

Rethinking Entrepreneurship Education as a Remedy for Graduates Unemployment in Nigeria

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Abstract : Over the last two decades, Nigeria has witnessed an upsurge in graduate unemployment occasioned by the lack of industries and proliferation of tertiary institutions churning out thousands of graduates every year to compete for the few available job space. The astronomical rise in the unemployment rate amongst Nigerian graduates however, is principally assumed to be the defective curricula of the universities and other tertiary institutions whose focus is on training for white-collar jobs. Although graduate unemployment has become a global scourge, its adverse economic impact is believed to be more in developing economies like Nigeria with a huge young population within the working age who cannot seem to find gainful employment to make out a respectable livelihood. Thus, higher institutions especially Universities found itself under pressure and intense competition to produce graduates who can think outside the box and create jobs; hence there was the need to focus on instilling hands-on practical job skills into their students that will make them job creators rather than job seekers on graduation. In the same vein stakeholders in education have continued to lend their voices to the philosophy that the undergraduate curricula should be completely overhauled to accommodate the development of hand-on practical skills and innovative capacity relevant to creating solutions to societal problems. In a bid to correct this anomaly, the Federal Government of Nigeria in conjunction with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment inaugurated a programme tagged "University Entrepreneurship Development Programme" (UNEDEP) whose objective was basically to promote self-employment among the youth right from the institutions of higher learning. But the question is whether the objectives of the programme have actually been achieved. Despite the inclusion in Nigerian educational curriculum close to two decades now,, one wonder if the essence has been aborted. Thus, the paper focused on the concept of entrepreneurship education, objectives of entrepreneurship education, Graduates unemployment, rethinking entrepreneurship education programme in tertiary institution for employment generation , role of entrepreneurship in job creation, challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institution in Nigeria, conclusion and recommendations were drawn accordingly.

Keywords : rethinking, entrepreneurship education, remedy, unemployment, job creation

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