

Towards Improving the Strategies of Effective Teaching of Entrepreneurship Development Education Courses to Office Technology and Management Students of Polytechnics in Delta State

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Abstract

This study investigated the strategies and tools for effective teaching of Entrepreneurship Development Education to OTM students of Polytechnics in Delta State. The design of the study was survey. Research question was raised for the study. An instrument which consisted of 70 items was distributed to 30 respondents in the areas covered in the study. Frequency and descriptive statistics were used in analyzing the data obtained. The finding of the study revealed that the implementation of EDE curriculum does not promote the acquisition and practical application of entrepreneurial skills as it is taught by incapable hands or taught theoretically. It was recommended that lecturers should be equipped in methodology and in content for effective service delivery.

Keywords: Strategies, content; competencies; Entrepreneurial skills, unemployment, Panacea

Introduction

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2012) stated that one of the national education goals is principally the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in, and to contribute to the development of the society.

Higher education in Nigeria is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, including those institutions offering correspondence courses. To this end, Nwagwu (2009) and Olaitan (2009) had noted that the development of manpower for the country is the responsibility of tertiary educational institutions and unless this is achieved, the purpose for which these institutions are established will be totally defeated. To achieve the goals of tertiary institutions, they suggested that governments in collaboration with private individuals and organizations should support these institutions with funds and donations of instructional materials and equipment for effective teaching and learning process.

The Nigeria's National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN, 2012) emphasized the role of entrepreneurship development education in National Development by stating that education is the most important instrument for propelling change, as no fundamental change can occur in any society except through educational revolution that impact on the intellect.

The system of education inherited from the colonial masters is, however, a departure from the traditional indigenous education, as product of this system of colonial education are targeted to the job-seekers instead of creators. Olu-Obafemi and Onajinrin (2014) and Akhuesonkhan, Raimu and Sofoluwe (2013) asserted that the colonial educational policy centred on the production of literate nationals who were required to man positions, which would strengthen the colonial administration. Thus, our educational institutions, few as they were, remained factories for producing clerks, interpreters, forest guards and sanitary inspectors as no special professional nor entrepreneurial skills was envisaged in the educational system (Esene, 2001)

The dysfunctional education that is devoid of entrepreneurial skill acquisition has laid the foundation of militia agitation as unemployment dominates national discourse in almost every fora. Worried by the high rate of graduate unemployment which has been put at 1.8 millions yearly, the presidency had in 2006, directed all higher educational institutions in Nigeria to include on its curriculum of studies, Entrepreneurship Development Education (EDE) as a compulsory course for all students with effect from the 2007/2008 academic session irrespective of students' areas of study (Esene, 2014). The Tell News Magazine in its November 2012 edition painted a clearer picture of the relatively between EDE, unemployment and militancy when it posited that the high unemployment rate remains one of the greatest challenges of the nation. For instance, as at December 2011, the figure of unemployed Nigerian stood at 23.9 percent, up from 21.1 percent in 2010 and 19.7 percent in 2009, according to figures obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). According to the NBS, the incidence of unemployment was highest among youths between the ages of 15 and 24, and 25 and 44 and the problem is more pronounced in the rural areas. Indeed, there is very cause to worry. Already, the rising unemployment rate in the last couple of years, particularly among graduates, is believed to be largely responsible for the rising violent crimes and the widespread feeling of insecurity in the country. Today, kidnapping, advance fee fraud, otherwise called 419, armed robbery, prostitution, cultism, riots, protests, drug and child trafficking among others, have become the other of the day. The magazine further provide the link among the issues; unemployment, militancy and entrepreneurial skill, in its March 2012 publication: "students graduate with no practical skills, are compelled

to join the unemployment market because they lack the requisite skills for the jobs that are available...it is not that the jobs are not available out there, but the people who are seeking them are unemployable.

In spite of the fact that the Office Technology and Management Curriculum of the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) respectively have been expanded to include ICT and management courses, in addition to secretarial, vocational and EDE courses, it is found here and there, unemployment among graduates of OTM.

At the moment, in the Departments of Office Technology and Management programmes run by some institutions in Nigeria, Introduction to Business and Small Scale Business Management are taught along with the three EDE courses, viz: EED 126 Introduction to Entrepreneurship; EED 216 The Practice of Entrepreneurship and EED 413 Entrepreneurship Development.

According to Asuguo (2011), EDE has been gradually accepted as unique courses now offered and taught among higher educational institutions in Nigeria aimed at equipping students with skills and competencies to make them self-reliant and employer of labour on graduation. Okolocha and Ile (2011) observed that the aim of various governments to eradicate poverty and increase the standard of living of citizens through the establishment of poverty reduction programmes have failed due to lack of entrepreneurship skills by graduates of the educational system. These authors observed that while millions of jobs are awaiting to be done because people with the right education and training cannot be found. This corroborates the result of a study carried out by the National Universities Commission (NUC) as reported in Mebane (2006). The findings of the study revealed that tertiary institutions in Nigeria do not sufficiently and adequately prepare graduates to be self-reliant. This ugly situation seems to occur because of lack of linkage between the institutions and the industries where students can try their hands on business experience. In this direction, The United State National Foundation for the teaching entrepreneurship development education as reported in Nelson and Johnson (2008) advised that the teaching of EDE courses should be matched with adequate entrepreneurial network.

