

Status of Entrepreneurship Education in South-South Nigerian Tertiary Institutions as Perceived By Lecturers

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Abstract

This study investigated the status of entrepreneurship education in South-South Nigerian tertiary institution as perceived by lecturers in terms of course contents and mode of delivery. The study population comprised all the 215 entrepreneurship education lecturers in the target institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education) as at March 2015. No sampling was done because the population size was manageable and five research questions guided the study. The survey research design was adopted for the study and a 32-item structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated and tested for its reliability using the Cronbach Alpha and a reliability value of 0.89 was realized. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of respondents' opinions. The findings revealed among others that entrepreneurship education course contents is appropriate to prepare graduates to participate effectively in the world of work but the human and material resources provided are grossly inadequate. In the light of the above, teaching the course is theory-based at the expense of practical training for competent entrepreneurial skill acquisition. Against this backdrop it was recommended among others that Lecturers should complement the orthodox lecture method with motivational strategy and use teaching strategies to enhance their effective delivery of the course contents. Above all, government should provide adequate teaching/learning resources to enable effective teaching/learning process.

Keywords: Status, Entrepreneurship Education and Lecturers' Perception

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship education is the training given to individuals or groups to develop their innate entrepreneurial tendencies to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed for lucrative business ventures in their immediate environment in order to earn a sustainable living. Osuala (2004) noted that entrepreneurship education is a special training given to students to acquire skills, ideas and managerial abilities necessary for self-reliance. Entrepreneurship education is intended to equip graduates with entrepreneurial skills not only to make them to become self reliant but to be more employable and to contribute their quota meaningfully to economic development. Briga (1996) posited that entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people, especially the youths to become responsible enterprising individuals or entrepreneurial thinkers who will contribute their quota to both community and national economic development. Entrepreneurship education as a component of business education emphasises the application of practical knowledge and skills and its essence is primarily to prepare individuals for gainful employment.

It would be recalled that graduates of tertiary institutions were 'hot cake' in Nigeria employment in the past and until late 1970s during the sudden emergence of the oil boom. The numbers of tertiary institutions were relatively few and graduates were easily employed immediately after graduation. The employment situation then was quite appreciable but the current situation of unemployment in Nigeria is a strong detractor which could be traceable partly to the proliferation of tertiary institutions and the mass production of graduates without corresponding increase in job opportunities, whether in public or private organisations. The over-dependence on oil-driven economy and the economic recession of the mid '80s may have equally contributed to the high level of unemployment in Nigeria. Agbakuru (2012) reported that Sanusi Lamido, former Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria in his speech at the annual University of Calabar lecture series remarked that the increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria could be attributed to the mass production of graduates from the increasing number of tertiary institutions without corresponding increase in job opportunities. He however noted that the situation may increase if no critical step is taken to salvage the situation. The consequences of unemployment such as social vices and brain drain of the labour force among others have been observed in many nations including Nigeria and this could be abated mainly through entrepreneurship development by way of establishing cottage industries, small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs). The competencies needed to manage entrepreneurship development could be best achieved through effective entrepreneurship education. This could have inspired the policy makers and curriculum developers in Nigeria to include entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary

institutions as a critical step to minimize the unemployment challenges facing the young tertiary school graduates today.

A general over view of entrepreneurial course contents indicates that students could be taught the following: concept and meaning of enterprise, entrepreneur and entrepreneurship, how to generate business ideas, identify business opportunities, start a business, successful business management and evaluating the business operations. The training could equip them with competencies and skills such as innovative, inventive, risk-taking, inter-personal relationship and managerial skills among others.

General observation seems to show that teaching of entrepreneurial courses in the various institutions provide more theory than practical application. Students seem not to be exposed to experiential learning to allow for their ingenuity rather they are limited to the conventional lecture method of teaching/learning. This is particularly at the expense of entrepreneurial skill acquisition needed for self-reliance in employment generation. Akpomi (2009), argued that Nigeria's educational process is too mechanical and criticized a situation whereby lecture method remains the only conventional method used in teaching entrepreneurship courses which may not yield significant result. Although the entrepreneurial course contents seems to have been richly designed to effectively train the students to acquire appropriate entrepreneurial skills prior to graduation yet the extent to which the situation on ground would lead to the effective delivering of the course contents remains doubtful. Observation of the challenges that seem to face the successful delivery of the course contents call for a proper investigation. In other words, it becomes imperative to ascertain the status of entrepreneurship education from the stand-point of the course contents and its delivery practice in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the status of entrepreneurship education in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers. Specifically, the study was to establish the following:

