ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE AND CONTINUOUS EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF POLYTECHNIC AND VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract
Polytechnic and vocational education, as entrenched in the Nigerian National Policy on Education, is concerned with qualitative technological human resources development directed towards a national pool of skilled and self-reliant craftsmen, technicians and technologists generally referred to as middle manpower in polytechnic and vocational institutions. The two key phrases, which readily come to mind in this type of institutions, are competency-based skill-acquisition and sound scientific knowledge. In order to cope with the requirements of fast developing economy, to gear up employment generation and meet the challenges of globalization, it was absolutely imperative to realign polytechnic and Vocational institutions in the country to cater for these requirements through entrepreneurial performance and continuous education. This paper attempts to appraise the roles of this often neglected but yet inevitable educational sector that is necessary to enhance continuous education and entrepreneurial performance for the growth and development of Nigeria. The focus is on the roles of polytechnic and vocational institutions in enhancing entrepreneurial skills that will equip students for entrepreneurship performance driven by continuous education. The paper therefore upholds that entrepreneurial performance and continuous education will equip the students with the skills with which to be self-reliant. The methodology used involves review of the current situation especially existing education policies and highlights the need for departure by studying some areas that can be applied. The conclusion was that to accelerate economic development, it is necessary that entrepreneurial performance is enhanced in the polytechnic and vocational education because it is the entrepreneurial skill together with vocational and technical skill that is required to ensure that graduates who are job creators and not job seekers are produced. The paper recommended that polytechnic and vocational institutional programmes at all levels of education should be made relevant to providing the needed entrepreneurial skills. It was also recommended that the government should continue to give adequate attention to entrepreneurial performance in the country through the provision of continuous education.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Performance, Continuous Education, Polytechnic, Vocational, Institutions Innovation, Curriculum.

Introduction
Ever since the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century, progress and prosperity have been closely identified with economic development. The economic competitiveness of a country depends on the skills of its work force. The skills and capabilities of the work force, in turn, are dependent upon the quality of the country's education and training systems. Polytechnic and Vocational institutions are perceived as one of the crucial elements in enhancing economic productivity through the process of developing middle manpower needed in the society.
Again, the fast pace of development recorded in such nations like Malaysia, Indonesia, Brazil and India among others have clearly shown that development is driven by the innovativeness, creativity and enterprise of the people. Unfortunately, Nigeria has not been able to enact similar feats owing to poor linkage between entrepreneurial performance and continuous education on one hand and the role of polytechnic and vocational institutions on the other hand. This may have been due to lack of appropriate skills and sufficient entrepreneurial culture in the educational system. Education particularly, entrepreneurship focused education therefore plays a very vital role in the development of economy of any nation because the more the number of young graduates that are self-dependent and self-employed the more the poverty and unemployment is eradicated and the faster the nation moves towards self-sufficiency.

Polytechnic and vocational institutions facilitates the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. It is therefore a planned programme of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration of career options, supports basic academic and life skills, that can enable achievement of high academic standards, leadership, preparation for industry-defined work, and advanced and continuing education (CTE, 2009). Unfortunately, Nigeria does not seem to give polytechnic and vocational institutions the attention they deserve and this appears to be one of the reasons for rising unemployment and poverty in the society. Rising unemployment, lack of skilled workers, high dropout rates, and the changing demographic nature of the work force have placed the issue of workforce education high on the educational reform agenda. Hence, in the new economic environment, polytechnic and vocational institutions are expected to produce an educated, skilled, and motivated work force (Mustapha & Greenan, 2013). Nigeria needs to stimulate entrepreneurial mindsets among young people, encourage innovative business start-ups, and foster a culture that is friendlier to entrepreneurship and to the growth of small and medium-sized businesses. The important role of polytechnic and vocational institutions education in promoting more entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours, should be widely recognized.

