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**AN ANALYSIS ON VARIOUS EFFECTIVE
TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING
ENTREPRENEURIAL LIFE SKILLS IN SCHOOLS**

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An Analysis on Various Effective Techniques for Developing Entrepreneurial Life Skills in Schools

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Abstract – The need to develop entrepreneurial skills among students in the classroom has taken a global dimension due to growing graduate unemployment and economic recession. School-industry link is one of the pedagogy practices to enhance students learning of entrepreneurial skills in the classroom. Linkages between educational institutions and industries allow students to explore the opportunities of self-employment through the practical and direct involvement of local businesses. This paper looked at the concept of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education as well as the objectives and importance of entrepreneurship education. It established the importance of school-industry links in imparting entrepreneurial skills to students in the classroom, and examined different strategies for inculcating entrepreneurship skills. It also identified some problems and prospects in adopting different strategies in imparting entrepreneurial skills in classroom.

School is the platform for learning for the student. The main objectives of school are to build a productive generation in the future. The teacher focuses on the overall development of the students. Teacher builds reading writing and arithmetic skills among students. Apart from these skills it is the duty of the teacher as well as school setting to enable the students to face challenges in life. It is the generic life skills like self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, inter personal relationship, problem solving, decision making, creative and critical thinking, coping with stress and emotions that help the students to overcome challenges in real life. In this study the researchers aims to identify the importance of life skills education in school setting and identifying the gap in providing this life skills in school setting.

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INTRODUCTION

School is the temple of learning. Teachers are the facilitators of learning process. The teacher focuses on overall development of the students. The way of teaching the subjects will influence the student's behavior. It is the duty of the teacher to build the character of a student. Gage defined teaching as a "form of interpersonal influence aimed at changing the behavior potential of another person". The main objective of teaching are it helps the students to understand the realities and adjust in a better way, enable them to analyze the truth and take decisions, make the students a best worker and best thinker. When we relate this in the context of life skill education we can see a lot of similarities like life skills enables the individual to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life, development of cognitive skills including problem solving, decision making, creative and critical thinking, and finally enabling behavior modification of the individuals.

Globally, men and women are embracing entrepreneurship as a major tool for self-reliance.

Entrepreneurship is the willingness to seek out for investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run business successfully based on identified opportunities. It is the willingness and ability of a person or persons to acquire educational skills to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful business enterprise (Aboho and Jimin, 2011).

Skills are generally defined as the ability to perform an activity or a task expertly. It is seen as having enough ability to do something well (Onele and Nwite, 2011). The process of effective utilization of available resources in the economy for sustainable development needs special skills or ability which are to be created in the students as the future of any nation. The ability, knowledge, and experiences required to accomplish those task are known as entrepreneurial skills.

Entrepreneurial skills are all about the acquisition of skills that will culminate to an individual becoming self-employed, self-reliant and then create job and wealth for himself. It involves the acquisition of skills,

knowledge and competencies that will enable learners to maximize the use of existing resources for firm career commitments such as setting up businesses, marketing service or being produce employees of organizations (Ezenwenne, 2005). The goal of education is entrepreneur (Iyekekpolo, 2007). That is production of an individual who is self-reliant, and an employer of labour.

School – Industrial link is one of the strategies of developing entrepreneurial skills in the learners in the classroom. Through the school-industrial links a student is made to receive practical on the job experience either through employment on part-time basis in an industry or business establishment or using industrial personnels as resource persons to impart certain skills that will make them self-employed and self-reliant.

Through this scheme a lot of personnel like doctors, pharmacists, engineers who can contribute to the development of the nation are produced. This paper therefore focused on the strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills among students in the classroom using school-industry link, the problem and prospect of using such strategies were also highlighted.

Everywhere, education is seen as the main way of enabling individuals and nations alike to meet the ever increasing economic, technological, social and personal challenges. We expect education to prepare young people for the world of work and for economic independence; to enable them to live constructively in responsible communities; and to enable them to live in a tolerant, culturally diverse and rapidly changing society. Perhaps above all, we expect education to help young people to build lives that have meaning and purpose in a future we can scarcely predict.

This has led to re-organizing of the education systems all over the world so that they provide not only high standards of academic qualifications, including literacy and innumeracy but also inculcate skills such as creativity, communication, empathy, adaptability, and social skills, all of which are being increasingly emphasized by employers and others in the global society. More so, in this age of information explosion education systems face the ever increasing challenge of providing skills to acquire and process information as it is neither possible to provide children with all the information available, nor is it possible to predict what knowledge would be required 20 years from now, hence the focus on skills.

