

# ENCAPSULATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP PRACTICE INTO THE FINE AND APPLIED ARTS CURRICULUM FOR SELF RELIANCE

BY

AMEEN A. AHMED<sup>1</sup> & ADAMU ISHIAKU<sup>2</sup>

E-mail: babaameenahmed63@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>

adamuishiaku9@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>

Department of Fine and Applied Arts,  
Aminu Saleh College of Education, Azare, Bauchi State.

## Abstract

Many school leavers are on the opinion that the Nigerian government can (as normally were made to believe), provide jobs for them if certain provisions were made. It is however an illusion and a mirage to concentrate and count on such belief by any sane school leaver, looking at the number of students been turned out by universities and polytechnics each academic year. Fine and applied Arts with its diverse field of learning teaches students to acquire skills in production of both aesthetic and utilitarian objects. The acquisition of skill could make students start an entrepreneurial activity either in isolation or in groups so that they not only employ themselves but others as well. For such a situation to be achieved, it has become pertinent to integrate into the curriculum of Fine Arts an entrepreneurial skill alongside the practical. What is essential is for teachers to become more realistic with regards to the strategies they adopt in teaching entrepreneurial skills within an art training career. This calls for a simultaneous dissemination of the contents of art and entrepreneurship using practical techniques to prepare students for real life world of work.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial skills, Fine and Applied Arts, Self-reliance.

## Introduction

It has always been a problem that students who acquire skills in the field of fine and Applied Arts in Nigeria, will still be roaming the streets looking for white collar jobs which may or not come by. The fact that they are trained to acquire various skill if only they had stopped to look in the right direction could have been enough for them to start creating jobs for themselves so that some burden could have been eased on their parents of continuing to take care of them even after graduation.

Fine and applied Arts with its diverse field of learning teaches students to acquire skills in production of both aesthetic and utilitarian objects. The acquisition of skill could make students start an entrepreneurial activity either in isolation or in groups so that they not only employ themselves but others as well. For such a situation to be achieved, it has become pertinent to integrate into the

curriculum of Fine Arts an entrepreneurial skill alongside the practical.

Many school leavers are of the opinion that the Nigerian government can (as normally were made to believe), provide jobs for them if certain and provisions were made. It is however an illusion and a mirage to concentrate and count on such belief by any sane school leaver, looking at the number of students been turned out by universities and polytechnics each academic year. Government can however, create an atmosphere conducive for job creation and even help financially where possible to help our youth set up a business (Hammad, 2015).

Shedrach, (2021), observed that graduates who acquire skills in fields of vocational training could not summon up courage to view their field as potential for creating jobs and self-employment, instead they continue to wait for paid employment in government or other agencies; as such they

lost focus of the future and get confused. He opined that this stem from the nature and quality of training received from academic institutions which does not include orienting the students to identify business opportunities within their environment and stimulate their brain towards the idea of self-employment.

This paper is of the view that unemployment issue in Nigeria requires a finer approach on the way students were initially trained right from school which gives them impression that they are above the ordinary man, they are exceptional so that anything menial or non-academic counts down on their ego. The system of training also kept the students' minds focused only on white collar jobs with no initiative for self-employment. Yakubu, (2011), opined that there is a need to adopt a proactive approach towards the teaching of Fine Art in combination with entrepreneurial education which should stimulate the minds of our graduates and motivate them to establish an entrepreneurial concern, employ themselves and others as well.

### **Relevance of Entrepreneurial Education to Vocational Discipline:**

A number of studies were carried out to establish the relevance of entrepreneurship knowledge to students of skill based courses like the Fine and Applied Arts, Technology and the Sciences. Some suggested that entrepreneurial education be inculcated in the school curriculum and made compulsory for on skill oriented courses with a standard course code. Scholars such as Siedensticker (1987), Pandhi (2000), Siemen, Litty, Precious, (2013), Bird, (1989), Yusuf, (2013) (Moses, Jonah, Marte, Benjam ad Patence, (2018), are of this opinion. Unemployment being the world's most denting phenomenon, it is suggestive not only to introduce the course to a formal curriculum, but also to integrate it as part and parcel of the Fine and Applied Arts courses so that students can naturally feel that the subject is part and parcel of the program not a forced course on