It is pertinent to note that education can simply be a tool for securing employment and emancipation of people through the provision and acquiring of necessary knowledge and skills to make lives more flourishing. One practical strategy towards doing this is continuous education through polytechnic and vocational institutions further facilitated through a well structured academic curriculum that is entrepreneurial focused. A nation with increased numbers of self-sustained and self-dependent graduates will record less numbers of unemployed graduates.
This paper therefore brings to the fore some salient roles this neglected institutions can make in Nigeria economic development by producing labour market ready graduates through entrepreneurial performance and continuous education. By making the world and ourselves increasingly comprehensible and thereby manageable, continuous education establishes a foundation for human growth, creativity, fulfillment, and progress. It generates ongoing innovation and improvement of our goods, services, and institutions. It makes them more efficient, affordable, and, thus, effective.

Entrepreneurial Performance
Performance simply means accomplishment of undertaking in a particular area or thing. While entrepreneurial performance and continuous education is the purposeful intervention by an adult (the teacher) in the life of a learner to impact entrepreneurial qualities and skills to enable the learner to survive in the world of business (Gouws, 2002). It aims at equipping learners with skills, knowledge and dispositions that can help them develop or implement innovative social or business plans (Nnazor, 2005). Continuous education in this direction, is often used as a generic term for the learning associated with the development of entrepreneurial performance.

Between entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education
Meredith (1983) defined an entrepreneur as a person or persons who possesses the ability to recognize and evaluate business opportunities, assemble the necessary resources to take advantage of them and take appropriate action to ensure success.
Entrepreneurship, according to Omolayo (2006) can be described as “the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coupling these with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and create wealth. It refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It covers creativity, innovation and risk taking, and the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. However, the operational definition of entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability to acquire educational skills to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful business enterprise.
Onyekwelu (2005) views entrepreneurship education as the identification of the general characteristics of entrepreneurs and how potential entrepreneurs can be trained in management techniques needed for effective performance of persons for long time survival of an organization after the acquisition of occupational skills. Entrepreneurship cannot be a “one size fits all” discipline. Therefore, the roles polytechnic and vocational institutions in enhancement of entrepreneurial performance is to continuously identify and equipped graduates with critical wealth of skills, technical knowledge, and a good measure of self-confidence using entrepreneurial performance and continuous education. The society needs competent auto mechanics and truck drivers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, electronics and computers, database, web and network technicians, book-keepers, and clerks, medical technicians and nursing assistants, (and other personnel in this category) to function well. These are some of the skills in short supply in Nigeria. Given these facts, it is a disservice to the society to neglect polytechnic and vocational institutions.

From the different definitions, one can define entrepreneurship education as a process of teaching learners to acquire skills for self-reliance; to see opportunities where others could not, and to generate wealth and create employment. Looking at the key role of polytechnic and vocational institutions, Onyekwelu (2005) describes skills acquisition as a job oriented kind of training with the ultimate goal of preparing people for the world of work in the society. It is a way of gaining ability to work well. Therefore entrepreneurship skills acquisition could be referred to as a way of equipping individuals with the necessary ability for production of necessary goods and services.

Polytechnic Institution in Nigeria

Polytechnic is simply a college offering a range of courses, some of them vocational or technical, qualifying students for the award of national and higher national diploma. The Acts establishing the various polytechnics empowered them to award their own diplomas. But where an institution wishes to award national diploma (ND) and higher national diploma (HND) the programme should meet the minimum standards laid down by the National Board for Technical Education. The goal and objectives of the programme which are to produce technician or technologists in the disciplines or similar manpower in business occupations are being met through the totality of activities taking place in and the resources available to the department offering the programme.
The need for Nigeria to develop technologically in order to meet up with the industrial demand of the era, and to attain self-reliance give birth to the establishment of a body that will be charged with the development of technical and vocational education. Under decree 9 of 11th January 1977, the federal military government established the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) with terms of reference similar to that of NUC. The board was charged with additional function by the decree No 16 of August 1985, to produce a minimum standard for all polytechnics, technical colleges and technical institutions. Furthermore Section 81 of the Education National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions Decree 16 of 1985 provides that the responsibility for the establishment of minimum standards in polytechnics, technical colleges and other technical institutions in the Federation shall be vested in the Minister of Education after consultation with the National Board for Technical Education and thereafter the Board shall have responsibility for the maintenance of such standards.

