ISSN 2321–7359
EISSN 2321–7367

Medical Science
An International Journal

The entrepreneurial opportunities untapped in the field of human-kinetics and health education: current challenges

Akinbile PO, Bernard EA, Akinmusere AK

Department of Physical and Health Education, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria

Publication History
Received: 16 December 2016
Accepted: 06 January 2017
Published: January-February 2017

Citation
Akinbile PO, Bernard EA, Akinmusere AK. The entrepreneurial opportunities untapped in the field of human-kinetics and health education: current challenges. *Medical Science*, 2017, 21(83), 53-59

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ABSTRACT

One of the aims of higher education is the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals develop into useful members of society as well as acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value-orientation for the survival of the individual in the society. This happens to be the ultimate objective of Human Kinetics and Health Education as an integral part of general education. It is the intention of this paper to bring to awareness that opportunities are abound in the field of Human Kinetics and Health Education which could make a graduate of the programme an entrepreneur and sport entrepreneurs in this 21st century. The article also indicates that entrepreneurship has been an issue examined by many theorists due to its positive contributions to economic and social life at a period in human history. The paper equally highlights the current challenges that could confront a budding entrepreneur in the field of Human Kinetics and Health Education in Nigerian Universities. It is therefore

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being recommended that creating an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship would motivate industrious students in the Human Kinetics and Health Education to go into entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Human Kinetics & Health Education, Sports Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial approach in sport can provide important mechanisms for the period of economic crisis says Peredo and Chrisman (2006) and Harper, (1991). In actual fact, entrepreneurship has been subjected to a lot of debates recently in Nigeria. It has been observed too that many renowned authors have written widely on entrepreneurship and its potency to generate employment (Lee and Peterson, 2000; Li, 2006; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). Definitely, the researchers in the developed countries have long ago sighted the significance and relevance of entrepreneurial programme in the sustenance of a given economy. So they have evolved entrepreneurship education since 1980's which makes one to say that entrepreneurship is not a new area of endeavour in this century. The experiences of developed economies in relation to the roles played by entrepreneurship buttress the fact that the importance of entrepreneurship cannot be underscored especially in Nigeria where the economy is presently in recession. Infact, the rationale behind putting together facts in this paper was informed by the poor economic situation in the country. The period Nigerians are in now is so appropriate to prompt people to embrace entrepreneurship activities because it is my belief that anyone in a comfort zone rarely becomes innovative. Consequently, it requires that our young people in the field of Human Kinetics and Health Education be exposed to and be revived in the entrepreneurial activities that are in the field but have not being tapped by students while in school or even after graduation.

In order to bring to fore entrepreneurship's significance in relation to the growth and development of a given economy, it has been variously referred to as a "source of employment generation" and Adejumo, (2001) opined that entrepreneurial activities have been found to be capable of making positive impacts on the economy of any nation and the quality of life of the people therein by tackling the problems of unemployment.

2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

According to Wikipedia, entrepreneurship "is the act of being an entrepreneur" or "one who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods". This may result in new organizations or may be part of revitalizing mature organizations in response to a perceived opportunity. The most obvious form of entrepreneurship is that of starting new business which has been referred to as start up company. Entrepreneurship can simply be captured as the use of human courage to seek investment opportunities and establish a profit-oriented enterprise (Ikeme & Onu, 2007).

Entrepreneurship is generally viewed as a process of creating something new. Doing this involves a lot of time and effort devoted to ensure the tasks at hand and the resultant effects include monetary and personal satisfaction as well as independence. Entrepreneurship involves creation process, conscious devotion of time and effort, though it involves risk it has some rewards.

Gana (2001) defined it as willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunities. Hisrich and Peters (2002) simply captured the term as the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. They went further to explain that entrepreneurship is the personalized version of actualizing one's desire, ambition, and expression. In this time of recession it thus become viable to re-visit the areas where entrepreneurs can grow but for lack of awareness of such opportunities the innovation thereof were not well harnessed by young people in the field.