them. This way, it becomes imperative to develop a curriculum which will reorient the way vocational courses are taught in advanced institutions of learning with a view to preparing the youths not only in Nigeria but the world over for the world of business rather than world of work. For this reason it is enough to conclude that entrepreneurship education when related to skill acquisition will go a long way in solving a great percentage of national youths' unemployment. This as Ikponmwosa, (2019) pointed out, entrepreneurship is all about creation of jobs from inward resources. It also helps prepare individuals build entrepreneurial qualities. A study by (Stanley, 2019) indicated that many of the qualities displayed by successful leaders are also essential to successful entrepreneurship, such qualities as foresight, venturing, ambition, ability to motivate, creativity, accommodation, persistence, and patience are very necessary as well as the vision to recognize opportunity where others only see chaos, contradiction, and confusion (Yakubu, 2011). With the rising problem of unemployment necessitating the need to include entrepreneurship education in the school system and with more entrepreneurial habit been propelled to bring about new business startups, (Jonathan, 2013), as well as Ikponmwosa and Umar (2019), stress the need to expand the requirements for entrepreneurship education as well as develop adequate teaching strategies that will suit each subject.

The study seeks to redirect the thinking of Art graduates towards self employment by identifying specific skills an artist will possibly acquire through an entrepreneurship integrated art curriculum where entrepreneurship knowledge and artistic skills can be simultaneously assimilated. This will prepare the students for self-employment after graduation.

## **Reasons for integrating Entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts Curriculum**

Applied entrepreneurship is a relatively new discipline in Fine and Applied Arts higher education and is currently attracting attention due to the possibilities it affords to address graduate employability issues. However, as an emerging area there is a need for further research that attempts to clarify the meaning of Art entrepreneurship and explore how it is currently practiced

There is presently the need to develop a curriculum relevant to Fine and Applied Arts programs in higher education institutions which would address the employability of graduates. Such curriculum must be reflective of the particular types of employment commonly experienced by Fine and Applied Arts graduates. Typical employment in the Fine Arts is by way of short-term projects and contracts with high levels of self-Employment.

Bridgstock, (2011), Ball, Pollard, Stanley and Oakly, (2010), Throsby and Zenik, (2010), Brown, (2017) Beckman, (2011) argue that there is the need for a paradigm shift to ensure that Art entrepreneurship is considered an academically robust and integral aspect of Fine and Applied Arts education. The aim of this article is to contribute to this paradigm shift through an examination of an emerging and integral element in Arts entrepreneurship education, leading to an “Art entrepreneurial mindset” (Ball, Pollard, Stanley and Oakley (2010); Carey, and Naudin, 2020), Brown, (2017),); Gustafson, (2011),

Art is an inherent daily human activity which gave rise to the designs and production of fabrics. (Bappah, 2019), is of the opinion that the appreciation of aesthetic values is what brought about people's choice in many products and influence most buying decisions. Fine and Applied Arts play an important role in promoting the aesthetic quality of an environment. It more importantly helps to develop skills, and competencies. Fine and Applied Arts can also help prepare an individual for a useful living within the society. Art had for centuries been a

means of passing on skills from one generation to the next by the process of enculturation to ensure continuous existence of knowledge skills (Fati, Yusuf and Satti, 2019).

Ahmed, Suleiman and Ishiaku (2021), defined Art as a means of transforming abstract illusion to useful and palpable product. Julie, Rekha, Monday and Sashi (2022) view the process as engagement of people's Fine minds in doing a thing. For them, Fine minds produce originality, novelty, resourcefulness, flexibility, innovation and invention. What this insinuates is that Art provides novel solution to problems, new methods or ways of presenting aesthetic objects or form for the development of a nation. The indispensability of the tenets of Art in technological development cannot be disregarded. For this reason, as Julie E, (2018), pointed out, Art as a tool for technological development has contributed to the development of technology in various nations. This means that meaningful development in technology employs the services of Fine and Applied Arts in many nations. This is because as Julie (2018) pointed out, Technology is art executed in Principles of Science. (IJAAS, 2021) is of the view that without art there would be no meaningful development in technology. For this reason, any potential entrepreneur can therefore avail himself on the entrepreneurial opportunity offered in Fine and Applied Arts. Base on the reasons postulated above, it is pertinent to look at the possibility of the new trend of running the Fine and Applied Arts Program which will help the students of Fine Art in Nigeria graduate with confidence knowing that there is always an option besides the regular government employment.