Vocational Institution
Vocational schools is a relatively modern development. Until the 19th century such education, except for the professions, was provided only by apprenticeship. This situation was partly due to the low social status associated with such instruction as opposed to a classical curriculum, which was considered “necessary for a gentleman.” Vocational education was seen in the early part of this 21st century as the way to prepare people for supervisory positions in nonprofessional occupations. Over time it has changed to meet the needs of the work force: first from agricultural priority to industrial priority, and then to today's emphasis on an information and service economy. As vocational education grew and vocational career centers were built across the country, vocational education became part of the local infrastructure. As such, economic developers encouraged vocational education to assume the role of training an entire work force to meet the needs of any major corporation willing to move to that area.

In addition to recruitment and training, polytechnic and vocational educators and schools began to provide technical assistance including management courses, to businesses. polytechnic and vocational institutions designed to meet the particular needs of specific large companies currently is viewed as the most direct, most demonstrable, and most successful way that polytechnic and vocational institutions has to economic growth. It was not until the early 1980s that polytechnic and vocational educators began to search a new opportunity for human capital development through entrepreneur-ship education, as they began to recognize the great number of small businesses in our economy.
However, Vocational institution is an institution intended to equip persons for industrial or commercial occupations. It may be obtained either formally in trade schools, technical secondary schools, or in on-the-job training programmes or, more informally, by picking up the necessary skills on the job. It is a college where instruction in skills necessary for persons who are preparing to enter the labour force or who need training or retraining in the technology of their occupation. Vocational education programs range from short-unit (ten weeks or less) to long-term programmes up to two years in length. The programmes include numerous occupational areas, such as office skills, agriculture, various trades, health services, and technical training. The scope of vocational education is broad, ranging from occupations requiring little skill to those requiring a high degree of skill and scientific knowledge. Jobs requiring minimum training are not generally included in formal programmes because the necessary skills can be readily learned on the job.

The impact of technology on occupations, the tendency of employers to set higher educational requirements, and the need for employees with specialized training have made polytechnic and vocational preparation imperative. Continuous education programmes are essential in order to provide occupational mobility among entrepreneurs and to overcome the effects of job obsolescence. Programmes in both public and private institutions are general in scope, providing training for several jobs in an occupational cluster; programmes conducted by these groups are usually focus on particular interests.

Polytechnic and vocational institutions should differ from academic ones in their curriculum and in their aim of generally preparing students for specific types of occupations and, in some cases, for direct entry into the labour market. Taking into account differences between countries, the definition of vocational education is broad, including all vocational, technical and commercial schools and colleges, and all possible fields of specialized training.
The Face of Education in Nigeria

The history of Nigeria education system could be traced back to the colonial period, the educational policy then was geared toward serving the interest of the colonial masters in term of supply of manpower for their effective administration of Nigeria colony and protectorates (Aladekomo, 2004). The policy was aimed at producing Nigerians who can read and write to hold certain positions such as clerks, interpreters, inspectors t.c without any entrepreneurial or professional skill to stand on their own or even establish and manage their own venture. The over pressing demand for while collar jobs for majority of graduates is just an upshot of colonial educational policies.

However, later in the mid-70s, the government because of perceived importance of small scale businesses to the economy decides to focus attention on small and medium sector. Thirteen industrial centers and some institutions were set up to support the activities of entrepreneurs in the small and medium businesses in the country. In the 1981 National policy of education, attempt has been made by the government to link the policy with the issue of self-employment and the industrial policy. The Higher education policy was deficient in the sense that it was mainly concerned with the development of both higher and middle manpower. Thus higher education policy as stipulated is expectedly to cater for production of scientist and technologist and absolutely none was directed for self-employment but for the vacant positions in government or public offices. (Aladekomo, 2004).

Education is seen as one of the precondition for entrepreneurship development particularly in a place where the spirit and culture is very minimal. It is said to be an important determinant of selection into entrepreneurship, formation of new venture and entrepreneurial performance (Dickson, Solomon and Weaver, 2008). For any country to foster genuine economic growth and development, its education system must be considered as basis and essential ingredient. Education is undisputedly considered as the bedrock of any meaningful development (Akpom 2009), be it economic, social or political.

Education is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character (moral) or physical ability of an individual. It is also a process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values (personal & cultural) from one generation to another. To this end, education is a basic human right and considered by many as a key tool for national development.