1. The status of entrepreneurship education in the three levels of tertiary institutions in south-south Nigeria relative to the course contents as perceived by lecturers.
2. the status of:
 - Human resources for effective entrepreneurship education in the three levels of tertiary institutions in south-south Nigeria as perceived by lecturers.
 - Material resources for effective entrepreneurship education in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers.
3. Teaching methods and strategies used by entrepreneurship education lecturers for delivering the course contents in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. What is the status of entrepreneurship education relative to the course contents as perceived by lecturers in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions?
2. What is the status of human and material resources for entrepreneurship education as perceived by lecturers in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions?
3. What are the teaching methods and strategies used by entrepreneurship education lecturers for delivery the course contents as perceived by lecturers in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions?

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was adopted and the study covered south-south zone of Nigeria. The population consisted of 215 entrepreneurship education lecturers in all the twenty-nine federal and state government owned tertiary institutions as at March 2016. No sampling was done because the population size was not too large for the purpose. A 32-item structured questionnaire on five point Likert-type scale was used for data collection and values were assigned to them thus: Strongly Agree-5, Agree 4, Undecided 3, Disagree-2 and Strongly Disagree-1. The instrument was validated by four experts and tested for its reliability using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a reliability value of 0.87. The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected in order to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondents' opinion and 3.0 was used as the standard mean score. Any value equal to or above the standard score or set decision rule of 3.0 was considered acceptable while any value less than 3.0 was considered unacceptable.

RESULTS

Research question 1: The status of entrepreneurship education in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions relative to the course contents as perceived by lecturers.

Table 1: Respondents' mean rating and standard deviation of the status of entrepreneurship education relative to the course contents
 N=200

S/N	Item	Mean X	SD	Remarks
1	Entrepreneurship education course contents are overloaded.	2.13	1.33	Disagree
2	Entrepreneurship education course contents are not too elaborate.	3.68	0.89	Agree
3	Entrepreneurship education course contents such as tailoring skills can be effectively delivered within 2 unit hour as stipulated on the time-table.	2.84	1.33	Disagree
4	Entrepreneurship education course contents such as financial record keeping skills cannot be effectively delivered within one week as stipulated on the time-table.	3.81	0.78	Agree
5	Entrepreneurship education course content 30 level hour (30 LH) delivery is grossly adequate.	2.93	1.26	Disagree
6	Entrepreneurship education lecturers cannot effectively attain the course content objective within the period allotted.	3.92	0.74	Agree
7	Entrepreneurship course contents are adequate to allow for graduates participation in the world of work if effectively delivered.	3.81	0.78	Agree

Table 1 revealed that respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education course contents are not too elaborate, financial record keeping skills cannot be effectively delivered within one week as stipulated on the time-table, lecturers cannot attain the course content objective within the period allotted and the course contents are adequate to allow for graduates participation in the world of work if effectively delivered. In the same vein the disagreed that entrepreneurship education course contents are overloaded, tailoring skills can be effectively delivered within 2 unit hours as stipulated on the time table and also that the course content 30 level hour (30 LH) delivery is grossly adequate.

Research Question 2: the status of:

- Human resources for effective entrepreneurship education in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers.
- Material resources for effective entrepreneurship education in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers.

Table 2: Respondents' mean rating and standard deviation of the status of human and material resources for entrepreneurship education
 N=200

S/N	ITEM	Mean X –	SD	Remarks
8	Entrepreneurship education lecturers are not adequate in number to deliver course contents.	2.05	1.31	Disagree
9	Entrepreneurship education lecturers have adequate academic exposure for effective teaching.	3.45	1.02	Agree
10	Entrepreneurship education lecturers have adequate pedagogical preparation for effective teaching.	3.32	0.76	Agree
11	Entrepreneurship education functional projectors are not available for course content delivering.	4.69	0.41	Agree
12	Entrepreneurship education has adequate number of functional computers for students' practical training.	2.29	1.28	Disagree
13	Entrepreneurship education text-books are inadequately available for effective teaching and learning.	3.87	0.62	Agree
14	Entrepreneurship education textbooks are expensive to afford.	2.79	1.27	Disagree
15	Entrepreneurship education lecture rooms are conducive (proper ventilation and lighting) for effective teaching/learning	2.69	1.32	Disagree
16	Entrepreneurship education numbers of lecture rooms are adequate to accommodate the teeming students' population for effective teaching/learning.	2.46	1.36	Disagree
17	Entrepreneurship education lecture rooms are not spacious for effective teaching/learning	4.45	0.48	Agree
18	Entrepreneurship education functional resource-based development centre is not available.	3.19	0.97	Agree
19	Entrepreneurship education practical training workshop is adequately equipped for practical training.	2.43	1.39	Disagree