This work is in form of a study curriculum which should serve as a guide for effective interaction and imparting of knowledge from teacher to students. This guideline or curriculum considers the inculcation of entrepreneurship study within the normal training program of the Art courses for the students to be introduced to

series of activities which will ensure conversance with the methods to be learned that will set the stage for an effective business career after school.

The Present Fine and Applied arts is a program of instruction intended to train students to become professional artists by faculties of Art in the universities or train the students to become professional Art Teachers in colleges of education. it does not matter if one is a student of art at the university level or at the college of education level, the aim is to learn the techniques of the profession and eventually secure employment in government. This is true because at the end of the program each unit of training ensures that the graduating students are certificated. Now in the event where the government job is not forthcoming, an alternative ought to supplement the government employment.

The practical training which students rigorously were made to go through at the institution is enough to keep them employed where the government jobs are not readily available. Graduates can make a living out of what they learnt in school and be on their own by selling their services. There are various skills which the students of the Fine and Applied Arts acquire through their training which include: Painting, Graphics, Ceramics works, Textiles design, cloth dyeing, Museum keeping techniques, Acting and Drama, Printing, House Decoration, Photography and a lot more. But for them to sustain themselves in the business world, they need to add another very important skill, which is an entrepreneurship skill. This paper explores the essential elements of an Entrepreneurship Management, as given by experts in the field.

Entrepreneurship can be a very potent tool in the Fine and Applied Arts education. The goal should be to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success in the management of enterprise which they may wish to embark on after graduation, either as part or full time business. (Nnolly, 2018), Suggested that; certain entrepreneurial skills are necessary, note that the starting entrepreneur must not

necessarily memorize a list of qualities as those enlisted by Sultana and ikponmwosa, (2002), but it is necessary for the new entrepreneur to attain some few basic qualities, such as the ability to develop self-control in crucial times, the ability to set up a future development plan, (that is target) so that one can have focus on where or which direction one is heading for, chasing and executing orders within specified time. Understand people and work in group with tolerance and be able to calculate risk and invest wisely and a little knowledge of accounting to know how you use your money and understand profit margins.

### **Strategies for Teaching Entrepreneurships in Fine and Applied Arts Education**

To effectively teach entrepreneurship in Fine and Applied Arts, three sets of objectives were developed by the College of Fine Applied (2003) at the University of Texas. The first sets of objectives were geared towards the development of intellectual and personal skills of the students. They were outlined as follows:

- To establish an entrepreneurial perspective that will serve you through your art Career this should be kept simple at the initial stage and develop with time. Simulations in the class room for business ventures can be created through group work and practical weekly assignments which can be reported back to the teacher on appointed time for discussion and criticisms.
- To demonstrate how your innate creativity, intellect, training, and experience can be channeled to an art (or Applied related) career, students can be challenged to work on critical issues on problems of art and a time frame be assigned to them within which to come up with a solution.
- To demonstrate the risks, rewards, satisfaction and power inherent in an entrepreneurial lifestyle. This can be through work/study program like an industrial attachment program where students can acquire skill both of management and practical execution of works within a formal organization. The second sets of objectives



were concerned with basic business as well typical professional skills critical for developing art career. These objectives are:

- A general understanding of profit and non-profit business structures
- A basic knowledge of marketing and communications,
- A basic understanding of what is expected of a professional artist in the marketplace.

All the above can be learnt through simulation and group discussion by creating problems to be addressed by groups as related to practical situations.

Against this background, a structure should be available which will provide students with the opportunity to explore the feasibility of a self-chosen Fine or Applied Arts-related venture (such as starting a gallery, studio or museum, Advertising Agency, selling your art on-line; Creating a theatre company or other methods of theatre production; an Art Teaching Studio; a community based Event Center, an Art or Fashion Gallery; Music Studio; Interior Decoration; publishing Magazines e.g. Fashion Magazines for women, Package printing services for Pure water, Biscuits and other food products, etc.).

The focus was to help the students make these Art ventures a reality through classroom activity and group work practices. All assignments, readings and discussions should be carefully chosen while principles of Intellectual Entrepreneurship guide the class.

