurship and innovation in educational management that encourages and nurture creative thinking. By providing and creating enabling environment for problem solving,

building ideas in youths, and design thinking, institutions can prepare youths to be innovative thinkers who can contribute their quota in addressing emerging needs in the market square.

3. Embracing new technologies: educational management that accept new technologies feeds the youths with digital skills needed in today's job market. This means that technological advancements open up new business and employment opportunities particularly in the fields like e-commerce, data analysis, digital marketing and more. Through the integration of new technologies in to curriculum such as entrepreneurship in educational administration and planning, schools can prepare youths to leverage these tools for entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.
4. Encouraging and providing small and medium sized business companies with the opportunity to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skill relevant to management of the business centres (Joseph and Esther, 2012). This means that educational institutions can provide incubation and support structure to nurture youths in entrepreneurial skills and innovative start up. This can include dedicated entrepreneurship centres, innovation lab, which provide resources, mentoring funding, infrastructure to support the youths scaling their ventures. Therefore, by providing these support mechanisms, schools contribute to the creation of a conducive ecosystem for youths' employment through entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.
5. Providing youths with training skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society. (Osuala, 2010).

Conclusion

Integration of entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation in educational management holds immense promise as a solution to the pressing issue of youth unemployment. These transformative elements not only equip young individuals with the skills and mindset needed to become self-reliant job creators but also stimulate economic growth, reduce crime rates, and alleviate poverty. As we look ahead, it is essential for educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders to prioritize the implementation of these strategies, recognizing their pivotal role in shaping a brighter future for our youth and society at large. By cultivating an environment that encourages entrepreneurship, fosters creativity, and champions innovation within educational systems, we have the power to embolden the upcoming generation to excel in an ever-evolving job landscape and make substantial contributions to the well-being of our local communities and the country at large.

Recommendations

The implementation of the following recommendations will enable the educational institutions to play a pivotal role in equipping youths with the skills, mindset, and resources needed to become successful entrepreneurs and contributors to economic growth and job creation:

1. Educational institutions should integrate entrepreneurship education into their curricula at all levels, from primary to tertiary education. This should include practical training in financial management, marketing, business planning, and the development of entrepreneurial skills. By instilling an entrepreneurial mindset early on, students will be better prepared to start their own ventures.
 2. Create an environment that fosters creative thinking and problem-solving. Encourage students to think outside the box, explore innovative solutions to real-world problems, and develop their creativity. Educational institutions should provide resources such as innovation labs, workshops, and mentorship programs to support students in their creative endeavours.
 3. Recognize the importance of technology in the modern job market. Educational institutions should integrate technology-related subjects and digital skills training into their curricula. This will equip students with the skills needed for digital entrepreneurship and employment opportunities in technology-driven sectors.
 4. Foster collaboration between educational institutions and the private sector. Invite industry experts to share their experiences and insights with students. Create internship and apprenticeship programs that allow students to gain practical experience in real-world business settings. This will bridge the gap between education and industry and enhance students' employability.
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5. Encourage students and faculty to engage in research and innovation projects. Support research initiatives that address local challenges and provide solutions to societal problems. Create platforms for students to showcase their innovations and entrepreneurial ventures.
 6. Establish dedicated entrepreneurship centres and incubation programs within educational institutions. These centres can provide aspiring entrepreneurs with resources, mentoring, access to funding, and infrastructure to help them launch and scale their ventures. Encourage students to participate in these programs and turn their creative ideas into viable businesses.
 7. Provide career counselling and guidance services that help students identify their strengths, interests, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and career aspirations. This will help them explore various career paths, including entrepreneurship, and provide the necessary resources to pursue their chosen paths.
 8. Establish mechanisms to measure the impact of entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation programs in educational institutions. Collect data on the number of start-ups created by students, job placements, and the success of entrepreneurial ventures initiated by graduates. Use this data to continuously improve and tailor educational programs.

9. Advocate for government policies and initiatives that promote entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation in education. Collaborate with policymakers to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, including access to funding, reduced regulatory barriers, and incentives for start-ups.
10. Educational institutions should continuously evolve and adapt their programs to align with the changing demands of the job market and emerging opportunities. Stay updated on industry trends, technologies, and entrepreneurial best practices to ensure students receive relevant and up-to-date education.

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