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ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS POTENTIALS IN PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

OKUNEYE, R. O. IDOWU, B. B. AND DANSU, A.

Dept. of Physical & Health Educ.

Lagos State University, Ojo, P.M.B .4087, Apapa, Lagos State

ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the various entrepreneurial skills in Physical and Health Education as a discipline. It brings to fore the areas that PHE specialists can excel in terms of entrepreneurship. It further creates awareness of areas that PHE specialists can explore in order to be employers of labour rather than wait for white collar jobs that have been oversubscribed. Conclusively, the paper recommends that for PHE specialists to succeed in the areas of entrepreneurship highlighted in the paper there would be need for creativity, dedication, innovation and risk bearing among others.

INTRODUCTION

A common saying is that “necessity” is the mother of invention and this manifest in different dimensions. Entrepreneurship is an old phenomenon but it is just of recent that it is gaining unprecedented attention because necessity for it has violently knocked at the door. Apparently white collar job opportunities have shrunk, company and industrial job are oversubscribed, unemployment is alarmingly pronounced yet people still look up to being employed rather than being creative and aspire to be employer of labour.

Entrepreneurship is an act of initiating a move or step or programme to earn money for purpose of survival or as supplement to means of living. It requires from individual developing an idea and turns such idea into action purposely to earn a living. Entrepreneurship is mainly about making money and as such historically, it is dominated by economist and business experts. Entrepreneurship is seen by Wikipedia (2008) as practice of starting new organizations or revitalizing mature organizations particularly new business generally in response to identified opportunities to make money.

In recent time, entrepreneurship has been linked to the nation economy such that programmes and small projects are funded by microfinance homes in order to create wealth among people. The crux is that programme and projects that are viable must be initiated and established. Projects to be initiated must emerge from certain body of knowledge of which physical and health education is one.

Physical and health education is a unique area of knowledge that has linkage with all aspects of human endeavour. Wuest and Bucher (1999) defines Physical and Health Education as an educational process that uses physical activity as a means to help individuals acquire skills, fitness, knowledge and attitudes that contribute to their optimal development and wellbeing. It is a form of education that takes place in variety of settings and among all age groups.

Physical and Health Education has wide connectivity to human endeavour and as such there is large latitude of entrepreneurial skills inherent in it. In this paper, attempt was made to expose potential entrepreneurial skills in Physical and Health Education as well as approaches towards accomplishing them.

AREAS AND CAREERS IN PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Physical and Health Education has all the features and characteristics that qualifies it as a profession and academic discipline and for many years, it has been so. It involves educational preparation, code of ethics, formal association, and continually expanding body of knowledge. In the past, PHE is seen as part of teaching profession but today, it has expanded and extended to non-school setting and allied careers.

Physical and Health Education as academic discipline permeates through primary, secondary and tertiary education. The development of the subject stimulated greater academic scholarly activities by academics in tertiary level and with technologies, scientific inquiries in other disciplines coupled with proliferation of research, many specialized areas have emerged. Common among these specialized areas which are available in universities in Nigeria are Health Education, Exercise Physiology, Sports Administration and Organization, Sports Psychology/Sociology and Adapted Physical Education.

Wuest and Bucher [described specialized areas in Physical Education as follows:

Adapted Physical Activity: these are modified Physical Education programmes to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Biomechanics: this implies correct techniques for the training and evaluation of participants movements.

Exercise Physiology: this implies body's response to exercise based on intensity, frequency and duration. Motor Development: that is movement development needs of the participants Motor Learning: this implies the best practice condition for learning motor skills.

Pedagogy: this is guidelines for presenting instructions and characteristics of effective teacher,

Sports Management: this implies the best way to promote and handle sport programmes and sports policies.

Sports medicine: this implies injury matters and sports performance in an environment.

Sports Psychology: that is strategies to help participants adhere to sustain mood to continue to participate well.

Sports Sociology: this implies social factors and forces in participation.

Recreation: that is engaging in activities during leisure.

Dance: that is body aesthetics expression through movement.

It's worth noting that each of these areas of specialization has sub areas of specialization.

Carrers in Physical and Health Education

Career opportunities flourish in Physical and Health Education but are less exploited in this part of the world. Teaching as the career line of professional PHE is the only concentration and now saturated. Sports programme as major component of Physical and Health Education opened up coaching as a career line. Teaching and coaching remains as traditional career line in PHE and this is due to people's limited imagination of coverage of PHE. Lambert [1980] points out

that one's definition of PHE can limit or expand one's horizon. Defining PHE only as teaching of exercise, sports, dance, health and recreation in schools can limit job opportunities. PHE is now seen with wider imagination as the art and science of human movement or preventive and rehabilitative medicine and with that, many career possibilities become evident.

The impressive growth of PHE as academics discipline leading to emergence of specialized areas further opened up career lines beyond teaching and coaching. Career opportunities in PHE abound in the areas of public health, general health and fitness/wellness, management and organization, journalism and law, training, rehabilitation, social work and security. Wuest and Bucher [1999] list career opportunities under some sub headings as follows:

Teaching Opportunities

School Setting: elementary, junior secondary senior secondary, college and universities, basic instruction programmes, professional preparation programmes, and military school programmes.

Non School Setting: community recreation programmes, corporate recreation programmes, commercial sport club, youth service agencies, health club, military personnel programmes, resort programmes and correctional programmes.

Coaching Opportunities

Interscholastic and intercollegiate programmes, commercial sport camps, sport clubs, community sport programmes and military sport programmes.

Media Opportunities

This includes sport journalism, sport photography, sport writing, sport broadcasting and sport art and health promotion.

Fitness and Health Related Opportunities

This includes cardiac rehabilitation, sports medicine, movement therapy, health clubs, community fitnessprogramme, worksite health promotion, space fitness programmes, corporate fitness programmes, sport nutrition, athletic training, weight control spas and military personnel programmes.