Table 2 revealed respondents agreed that lecturers have adequate academic exposure and pedagogical preparation for effective teaching but functional projectors are not available for course content delivering. They equally agreed that text-books are inadequately available and lecture rooms are not spacious for effective teaching and learning and also functional resource-based development centre is not available. The equally disagreed that lecturers are not adequate in number to deliver course contents, the availability of adequate number of functional computers for students' practical training and lecture rooms for the teeming students' population, that textbooks are expensive to afford, lecture rooms are conducive; properly ventilated and lightened) for effective teaching/learning and moreso that practical training workshop is adequately equipped for practical training.

Research question 3: Teaching methods and strategies used by entrepreneurship education lecturers for delivering the course contents in south-south Nigerian tertiary institutions as perceived by lecturers.

Table 3: Respondents' mean rating and standard deviation of the teaching methods and strategies used for delivering entrepreneurship course contents
 N=200

S/N	ITEM	Mean X -	SD	Remarks
20	Entrepreneurship education lecturers do not use game as teaching strategy.	3.69	0.85	Agree
21	Entrepreneurship education lecturers hardly use assignment as teaching strategies.	2.72	1.28	Disagree
22	Entrepreneurship education lecturers often use simulation as teaching strategy.	2.11	1.41	Disagree
23	Entrepreneurship education lecturers always use experiential learning as teaching strategy.	2.13	1.39	Disagree
24	Entrepreneurship education lecturers mostly use the conventional lecture method in teaching.	3.85	0.72	Agree
25	Entrepreneurship education lecturers use various motivational teaching strategies.	3.46	1.02	Agree
26	Entrepreneurship education lecturers are unable to cater for individual learner's affective domain in the class because of the large population.	3.86	0.72	Agree
27	Entrepreneurship education lecturers vary their teaching methods to cater for individual students' learning ability.	3.11	1.06	Agree
28	Entrepreneurship education lecturers use continuous assessment to assess their instructional effectiveness.	2.93	1.46	Disagree
29	Entrepreneurship education lecturers use continuous assessment to monitor students' academic progress.	3.97	0.68	Agree
30	Entrepreneurship education lecturers manage classroom effectively despite the large students' population.	3.63	0.92	Agree
31	Entrepreneurship education lecturers present lessons in sequential order to ensure the attainment of instructional objectives against all odds.	3.71	0.76	Agree
32	Entrepreneurship education lecturers provide enabling environment for students' learning; good classroom atmosphere free from coercion.	3.12	1.04	Agree

Table 3 revealed that respondents agreed that lecturers do not use game as teaching strategy, they mostly use the conventional lecture method in teaching and use various motivational teaching strategies. They equally agreed that the students' population is relatively too large to enable lecturers cater for individual learner's affective domain in the teaching and learning process though lecturers vary their teaching methods to cater for individual students' learning ability. Moreso, lecturers manage classroom effectively despite the large students' population and present lessons in sequential order to ensure the attainment of instructional objectives against all odds as well as providing enabling environment for students' learning; good classroom atmosphere free from coercion. They equally disagree that lecturers hardly use assignment, often use simulation and always use experiential learning as teaching strategy.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result of the analysis of entrepreneurship education relative to course contents as shown in Table 1 revealed that although entrepreneurship education curriculum contents in the various institutions are appropriate to equip the students with entrepreneurial competencies and skills to enable them become self reliant and to participate effectively in the world of work but the time allotted to effectively deliver the course content appears to be grossly inadequate.

A curriculum that helps learners to acquire the relevant competencies and skills desirable to cope with individual and national challenges in the society is usually preferable and that is what entrepreneurship education curriculum seeks to provide to the Nigerian society. If entrepreneurial curriculum is effectively delivered it would abate the unemployment challenges facing young tertiary school graduates in Nigeria today. The entrepreneurial competencies and skills which students would acquire through the training will make them become self reliant and be able to create wealth using the local resources in their immediate environments. The findings of this study therefore supports Idogho and Akhigbe (2012) assertion which stated that a responsive curriculum takes cognizance of vital changes and challenges in learners' environment and prepare them to meet such changes and challenges.