Nigeria as a country has numerous business and investment potentials due to the abundant, vibrant and dynamic human and natural resources it possesses. Tapping these resources require the ability to identify potentially useful and economically viable fields of endeavours. Nigerians have made their marks in diverse fields such as Science, Technology, Education, Academics, Business and Entertainment. Thus, entrepreneurial activities and innovative ingenuity in Nigerians have developed enterprises in the areas listed above.

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3. SPORTS ENTREPRENEURS

An entrepreneur is an enterprising individual who builds capital through risk and from initiative. The term Entrepreneur in English is a term applied to a person who is willing to help launch a new venture or enterprise and accept full responsibility for the outcomes. Ojeifo (2010) defined an entrepreneur as the owner or the manager of business enterprise who through risks and initiative, attempts to make a profit. He is commonly seen as a business leader and innovator of new ideas and business processes. In the same vein a Sports Entrepreneur is the individual who has acquired skills, practicable abilities in ventures that originate from movement experiences.

In such an individual certain characteristics would be overt, such as been passionate about what he/she is doing. Such person will have a sustained positive attitude, and be able to inspire others. He/she will be strong and show confidence in whatever he/she lays his/her hands upon to do and most time she/she is apt to be a leader and not necessarily waiting for leadership from a boss.

4. OPPORTUNITIES OPENED TO SPORTS ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Human Kinetics

There are quite a number of entrepreneurial opportunities which graduates of Human Kinetics and Health Education can fix into and establish businesses in their area of choice. These include Physical Fitness Centres, Managing Sports Club/Athlete, Sports Officiating, and Sports Coaching.

Physical Fitness Centre

Physical Fitness centre is a place where a lot of physical activities could be performed. Most often, such physical activities are aimed at building power and capability in individuals which will assist the individuals to maintain muscular conditions in the best-working order while at the same time provide for greater efficiency of intellectual and emotional experiences in life.

Hardy (1996) believed that entrepreneurs provide a basis for creative activities in field of exercise and sports. So an individual with adequate knowledge and skills can set up a fitness centre to render services to people who want to keep fit or slim down.

This can be done by moving from one house to the other which is referred to as households visits or/and by the general public orientation (having a facility where people come in to participate in fitness activities available). By so doing the individual becomes self employed; improving his economic status which consequently fosters economic development.

Recently, I came across an advert from Singapore , it reads, "Fitness Instructor to apply latest 9th October 2016 to Nirvana Fitness centre, Singapore, Regular Instructor will earn $358,000 per annum". The picture below (Fig One) depicts a woman in a fitness centre participating in an activity without an instructor to assist her. There is no doubt about it that exercise entrepreneurship is needed in most fitness centres all over the world and it is dynamic and effective in its operation.

Managing Sport Club/athlete

Sports management is an aspect of Human Kinetics and Health Education which deals with the application of various theories to planning and execution of sports programmes in sport organizations. It is the process by which human, financial, material and physical resources in various sports organizations are harnessed to accomplish the goals of organizing sports. With the managerial

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knowledge and skills acquired in physical education, an individual is in a better position to establish and manage private sport club/athlete from amateurism to professionalism.

Sports Officiating

Officiating is an act of controlling sports competitions in accordance with the approved rules and regulations, ensure equity and fair play, enforce discipline, sanctioned misconducts according to the gravity of offence committed, among others. This means that the services of officiating officials in sports competitions cannot be underestimated. In a session in most tertiary institutions where Human Kinetics Education is being offered, a variety of Sports officiating skills would have been learnt which are capable of providing monetized roles for individuals during organized sports competitions at the Local, State and Federal levels. Serious minded person performing this role can take it to higher heights by becoming a professional referee in any of the various games or even a combination of games.

The crop of uniformed referees that are officiating in organized sports competition especially in soccer are mostly career officers who are not specialist in Human Kinetics Education. So if those who have acquired the necessary physical skills and techniques are involved, definitely excellent and more acceptable officiating will be the order of the day.