Consequently, scholars argue that countries need a well-diversified education system in order to gain sustainable development through education.

Continuous Education in Nigeria

The Nigeria policy of education made it clear on the need for functional education, to be relevant, practical and acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies as equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute to the development of his/her society (Aladekomo, 2004).
Adejimola and Olufunmilayo (2009) reported that about 80% of the graduates find it difficult to get employment every year. And at the same time much has not been done in trying to bring collaboration between the entrepreneurs and the institutions. The polytechnic and vocational institutions stand to benefit a lot from entrepreneurs out there. Similarly the entrepreneurs may harness and use the expertise of faculties in those institutions. This kind of interaction and interrelationship will go a long way in bridging the gap that exists between the entrepreneurs and the institutions. Lack of this kind of synergy shows the weaknesses, inadequacies and fallacies of the educational policies in Nigeria in attainment of its educational objectives (Aladekomo, 2004; Akpomi 2008; Adejimola and Olufunmilayo, 2009). Particularly as it pertains to entrepreneurial performance and continuous education.

Therefore, Continuing education in Nigeria has become very common. This applies to courses both offered by the private sector and public institutions. Continuing education is a field that is difficult to summarize because of its diversity and because it keeps changing. Broadly it can be divided up into general adult education and training directly linked to specific tasks within the labour market.

Continuous education can be described as the “post-secondary stage of education, comprising all vocational and non-vocational provision made for young people who have left school, or for adults.” Continuous education thus embraced the vast range of university, polytechnic, vocational, commercial, and art education and the wide field of adult education. It is this sector of education, which is concerned with education beyond the normal school-leaving ages of 16 or 18 that experienced the most astonishing growth in the number of students. In this continuous education, adult education is also imperative as it would assist those who could not complete their primary and secondary education to acquire basic skills, and for the retired, who constitute greater part of the unemployed group in the society, to retrain for a second career. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and other stakeholders should take up the campaign for more funds for polytechnic and vocational education and to launder its image.

Because of its practical focus, entrepreneurship’s greatest exponents are its innovators and practitioners, the creators of new enterprises, firms, products, and services rather than its students.

Education in entrepreneurship, operates along a continuum of learning that extends from the professional to the unprofessional. Among other things, entrepreneurs need to learn to devise a product, create a business plan, find new resources, build a company, market their innovation, and so forth. At the other end of the continuum, education in entrepreneurship also must be for the unprofessional, the consumer, who is the ultimate focus of entrepreneurship.
Opening schools to the outside world makes it possible to address this problem, by inviting external experts such as business people and entrepreneurs to take part in teaching. In this sense, it is advisable that young entrepreneurs coming to the classroom are those who have in the past attended the same school, so that students can easily identify with them: ‘if he/she can do it, I can do it as well’. Increasingly, continuous education requirements should focus on helping students gain basic competence in writing, quantitative analysis, interdisciplinary, research, globalization, ethics, and citizenship. It is where students are expected to acquire the fundamentals of learning that they can then apply to more specialized areas of study and to the rest of their lives.

Innovation and Continuous Education
Entrepreneurship is about devising and implementing new ideas and practices or improving old ones. Students learn best when they can live what they learn. They are more likely to practice innovation if their education values it, and it is a basic part of their learning. Making innovation intelligible may help students to imagine and engage in entrepreneurial activities they otherwise might not have considered. In a progressively technological, scientific, and interconnected world, the quality of innovation in large measure increasingly relies on superior advanced learning through continuous education. A strong educational foundation helps ensure that new ideas will be effective and substantive. Because entrepreneurship promotes, implements, and rewards innovation, it necessarily correlates with education. In this light, a key task of continuous education surely is to continue to stress and reward innovation and its implementation as a core educational goal. Through the continual innovation, the ongoing transformation of ideas and enterprises, and the persistent testing which takes place in the market, Nigerian society learns about itself and its culture in the very process of developing that culture.