Although the findings equally revealed that entrepreneurial curriculum contents are not overloaded neither too elaborate but there is every tendency that the effective delivering of the contents may be hampered by the high number of subjects offered in the tertiary institutions. The lecturers' claim about entrepreneurial curriculum contents particularly in the universities could be as a result of their non compliance with the NUC

recommended curriculum. The findings agreed with Anwuka (2005) assertion who argued that curriculum overload occurs because of the high number of subjects offered in schools which may not be relevant to the particular discipline. Idogho and Akhigbe (2012), also noted the overload of school curriculum as a result of high number of subjects offered and emphasised the need for delimitation of boundary of knowledge of curriculum content.

The analysis of the status of human and material resources for entrepreneurship education as shown in Table 2 revealed that although lecturers who have adequate academic exposure and pedagogical preparation are available to deliver entrepreneurial course contents but teaching facilities/equipments are not adequately provided for effective teaching/learning to prevail.

The inadequate provision of these resources as revealed in the study could hamper the effective delivering of the curriculum contents. No meaningful teaching/learning can take place if the necessary human and material resources are not adequately provided. The findings therefore are in agreement with Azih (2011), assertion which stated that adequate provision of human and material resources are prerequisite for effective curriculum implementation while Omoifoh (2012), argued that teaching/learning resources are crucial for effective curricula delivering. However, Ekpenyong in Inegbenebor (2005), assertion which stated that teachers are gathered from within the university to teach entrepreneurship course contradicted the findings.

The analysis in Table 3 revealed that although respondents claimed to present their lesson in a sequential order, they mostly used the conventional lecture method in teaching but hardly use other methods and strategies such as games, simulation and experiential learning though occasionally use assignment. The role of the teacher and his teaching methods and strategies are crucial in effective curriculum delivering and must not be glossed-over in entrepreneurship education to ensure competency-based instructional delivering practice.

Teaching/learning in entrepreneurship education must be interactive and interdependent to allow for students' active participation and commitment that could impel their ingenuity. The orthodox lecture method which is constantly and popularly used may render the course objective unattainable. This is in agreement with Akpomi (2009) who criticized the use of the conventional lecture method in teaching entrepreneurial course and regarded educational process in Nigeria in its totality to be too mechanical. Okon (2002) position that teaching strategies include not only the manner of presentation that the teacher employs, but everything that he/she does in the way of arranging conditions, grouping students, guiding activities, making assignments and providing information to aid learning equally supports the findings.

Since other teaching methods/strategies are neglected for the use of the lecture method as conventional method, the effectiveness of the instructional delivering practice to attain the set objective raises doubt. Although respondents' opinions were not sought on the use of 'old war stories', 'case study', 'planning' and 'generic action' approaches, they seemed not to be often used in instructional delivering of entrepreneurship course contents. This is because the findings revealed that the conventional lecture method is the only method mostly used by lecturers. The aforementioned approaches emphasis practical training to promote students' active engagement and commitment that could impel their ingenuity. This is in agreement with Agbamu (2011), who posited that teaching approaches require a shift from telling to learning through hands-on and active participation in a real life entrepreneurial environment.

The findings equally revealed that respondents do not use Continuous Assessment (CA) to checkmate the effectiveness of their instructional delivering practice. This could cause academic fraud in terms of compliance and conformity to the set academic standard to meet the set objectives of the course. Judging the overall teaching process through self appraisal by using CA will enable the lecturers detect their areas of weaknesses and strength and make necessary adjustments to continuously attain the lesson objective. This is in agreement with Ehiamentor (2006), who posited that CA reveals information about course objectives and its achievement, while Ekpenyong (2003) emphasized the relevance of teacher's self evaluation for the attainment of lesson objective, using the right teaching techniques and resources and making worthwhile adjustment continuously.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the study provides an insight to the status of entrepreneurship education in South-South Nigerian Tertiary institutions in terms of course contents and its delivering practice. It reveals that respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education course contents is appropriate to prepare graduates to participate effectively in the world of work but the human and material resources provided are grossly inadequate. In the light of the above, teaching the course is theory-based at the expense of practical training to enable students acquire competent entrepreneurial skills prior to graduation. Since teaching the course is theory-based at the expense of practical training, it becomes imperative to employ other teaching methods and strategies to enable effective teaching/learning process of the course.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made;

1. Stakeholders should re-plan entrepreneurship education to allow for adequate time for effective delivery of the course contents.
2. The school curriculum course content should be streamline to avoid overload.
3. Lecturers should make conscious efforts to employ other teaching methods/strategies apart from the conventional lecture method to ensure effective instructional delivery practise
4. Lecturers should complement the conventional lecture method with motivational strategy to impel students' ingenuity.
5. Above all, the government should provide adequate material resources to enable effective teaching/learning process.

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