Stanley (2019), was of the view that teachers must be able to present the adequate materials, provide students with an interactive learning environment as well as guide the classroom discussion. He provided two types of activities that students of entrepreneurship should get involved. They are: classroom activity and outside investigation. Indeed, within the classroom, the students aspiring to become entrepreneurs in Fine and Applied Arts should be guided on how to create a small enterprise or ways of becoming self-employed in a pragmatic and innovative way. They should be able to detect, evaluate, and implement entrepreneurship opportunities; define the

goals and aims of the business they wish to run; do the business plan; market research; know the best sources for financing as well as manage the business. They should also understand the principles of concept attainment (Stanley, 2019). To this end Stanley (2019) suggested that within the classroom, activities should involve:

**Teacher Presentation:** This involves a formal presentation of the session's topic by the teacher. Talking points and overhead slides or the use of Microsoft Power Point where possible should be utilized as part of the instructional media.

**Students Interaction:** Time is provided for students to perform hands-on work or meet with teams. Worksheets are developed and provided for such student activity.

**Class Discussion:** This includes class discussion of current events, journal entries and any other work that has taken place outside the classroom.

**Book Discussion:** Time is allowed for a Book Discussion where students are able to compare notes and share their impressions of a book on Fine and Applied Arts or entrepreneurship that they are studying.

**Previewing Next Class Sessions:** Time is provided for previewing the next class. This activity provides the teacher the opportunity to introduce the topic for the next class as well as provide assignments for students.

**Field Trips:** The closest Fine and Applied Arts outfit serves as an inspiring experience to the prospective entrepreneur. Students will be able to benefit from trips within and outside their environment. After such field trips, teachers can ask students to prepare a summary report of the services and products they learned about.

**Interviewing Entrepreneurs:** Art entrepreneur teachers and their students can equally identify local entrepreneurs who the students (individually or as a team) can interview. A format for reporting back on the interview should be provided by the teacher.

**Internships:** This is another valuable outside-the-classroom experience which can be very valuable in helping to place students in part-time or holiday job, Industrial

Training (IT) or Students Industrial Works Experience Scheme (SIWES). Schools should plan to leverage the contacts made through mentors to make internships a reality for the students.

**Teamwork:** To simulate the business world, students are expected to work as teams whenever appropriate. This would help to build critical communication and negotiation skills, as well as allow students to share difficult and time-consuming tasks. Through team work, students would also be able to learn how to use critical thinking and communications skills to evaluate opportunities identified by others within the team. This can help build self esteem and promote an in-depth understanding of this aspect of the entrepreneurial process.

### Concept Attainment

Evaluation is very vital in determining if the aims and the objective of any program have been met. This can also be referred to as assessment or concept attainment. During the assessment exercises, the focus should be on students discovering a concept. Assessment is expected to focus on students' application of skills (i.e. were they able to categorize? classify? and distinguish?); synthesis skills (how well did they explain? show relationships?); and evaluation skills (how did they judge? justify? draw conclusions?).

### Computer Technology

Technology skills are vital to today's business operations. It is therefore imperative to incorporate technology as a teaching medium. The computers, will enable students to complete writing assignments in a Word document; use Excel ( i.e. spreadsheet) for

developing budgets; use Power Point to give presentations and also explore the vast amount of current information on the internet when Applied research (most business and interior decoration publications are available on-line subscription). Students can also develop or enhance their Fine and Applied Arts skills using Computer Aided Design application software.

### Conclusion

Nigerian Schools should provide an efficient answer to the challenges of unemployment by providing students with concrete entrepreneurial skills for them to become successful entrepreneurs. Most importantly, teachers in institutions should be able to recognize entrepreneurship as an artistic and a scientific discipline and employ effective teaching strategies furnishing students with the entrepreneurial skills necessary to venture in entrepreneurial practice in Fine and Applied Arts as a career.

### Suggestions

he following recommendations were also made:

- Colleges of education and education faculties in the universities should develop a Fine and Applied Arts teacher education curriculum which encapsulates educational content knowledge and entrepreneurial skills acquisition that seems deficient in the current Art teacher education curriculum.
- Government should reform the curriculum to be positive, competent based on interactions with the current world of work, so as to be able to provide students with the necessary skills for future employment and self-reliance.

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