The Need For Polytechnic and Vocational Institutions
Presently Nigeria is offering education in general subjects, but to achieve development, it must offer a variety of courses for disciplines such as technical, vocational, professional, agricultural, and so on, because the country needs a balanced distribution of manpower for all professions so that the vast population of Nigeria can contribute to economic growth by participating in different professions. The efforts of our Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics and Colleges of Education have not produced the type and quality of skilled worker that can support our economy in the 21st century. There is a wide gap between the theoretical curriculum taught in tertiary institutions and the practical skill needed by employers of labour. The disconnect between the educational system and the world of work is one of the major challenges facing Nigeria today. While the dynamics of global labour market have been tilting towards the replacement of physical labour by knowledge and innovation skills, the undisputed fact remains that the knowledgeable and competitive skilled force are in desperate short supply in Nigeria today.

The problem is that the design of Nigeria’s educational system is flawed. Because of the sorry state of the nation’s tertiary institutions, many of the graduates lack “employability” skills, which could easily be acquired from polytechnic and vocational institutions. The neglect of polytechnic and vocational institutions are obstacle to national development. Not everyone needs a university education. In Nigeria, polytechnic and vocational degrees are regarded as inferior to regular academic degrees.

But in advanced nations those with polytechnic and vocational degrees are highly regarded. Individuals with years of field experience work in tandem with those with academic degrees. In fact, the worth of every worker depends on the person’s skills and knowledge, and not on the stack of academic degrees one has. Nigeria must learn to blend theory and practice in its education because theories alone cannot serve any useful purpose. Therefore, while polytechnic and vocational institutions has continued to thrive in many societies, successive government in Nigeria has neglected this aspect of education. Consequently, the society lacks skilled technicians: bricklayers, carpenters, painters and auto mechanics, laboratory and pharmacy technicians, electrical/electronic technicians and skilled vocational nurses, etc. The neglect of Polytechnic and vocational education is socially and economically injurious because it is robbing the nation of the contributions the graduates would make on national development.

Substantial productivity increases cannot be achieved without labour adequately educated and motivated for technological and organizational methods. Polytechnic and vocational systems play a crucial role in the social and economic development of a nation. Owing to their dynamic nature, they are continuously subject to the forces driving change in the schools, industry and society. The real tests of success of Polytechnic and vocational institutions are the employability of the graduates, personal development, opportunities for continuous education and career development, public acceptance and image.
The Role of Polytechnic and Vocational Institutions in Entrepreneurial Performance and Continuous Education

Any Government wishing to increase the number and ratio of skilled workers must embark on several “world-of-work” oriented projects in conjunction with the private sector. The latest emerging powers of Asia - “Asian Giants” have sought to expand the capacity of their systems of Polytechnic and vocational education to meet with new challenges posed by changing global economy in order to sustain its competitiveness. For instance, India and the “Asian Tigers” could not have become what they are without massive investment in Polytechnic and vocational education. So also for Nigeria's most valuable economic resource lies in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of our workforce—present and future. Entrepreneurial performance and continuous education is a vehicle for polytechnic and vocational education that brings new prospects and challenges as we compete for our global economic position in the 21st century. To improve Polytechnic and vocational institutions, emphasis should be focused on establishing and maintaining quality standards for entrepreneurial performance programmes. Quality standards include entrance requirements, teacher certification, accreditation, and standardized assessment. Government should seek employers and private sector involvement in financing and expanding polytechnic and vocational education and training (Mustapha & Greenan, 2013).

Furthermore, it is observed that the key to transforming Nigeria’s strong natural resources advantage is the creation of an appropriate human resource space through education. This appropriate human capital or resource space is the ideal continuous educational environment for producing individuals with a mindset of self-reliant, creative and high productivity ready to cope with the 21st century world of work (Aliu, 2007).

As such Polytechnic and vocational institutions should be seen not only as centers for knowledge creation and acquisition but also centers for human empowerment and development through entrepreneurial skill acquisition and training. This will greatly assist in changing the psyche of our students from studying, get certificate and work, but instead prospective student should think of coming to school acquire entrepreneurial skill and work for themselves.