The system of education is largely confined to the coverage of the prescribed syllabi the contents of which are mostly knowledge based, and thus provide only the basic level of education, advocating rote learning. This type of learning may at best result in acquiring knowledge of facts and concepts, but is not directly related to the immediate life of the learners or to their future needs. Therefore, there is a concern that the precious years of schooling should be optimally

used for developing skills, attitudes and values essential for effective living and working.

It is envisaged that in the changed educational process in terms of the concerns mentioned above, the learning, while continuing around the traditional school subjects, namely, language(s), mathematics, science, social sciences, art and aesthetics, work experience, health and physical education, should move beyond mere acquisition of knowledge of concepts and facts of these subjects. Though the textbooks may continue to remain the principal source of teaching-learning, the activities the methodology incorporated in the study should be skill oriented as opposed to provision of knowledge only.

This paradigm shift in the school education will mean that teacher will take care that learning of children is not limited to mere memorization of information contained in the textbooks, thus requiring a changed approach to the preparation of teachers. Most of the Schools are adopting this changed approach to develop a program for continuous professional development of teachers. In this regard technical support is being provided by the National Commission for Human Development, the first organization to take up the initiative of designing and introducing Life Skills based teacher training program on a large scale. As a first step a training module has been designed for the initial orientation and preparation of the primary school teachers with the immediate aim of introducing life skills based teaching methodology and training in preparing teaching material in the form of lesson plans using this approach.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES IN TEACHING AND LIFE SKILL EDUCATION

Teaching process is based on some general principles like principle of motivation and interest in which the teaching should create interest in the mind of students. Interest can be created within the students through participatory learning approach. When the students apply what they learned in daily activities it satisfy the principle of activity. It persists in their mind for a long time and is much effective then note writing and passing the exam. The principle of creation and recreation says teaching should have recreational activities that impart creative thinking and innovations among students. Recognizing individual difference and identifying talents of each student is another principle of teaching. The teacher should analyze the intelligence, nature, ability, interest, potential, needs and concerns of students. The next principle details with enabling the student to set a goal in their life. In this the teacher should help the student to recognize his/her talents and set directions to achieve the goal. The final principle of teaching says a teacher should relate everything to real life. Every subject should be linked to the reality. For example in science class if a teacher took class on health and nutrition the student should able to relate different dimensions of health and should analyze whether he/she is following healthy

lifestyle. The principles emphasis on practice of things that is learned and thus develop a good productive citizens.

Nowadays the implementation of these principles in teaching is minimal. The teachers are more focused on completing the syllabus. They teach reading, writing and arithmetic skills to students and consider it as overall development of the student. Here comes the relevance of life skill education through which we can implement all these principle effectively. The techniques in life skill education like activities, games, role play, debate, discussion etc. will make learning process interesting and the student automatically develop the motivation to study. Each content in life skill focus on learning by doing that improves the creativity of students. Life skill education helps the students to recognize their talents and abilities. The awareness about themselves help them to set goal in their life. Finally enhancement of these skills are useful to address the needs and concerns of their daily life. If a teacher who is well trained in life skill education will effectively implement the principles of teaching through life skill education.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS GENERIC COMPETENCY

As contemporary societies become more complex, the need has arisen to broaden the scope of general education for new knowledge, portable skills for the world of work and for living in the knowledge society. It is widely argued that the transitions between teaching and learning, school and work, knowledge creation and knowledge distribution are under scrutiny for several reasons. Recently, the debate is on the relationship between general education and the generic competencies needed in the context of knowledge society. The most apparent are: child being perceived as an entrepreneur of the future who is able to function in a competitive global environment, the discontinuity between the world of education and work, gap between the demands of jobs in terms of teamwork and decision-making and the way education prepares them for workplace.

Elementary education is a part of compulsory general education in India. Its objectives are much more than just preparing students for higher education. It needs to ensure to each child the full development of the human personality, citizenship and lay the foundation for employability; the underpinning knowledge and industry based professional competencies.

These skills, often also called core skills, should be every child's Intellectual Babbage while leaving the school and is, more than ever, a major task of basic education. Relevance of curriculum to the real world is extremely important for students. It is not necessary to look at the high-technology artefacts to value product

related work. One has to look around to realise that every aspect of human surroundings necessitates enterprising behaviour. A systemic study of entrepreneurship provides opportunities for learning a broad spectrum of generic skills and competencies. In addition to subject-related competencies, development of generic skills and competencies for 'Entrepreneurship' should be an important objective of any educational programme for all students in general and elementary stage children in particular.