Sports Coaching

A sport coaching is an act of preparing sports male and female athletes in the art of skills, techniques and strategies for excelling in sports. This has been a male dominated area and male coaches often were asked to coach female athletes in areas where women coaches are not available. The men and women trained through Human Kinetics Education would have been made to learn skills, techniques and strategies of different sports and games which would enable them organize coaching clinics and equally set up sports academy. Such an academy would be a source of supply of fine athletes and players to foreign clubs interested in importation of sports stars (soccer for instance) and highly skilled athletes from African Countries to European countries.

Advertising Agent and Sports Commentator

Advertising and Running of Commentaries in sports are other untapped areas of entrepreneurship that could be accessed by graduates of Human Kinetics Education. Advertising in sports has to do with the proclamation of sports personnel, materials and equipment as well as organized sporting activities. It is the act of informing or notifying the public about sporting activities and its wares that could be profitable to the public. Whereas, sports commentator is an expert in a variety of sports/games and describes each event while it is happening as in an organized sport, games/ athletics competition which could also be on radio/ television.

With the rapid development of technology in the world, Sweeney (2007) asserted that Internet and Digital TV may bring about changes in the way advertisement of sports, games and marketing of sports goodsare done. The utilization of the media will definitely bring the awareness of the merchandise to more people. In view of this, exercise marketers are asked to reinvest on their advertising and strategies in economic crisis making use of the devices of Information Communication Technology (ICT) (Futterman, 2008).

The commentator on the other hand must be vast in the rules and regulations guiding the playing of the sports/games involved. He must be familiar with the profile of the players and their roles on the field of play and the activities they are involved. In most tertiary institutions where human Kinetics is been offered, the course Skills and Techniques of Sports and Games would have taken care of the pedagogical knowledge the commentator requires to be effective and efficient in the job. What would be required would be to have an on-hand experience that could be gained from attending and participating in secondary schools Sports Inter-House competitions.

5. STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS IN HUMAN KINETICS EDUCATION

Entrepreneurial skills are relevant skills and competencies that enable an individual seek and run enterprise successfully (Yakubu and Moses, 2014). Similarly, Olibe & Obidike (2008) asserted that entrepreneurial skills consist of effective utilization of ideas, information and facts that help a learner develop companies, marketing, services or being productive employees of organizations. Therefore, entrepreneurial skills in Human Kinetics Education can be developed through the following means as suggested by Yakubu and Moses (2014):

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- Students are to be exposed to practical work experience situation in order to be proficient in any job they may be working towards. For example, final year students in Human Kinetics Education can be asked to assist the teachers in secondary schools to organize schools sports competitions and participate in the officiating of the games and run commentaries for the event.
- Lecturers who possess the characteristics of an entrepreneur would be role model for the learners. By their day to day activities and positive student-teacher relationship they might have the opportunities to instil in the students life of commitment to work; hinge on intrinsic motivation; the act of taking risk; being bold in making decision on financial situation, capable of enduring stressful situations, invoke the power of creating cooperation and taking personal responsibilities. It is hoped that when these characteristics are taught in a variety of course relating to Sports Administration it would help an individual to discover areas of his deficiencies and with training and practical work, acquire the necessary skills needed.
- Human Kinetics and Health Education department running consultancy outfits or rendering services with purposeful and goals oriented workshops in fitness training, coaching, officiating and advertisement among others would enable learners learn skills and thereafter function as managers of an enterprises. The individuals that pass through such training will be equipped academically and ultimately become entrepreneurs in their choice of games and sports.

6. THE CHALLENGES

No period for Internship

Unlike other professions where a period is set apart for an internship, the Human Kinetics programmes in most tertiary institutions do not allow a long period of time to put into practice the skills and techniques that have been learnt in school before graduation with the exception of the teaching practice period which is highly restricted. Consequently, creativity is not fully embedded into these programs and there are significant variations in the type of sports being offered between Institutions. Even teachers who are on the field might need to receive further training on creativity.