To be effective in preparing students for a changing society and workplace, Polytechnic and vocational education must extend beyond the delivery of occupational knowledge, job skills, and work experience. It must offer students an incentive for thinking creatively about an industry and broaden their understanding of the career opportunities afforded in that industry.
Aliu, 2007 promotes brainstorming of potential businesses in the various Polytechnic and vocational areas as a means of making students aware of self-employment as another route to success and personal esteem. The need for entrepreneurship education has to be upheld by the society and it calls for reorientation among students and their teachers. The government is expected to play a greater role in providing the necessary atmosphere and policy framework for the success of this transformation process. Polytechnic and vocational institutions are to be considered as the key agent of entrepreneurial performance, either as a way of developing human capacity, increasing the shield work force for modernization, industrialization, environmental development or as a matter of personnel freedom, developing capability and empowerment.

It therefore follows from the above that incorporating entrepreneurial performance and continuous education into polytechnic and vocational education will ensure that our polytechnic and vocational institutions will not only serve as centers for skills acquisition but also centers for inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship which will enable the graduates to see themselves as job creators rather than job seekers. It is against this backdrop that the need to redefined and refocus the current system of polytechnic and vocational institutions with a view to creating and enhancing the supply of entrepreneurship performance, initiatives and activities which is very paramount and crucial for achieving reduction in unemployment rate and overall development of the economy.

From our analysis so far, it is clear that modernization and economic development, depends on investment and appreciation of modern trends in polytechnic and vocational institutions.

Restructuring Polytechnic and Vocational Institutions Curriculum
One of the problems militating against polytechnic and vocational education in Nigeria is curriculum. People perceived that curricula had questionable relevance to the contemporary needs of business and industry. This suggests that polytechnic and vocational education and training institutions should conduct continuous needs assessments to create relevant curriculum. According to Okojie (2011), the Federal Government in 2002 decided that entrepreneurship studies be injected into the curriculum of university education in Nigeria, and since then, it has been introduced as General Studies (GST). The objective was to empower students to be able to harness opportunities, and be self-reliant and become job-creators and not job-seekers. Entrepreneurship education tends to make the curriculum more functional. Functional curriculum, according to Esu (2010) is designed to teach students skills that will equip them to function as competent and accepted adults in the society. This inclusion has reached polytechnic and vocational institutions.
As an outcome of close cooperation between all actors concerned, developing entrepreneurial performance should become one of the basic goals of continuous education, this goal being defined and acknowledged in educational policy as a whole as well as specifically in the curriculum of polytechnic and vocational schools and in teacher training development plans.

Introducing entrepreneurship as an explicit goal in the curriculum will be a clear signal that entrepreneurship is important for every student. Moreover, it will make it easier for teachers to spend teaching hours on the subject. Where entrepreneurship is not explicitly included in the curriculum, it often happens that teachers who want to participate with their students in entrepreneurial activities have to prepare this outside school hours. This type of learning must be anchored in the curriculum and made available to all students, not depend on the individual will and initiative of single teachers and schools. Some experts emphasised that only if entrepreneurship is introduced as a compulsory item in the curriculum will it become possible to reach all students.

At all events, the curriculum should not be too rigid, so as to leave room for teachers to take interdisciplinary initiatives and to organize practical activities. Apprenticeship training could be seen as a good model for cooperation on different levels: company trainers meet teachers to discuss the specific situation of apprentices, and companies negotiate with schools to ensure coherence between the company training and the school curriculum.

Curriculum is the basic enterprise of education. Continuous curricular innovation is hardly a uniform practice. Continuous educational culture of what we might call curricular entrepreneurship would create budgetary practices and incentive structures to reward faculty and departments for curricular innovations, fresh interdisciplinary partnerships, experiments with new modes of instruction, etc.

Since, the choice to instill entrepreneurship education in the curriculum rests with the teacher, which may therefore be difficult for teachers who have little or no training to teach the subject. Experts in the various specific skills/trade should be employed to train and re-train all the lecturers that handle entrepreneurship education for better outputs. Teacher in-service workshops can be offered to all polytechnic and vocational teachers in an area as part of teachers’ conference or to groups of teachers in the same discipline so that the importance of entrepreneurial performance within these institutions context could be communicated to these administrators to gain their support. Encourage and motivate teachers, on-site training that teachers receive from recognized providers by ensuring access to appropriate training, information and guidance. Allow internships in enterprises in the country and abroad. The curriculum in use for the programme is inadequate and therefore NBTE should work hard to restructure the approved minimum curriculum and course specification for the level of training.
The Role Polytechnic and Vocational Institutions: Teachers and Educators Perspective