Generic skills relating to entrepreneurship centred curriculum can broadly be considered along three dimensions:

1. Basic competencies relate to the personal attributes necessary for undertaking any tasks. These include sensitivity, aesthetics, critical thinking, creativity, motivation for work, ability to understand methodology, tools and techniques, capacity for analysis and synthesis.
2. Systemic competencies relate to the overall understanding and capacity for working in changing contexts. These include developing a holistic perspective, change and redefine one's role, take initiative and chart new paths and others.
3. Interpersonal competencies relate to the social aspects of any task. These include social skills, communication skills, capacity to understand and accommodate another's point of view, capacity to work in collaboration teams and the work in interdisciplinary contexts etc.

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS IN CLASSROOM

Many scholars, writers and researchers have advanced ways of equipping students with entrepreneurial skills in the classrooms at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

Akani (2011:9) listed same strategies that will help in developing entrepreneurship skills in students as follows:

- a. Organizing internship programme for students.
- b. Organizing seminars, workshops for students.
- c. Practical counseling on entrepreneurship and skill acquisition for students.

- d. Accessibility of loan that is granting soft loans to graduates to enable them start of their various business.
- e. Rewarding students that perform well in entrepreneurship and skills acquisition activities.

Mohammed and Funtua (2009) also identified some methods on developing skills in the student in classroom as include:-

1. Activity Based method
2. Learner or child centered method
3. Problem solving method
4. Science -Technology- Society
5. Excursion method
6. Demonstration method.

If these are fully utilized according to Umanu and Adu, a combination of all or few of these can provide the necessary skill to our students/pupils. Teachers are encourage to maximize much of, if not all the above as opined by Ivowi (2006).

In addition to the above listed method of developing the required skills, there are other essential ingredients necessary for effective skills development in students/pupils in the classroom.

These according to Umanu and Adu (2009) include:

- a. Motivation - The teacher need to motivate his students/pupils during teaching and learning in the classroom to learn the necessary skills for future application in the entrepreneurial process. The motivation could be both intrinsic and extrinsic. Once interest is develop learning will follow.
- b. Encouragement – The teacher needs to encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills. These could be achieved through;
 1. Providing child-friendly environment to the pupils/students.
 2. Displaying a role model attitude to his pupils/students.
 3. Exposing the pupils/students to challenging opportunities.
 4. Providing times for exploration through excursions and its likes.
- c. Improvising – The costly nature materials to use couple with the problem of damages and

insufficient power supply in Nigeria presently calls for improvisation, which is in form of drawing of a chart or using transparent tumbler as a break.

METHODS OF TEACHING AND LIFE SKILL EDUCATION

Methods of teaching plays a vital role in learning process of the student. Method is the style of presentation of contents in the classroom Verma has defined the term method in the following manner “Method is an abstract as logical entities that we can distinguish between matter and method. In reality, they form an organic whole and matter determines method, analogously as objective determines means; content and spirit determine style and form of literature.” According to him methods can be classified under following three heads:

1. Telling – Lecture, Questioning, Discussion etc.
2. Showing – Demonstration, visual aids etc.
3. Doing – Project, Role play, Practical etc.

A teacher can use any of these methods or combination of these methods in their teaching. But the method of doing is not much projected in current teaching. The method of learning by doing can be implemented easily by life skill education.

Let us analyze what is the relevance of applying life skills in current teaching methods. UNICEF defines life skill based education as tool for behavior modification. That is a behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills. Knowledge can be provided through class room teaching but the attitude and skills can be produced only through practice. Let us analyze what are problems faced by students due to this lack of attitude and skills. And what are the areas that need behavior modification for the student.

CONCLUSION

As a whole when we focus on school setting for the implementation of life skill education initially we have to analyze the perception of teachers who were the facilitators of life skill education, provide training to addressing their wrong perception and thus implement the program in a universal level. We should integrate life skill development with normal curriculum rather than consider it as a non-curricular activity. Gradually the acceptance of participatory learning will get momentum and our students can lead a healthy life.

Entrepreneurship education is a diligently or systematic planned process leading to the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for the purpose of living a self-sustaining life (Oguche and Wilfred-Bonse 2011). For this process to be accomplished required the adoption of appropriate strategies for the inculcation of

entrepreneurial skills to pupils/students in the classroom. School-industry links is one of the strategies that has been found to be effective for imparting entrepreneurial skills in the classroom.

These strategies enable students to explore the opportunities of self-employment through practical and direct involvement of industries and firms.

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