Management Opportunities

This include athletics administration, sport facility management, sport club management, recreation management, sport organization administration, health club

management, sport information, sport marketing/ “ retailing and resort management, health care management.

Others

This includes sport law, sport officiating, sport statistics, professional athlete, research consulting, social work, and public health. Career opportunities in PHE should be known to growing children particularly at secondary school level. Adequate coverage of Physical Education syllabus at secondary level of education is critical to the exposure of individuals to career opportunities in PHE (Okuneye 2008).

Entrepreneurial Potentials in Physical and Health Education

The landscape of areas and career opportunities in Physical and Health Education is wide and this accounts for the great deal of entrepreneurial skill potentials in the subject. A graduate of Physical and Health Education either from College of Education or University must have attained certain professional competencies to propel him or her to become an entrepreneur. It is about developing a service or product to meet the public's needs or interest in the areas of movement, wellness and health. What is apparent in Nigeria now is that services or products are not initiated in Physical and Health Education rather, the teaching job is the focus of every graduate of the subject, reason for this could not be far-fetched; facts on possible entrepreneurial skills are hidden. With the drive to bring entrepreneurship to the fore in all subject areas, entrepreneurial skills potentials in PHE deserve to be brought to bear.

Possible entrepreneurial skills in PHE among others cover working one-on-one with clients in fitness programmes in which activities designed to suit specific needs of clients are executed. Westerfield (1987) has since noted that programming in the area of fitness and health promotion offer many entrepreneurial opportunities. More individuals are interested in improving their fitness and health and willing to pay for such services. Entrepreneurial skills that could be developed to render this service are programme design execution on fitness assessment and improvement, weight reduction, fitness maintenance, nutrition, stress management, massaging, management of special health condition, rehabilitative and recuperative activities. This service beyond individual clients can be marketed to corporate bodies and organization for the benefit of their employees. Instructional books and videos on this service can be produced and marketed as means of earning more money.

The entrepreneurship in the area of fitness also covers professionals with expertise in exercise operating as consultants. They visit various fitness centres and health clubs where they assess the existing programme and make recommendations for improvement. They could also organize talks and workshops on regular basis for employees and at the same time train new employees for centres and health clubs. Exercise specialists can equally establish mobile fitness and health appraisal business as postulated by Postelosi [1987]. This requires filling a van with appropriate equipment and traveling to different organizations and companies to offer services on fitness appraisal and health maintenance.

Private coaching in sports is a viable entrepreneurial skill in PHE. Individuals with expertise in specific sport with ability to coach could exploit the business of rendering personal coaching to individuals who desire to achieve high level performance. There are instances when parents desire that their children further develop certain sport skills, also many amateur and professional athletes desire peak performance; at these instances, coaches are employed most often in individual or dual sports such as tennis, table tennis, golf, badminton, swimming, track and field and sometimes in certain positions in team sports like football and basketball.

In Nigeria today, there is growing interest in the establishment of football academies and this further opens opportunity for entrepreneurship among PHE professionals. The idea could be extended to other sports such as basketball, tennis, volleyball, handball and table tennis. Instructional sports camp or health camp could also be established for children, youth, adult or people with disabilities. These academies and camps offer job opportunities for PHE specialists in the areas of administration, teaching and coaching.

Analysis of movement or performance with the use of computer is another entrepreneurial skill in PHE. Postelosi (1987) notes that professionals with expertise in biomechanics can offer computerized skill analysis services to athletes as well as to coaches who are interested in furthering their team's performance. This is done by videotaping athletes and the performance is computer analysed after which the analysis is reviewed with the athlete and areas of improvement are identified and recommendations are made for better performance. This service could be rendered to clubs, teams, individuals or even parents who wish more detailed assessment of skills performance of their children.

Entrepreneurial skills in PHE spread to construction, equipment, officiating, organizing events, health talks and awareness campaigns. A specialist in PHE can engage in construction service to schools within a locality whereby courts or pitches of such sports as basketball, volleyball, football, tennis, and track and field could be designed and constructed. Such services could also cover maintenance of such courts and pitches. A PHE specialist is the personality with prerequisite knowledge to model or construct sports equipment at least for demonstration and teaching.

Teachers of PHE do not improvise equipment any longer; this can be taken up by an entrepreneur as means of earning a living.

PHE specialists who are imbued with organizational skills could form a group within a community and design programmes of sports events that could last for a whole session in the area of intramural and extramural sports programme. The designed programme if well packaged could be sold to schools or better still be sold to schools or better still be implemented by the designer or group itself. Gone are the days when such programmes are left for PHE teachers in school to do. Giving health talks and campaign is also within the purview of entrepreneurial skills in PHE as specialists in PHE could package talks and video clips on prevalent health problems or issues affecting school children or the community as a whole and get it delivered at a fee.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been established in this paper that there is a wide latitude of entrepreneurial skill opportunities in Physical and Health Education. In line

with the principle of entrepreneurship which is, turning ideas into actions, PHE specialists have acquired a lot of ideas during which they could turn into entrepreneurial skills. The requirement for tapping entrepreneurial skills opportunities in PHE are creative thinking, commitment, dedication, innovative mind, risk bearing, enthusiasm, self-reliance and self-confidence to pursue tasks. Financial resource is a major consideration and it varies as some other services require capital investment. An entrepreneur should be realistic about his or her financial resource and take off simply with preparation for growth. The scope of Physical and Health Education keeps on increasing and this is bound to be so. Zeigler (2006) describes PHE as a high calling since it seeks to improve the quality of life for people on earth. The implication of this is that entrepreneurial skill opportunities in Physical and Health Education will keep on increasing.

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