The problems of polytechnic and vocational institutions are legion but suffice it to say that three of them, namely resources, curriculum and teachers, stand clearly out as factors that can make or mar qualitative polytechnic and vocational institutions. Similarly, inadequate facilities and resources inhibited efforts to maintain high quality standards for polytechnic and vocational institutions training. Initial and further teacher training is of the highest importance, but entrepreneurship education is not yet included systematically in training programmes for educators, and it can be problematic to get teachers’ institutions involved. Providing teachers with adequate know-hows to teach entrepreneurship is seen as a major challenge. There seems to be a deficit of specific skills among teachers. The current situation is that most teachers have not been trained in entrepreneurship. Consequently, they may be unaware of the right approach to entrepreneurship teaching. For most teachers this is not easy because they are not familiar with the content. They have had little training to teach entrepreneurship and they have little time to learn about it on their own. Unless teachers believe that entrepreneurship is important for their students, it is not likely to become part of their teaching plans.

Polytechnic and vocational institutions educators should focus on field trips and class speakers on the creative small businesses in an effort to understand the phenomenon of job creation and economic development of which polytechnic and vocational students are a major part. Educators have also recognized that starting a business is a natural outcome of polytechnic and vocational skills training, and they are moving ahead to encourage the entrepreneurial performance in all kinds of young people. Teachers should have a better understanding of entrepreneurial performance and the range of aims, methods and contents of it. There is a need for more teacher training, conferences, seminars and workshops, and to disseminate understanding of different ways and methods to support the entrepreneurial mindset.
As concerns teaching methods, it seems that a project-based approach is by far the most efficient. Projects provide an opportunity to cover a number of different subjects in an entrepreneurial performance. An entrepreneurial performance should therefore permeate the whole of education. The best way of ensuring this on a long-term basis is to include teaching in entrepreneurship in compulsory initial teacher training programmes. It is also important to offer further education to those teachers who have already completed their initial education. A major strategy for encouraging teachers is in-service workshops. Teachers should also be able to participate in ongoing continuing professional development in the field, thus ensuring that the competences acquired do not become obsolete. This professional development could take place at the polytechnic and vocational schools as a part of in-service learning or externally with training providers with expertise in teaching entrepreneurship. Real entrepreneurs and business people should also contribute to teachers’ training.

Qualification requirements for polytechnic and vocational institutions teachers should correspond to real needs, and teachers in entrepreneurship should receive enough practical training. At present, the requirements focus too much on pedagogic and academic preparation. Ideally, teachers should experience entrepreneurship themselves. Teachers of entrepreneurship should be given a chance to do internships in enterprises. It is of course important to have a range of good-quality teaching materials and tools available. Teachers could be informed of the resources that exist by several methods: information markets, websites, and learning networks. Finally, offering awards to teachers who are particularly committed to entrepreneurship education would also contribute to keeping their motivation high. If polytechnic and vocational education is to make a significant impact on the entrepreneurial performance of millions of high school and continuous education students each year, it will depend on the attitudes of our teachers.

It is important that teachers are taken through the same learning process that they will use with their students, e.g. creating an idea and carrying it out, debriefing the learning, assessing the skills and knowledge developed, and evaluating the entire process. Teacher training needs to develop the specific skills required to teach entrepreneurship, such as:

a) Project Management Skills:- The heart of entrepreneurial performance is students setting up and running a project. Teachers require the skills to support students throughout this process, which includes: planning and preparing the project (setting objectives and identifying what exactly is required and how it can be carried out, etc.); anticipating students’ needs at each stage of the project; setting personal targets and goals throughout the project; and doing the final evaluation.
b) Pedagogical Skills:- The emphasis is on pedagogies that encourage learning: by doing; by exchange; by experiment; by risk taking and ‘positive’ mistake making; by creative problem solving; by feedback through social interaction; by dramatizing and acting the part; by exploring role models; and by interacting with the outside/adult world. This involves the teacher in suggesting and guiding rather than giving instruction, asking ‘open’ questions that do not necessarily lead to one correct answer, learning alongside the students, helping to resolve conflicts and difficulties that may arise and persuading students to face up to things they may initially resist or avoid. In teaching entrepreneurship it is particularly important to focus on the personality of young people. This type of education should foster creativity, a sense of initiative, risk taking and other generally applicable attributes and skills that are the foundation of entrepreneurship.

c) Personal Skills:- Much of the success of the facilitation process depends upon a range of communication skills, including that of active listening, the ability to negotiate and work in teams with other colleagues and the ability to create a learning environment in which students can be open and frank, and feel confident and secure.