Absence of a pro-active regulatory environment that encourages innovative enterprise development at the grassroots level

Through personal experiences, it has been observed that educational and school cultures do not fully support fostering creative and innovative approaches to learning. The school period has been portioned out with precise timing. Whereas fostering creativity requires time to explore new approaches and a culture that encourages experimentation and allows for achievement and failure. This implies that the school environment should in itself embody the characteristics of entrepreneurialism. For students to be creative, they would need support throughout their careers, in their initial education, their continuing professional development and in their day-to-day work.

Looking at the youths of today, the entrepreneurial tendencies or motives to be independent is missing in their ways of life. Most students lack the required competencies needed by an entrepreneur which distinguishes him/her from ordinary people. Learners need to be encouraged to imbibe such traits that would give them the push to become entrepreneurs.

Knowledge of Immediate environment is no longer sufficient for the learners

Furthermore, most students in tertiary institution lacked the necessary awareness of and alertness to the outside world, the economy, opportunities that are abound within and without and changes in the world in general. This entails the acquisition of knowledge for example the knowledge of the economy and business world and awareness of and positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and environmental change in general.

Teachers need refresher courses and curriculum needs to be enlarged in scope

Most Human Kinetics and Health Education departments seem not to have what it takes to encourage and support entrepreneurial and enterprising behaviour which would bring about innovation. Hitherto, the work of the lecturer might have been limited to teaching and marking examinations questions and grading of students, but today the lecturer has been saddled with two many unrelated pedagogical responsibilities such that the teacher has little or no time to emphasize skills in creativity and innovation, building capacity to discover existing opportunities, inculcate cooperation, giving adequate knowledge on how to start and run a business as well as attitudes initiating innovations. Teachers workload needs to be re-appraised.

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7. CONCLUSION

It is the thrust of this paper that certain areas in Human Kinetics Education can provide strategies for developing sports entrepreneurs in Nigeria. Consequently, the development of entrepreneurship in sport as interdisciplinary field with consideration to economic, political, and social dimensions is guaranteed. In this era of global economic recession, any graduate that is waiting to secure government job would be regarded as building castles in the air.

Individuals that have acquired entrepreneurship and functional physical skills and techniques in the different areas of Human Kinetics Education especially in the physical education programme should be capable of creating jobs for themselves and become employers of other people seeking jobs. By so doing, individuals become self employed and at the end of the day improve their economic status and consequently the economic development of the state or the country at large.

Economic benefits of entrepreneurship may include using new forces, development, and progress of productivity and increase amount of regional growth as suggested by Van Praag and Versloot, (2007). Based on the discussion made in this write up the following recommendations are put forward:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Creating an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship. The very nature of innovation means that entrepreneurs would either take advantage of existing gaps or forge into new territories. Either way, creating an enabling environment that lowers the barriers to market entry will certainly spur entrepreneurship. The workload of the teachers should be re-appraised for example in the bid to achieve this goal.
2. Offering incentives that foster entrepreneurship. Numerous examples have indicated that access to reliable and steady sources of funding (at least initial funding) is essential to entrepreneurial growth and sustainability.
3. Building entrepreneurial readiness through offering entrepreneurship education in the curriculum. Supporting entrepreneurship education in the higher education system by originating the content and setting the tone for developing the policy and institutional framework for entrepreneurship will go a long way to bring about committed entrepreneurs.
4. Higher education institutions certainly have a unique and vital role to play in their interaction with the three levels - macro, firm and individual - of entrepreneurship. First, higher education institutions can partner with governments in developing the required strategy for fostering entrepreneurship both at the level of the individual and the firm.
5. Emphasis should be laid on practical and project work/assignment such that higher grades would be allotted to it than theory aspect of the subjects taught. This will encourage adequate knowledge of how things really work, and bring about on-hands experience.
6. Career counselling should be encouraged. It thus implies that schools would be provided with experienced Guidance Counsellors.

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