

Empowering 21st Century Students with Self-Employability Skill Competencies in an Era of Uncertainties of Paid Employment Jobs

Authors : Pac Ordu

Abstract : The paper was conceived on the premise that employment of tertiary education graduates has become an endemic problem in Nigeria. Recognizing the objective of current education as schooling for paid employment, the paper identified that the basic objective of present-day education should be schooling to become self-employed. While schooling to become a successful employee was identified as the focus for the older generation, schooling to become self-employed was defined as the focus for 21st-century teaching and learning. Hence, the paper condemned the inability of curriculum implementers to teach creative trends to enable students to acquire practical skills and small business operation-oriented competencies. A review of some disciplines was made to show the new trend of education that would empower Nigerian students with small business enterprise operation skills for self-employment on graduation. This was further made to draw the attention of institutions and curriculum designers to the need for our curriculum to be functional in line with demands of the innovative economic environment. The paper also noted that at periods of recession with its attendant effects, was the best period for students of entrepreneurship to dream and create their small business enterprises. It highlighted the role of Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku, Rivers State, Nigeria and the national recognition it has received for developing an innovative, practical model of teaching entrepreneurship education in Nigeria Colleges of Education system. In order to equip students for economic survival on graduation, the introduction of innovative teaching can only be successful if lecturers shift their focus away from the conventional emphasis on theory to students' energy quotients. While the paper obviously recommended that lecturers should be creative and teach outside the curriculum box, it further recommended that students should use this period of their studentship to dream, create and operate their own small business enterprises.

Keywords : 21st century students, curriculum, entrepreneurship, hands-on-training, innovative

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