Conclusion

The study x-rayed the entrepreneurial performance and continuous education: The role of polytechnic and vocational institutions. The findings revealed that the roles of polytechnic and vocational education in enhancing entrepreneurial performance and continuous education is very important in training for self-employment, self-reliance and skills acquisition now that government cannot employ every graduate. If the aims and objectives of polytechnic and vocational institutions were to be realized, there is need to enhance the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial performance. Continuous education made possible in the unique research-based and research-driven educational framework of Nigerian polytechnic and vocational institutions, an environment defined by free inquiry, autonomous thinking, intellectual passion, and originality should be encouraged.

The development of entrepreneurship will be crucial in boosting productivity, increasing competition and innovation, creating employment and prosperity and revitalizing economies (Ritche and Lam, 2006). Therefore, the uniqueness of the paper is in emphasizing the need entrepreneurial performance and continuous education in vocational and technical institutions so as to be able to produce graduates who are job creators rather than job seekers. Hopefully, future research will use these insights to add to our knowledge of entrepreneurship as an experiential learning process.

Recommendations
Against this backdrop, there should be a closer cooperation and greater collaboration between education and employment particularly self-employment in order to help the youngsters acquire the necessary skills from the onset. Entrepreneurial performance should become part and parcel of tertiary institutions’ curriculum. Acquisition of practical skills should be stressed on the final outcome. Based on the results and limitations of this study, several recommendations for policy, practice, and future research are offered:

- The government should draw upon the resources of employers and work collaboratively with the private sector to maintain and expand polytechnic and vocational institutions to ensure entrepreneurial performance and continuous education and training in Nigeria.

- Federal, state, and local agencies should provide a clear vision and mission for entrepreneurial performance and continuous education and training. In addition, the government should provide effective leadership and incentives to the private sector to encourage partnerships and collaboration with these institutions.

- The government, especially the Ministry of Education, should seek input from numerous stakeholders, such as educators, business/industry personnel, parents, students, academicians, and other professionals, before formulating major policy decisions regarding polytechnic and vocational education and training.

- The essence and content of the general entrepreneurship curriculum, and the link to the specific skills should be made clear to the students during training; a balanced approach should be emphasized in the school curriculum through the integration of technical, employability, and generalizable skills in polytechnic and vocational programmes. In addition, vocational curricula should be flexible and responsive to the present and future needs of the nation.

- The government should reduce bureaucracy and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of polytechnic and vocational programmes by making adequate financial and material resources available for detailed practicalization of the courses, to make them exciting and interesting to the students. The Educational Tax Fund should consider polytechnic and vocational institution a priority area for funding.

- Policymakers should introduce legislation related to new reform initiatives such as school/business partnerships, school-to-work activities, technology preparation, and workforce development to sustain employer and private sector commitment to continuous education, training, and human resource development.

- Set up a national steering committee for entrepreneurship education, including representatives from different ministries and relevant stakeholders (including delivery partners and NGOs), with the objective of launching and developing a national strategy through the polytechnic and vocational institutions.
Support ‘peer learning’ and organize study visits to locations selected as good examples. Organize talks and seminars by entrepreneurs to encourage students, and to make them aware of the potential and implications of becoming self-employed. Present entrepreneurship in a practical way. Promote the use of methods based on real experience (project work with real enterprises or with the local community, student mini-companies, etc.).

Entrepreneurial performance and continuous education in polytechnic and vocational institutions should focus more on teaching business planning, computer applications, managing capital/cash flow, marketing skills, and accounting skills, and promote the involvement of instructors in any business management instruction initiatives across all programme areas.

References
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