The nature of learning and the wide range of student abilities in the average classroom necessitate a high degree of teacher expertise in strategies of presenting subject matter. As reported by Davies (2012), a well-stocked storehouse of strategies will enable the teacher to vary the classroom experience to prevent monotony and boredom and keep the learning situation fresh and stimulating; it will also enable him to individualize the learning method as well as the content, each based on student needs.

The scope and variety of strategies have been greatly enhanced in recent years by technology. So great is the wealth of instructional media that the role of the teacher is evolving from the old imparter-of-knowledge concept to one of classroom manager. As the manager in business chooses the best combination of resources to maximize output, so does the teacher choose the appropriate content-strategy-media mix in managing the learning experience to achieve the desired goals. The teacher must, therefore, be competent in both methodology and content. There is simply no validity to the argument that mastery of subject matter and both an understanding of, and ability in teaching strategies are mutually exclusive. A master teacher must have both.

Esene (2012) noted that just as the nature of the task influences the choice of instructional strategies, so do the needs of the students concerned. Some people prefer to be taught in large group situations. They find small classes too anxiety-provoking. The anonymity of the crowd is appealing. Other people much prefer small group situations, or even one-to-one situations like a tutorial. For them, the intimacy of the small group is a positive factor in their learning. They also appreciate the recognition that comes from being treated on an individual basis.

This study presents strategies in three basic groups: the traditional strategies, in which all activity centres around the teacher; the informal strategy, in which emphasis is on student participation; and innovations in teaching, which include newer teaching arrangement using experimental organizational pattern and/or technology (Esene, 2011).

Umoru (2011) and Esene (2011) reported that lecturers who teach EDE courses mainly adopt the traditional (teacher-method) thereby conducting theoretical classroom lessons rather than using the informal strategies that would enable student acquire marketable and saleable skills. Agbamu (2011) stated that lecturers who teach EDE courses should be more practical in their approach to teaching so that students could acquire practical skills and knowledge needed to function properly in the world of work.

Unfortunately, the implementation of EDE curriculum does not promote the acquisition and practical application of entrepreneurial skills but rather as Terdoo (2014) and Akanbi (2005) said that, "Entrepreneurship skills acquisition as taught is more intellectual than a deliberate process or endeavour to provide opportunities and insight into the world of human and economic survival". This scenario promotes the continuous under performance of the production industry in the country as well as unemployment in "the land full of bright opportunities for all citizen" (FRN, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

The present OTM curriculum and course specification replaced the old Secretarial Studies Curriculum. Under the present structure, the regulatory body – the National Board for Technical Education NBTE (2004) has expanded

the curriculum of the ND and HND programmes to include new courses called entrepreneurship development education, among others. With this inclusion, it is expected that lecturers who teach EDE courses will select appropriate teaching strategies and tools that would make OTM students acquire relevant entrepreneurial skills aimed at making them to be self-reliant in the competitive world of work. As noted by Terdoo (2014), the unfortunate thing about EDE is that in most of these institutions where the course is offered, the course is not properly handled for it is either taught by incapable hands or taught theoretically. However, there is the allegation and counter-allegation that EDE courses are taught theoretically thereby depriving students of acquiring practical skills needed for application. This study is therefore undertaken to find out the common strategies and tools used by OTM lecturers who teach EDE courses in Polytechnics.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to find out the strategies and tools for teaching EDE courses to OTM students of Polytechnics towards acquiring entrepreneurial skills for application. Specifically, the study examined the teaching strategies and tools used by lecturers who teach EDE courses.

Research Question

The study was guided by the question below:

- a. What are the teaching strategies and tools used by lecturers who teach EDE courses to OTM students?

Methods of Study

The study adopted a survey research design. It sought information from lecturers who teach EDE courses to OTM students in the three Polytechnics in Delta States. The population consisted of (30) thirty lecturers. See Table 1 which presented the population distribution.

Table 1 – Population Distribution

State	Institutions	Number of Lecturers
Delta	Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku	10
''	Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe-Oghara	8
''	Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro	12
		30

There was no sample and sampling techniques used since the population was manageable and the respondents were adequately reached. The instrument was designed to elicit the ratings of respondents on the teaching strategies and tools of teaching EDE courses to OTM students of Polytechnics in Delta State. The instrument which was used for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was developed from the literature reviewed based on the research question. The instrument was a 4-point rating scale designed to attract the following rating: [SA strongly agree (4)], [A agree (3)], [D disagree (2)] and [SD strongly disagree (1)]. The instrument was validated by (3) three experts in OTM, one of which is in Measurement and Evaluation from a University. A test-retest reliability method was used to determine the stability of the questionnaire items. A reliability co-efficient of stability of the items for the research question yielded a correlation of 0.76 which was considered high enough. A decision rule for accepting any item as accepted was set at mean (\bar{x}) equal to or above 2.50 was accepted, while those with 2.49 below were rejected.

Presentation of Results and Discussion

Results

This section presented and analyzed the data collected in the study. See Table 2 below.

Question One

What are the teaching strategies and tools used by lecturers who teach EDE courses to OTM students? To answer this question, the data in Table 2 were used.

Table 2 – Teaching Strategies and Tools Used in the teaching of EDE Courses

Q/I	Teaching Strategies and Tools used	\bar{X}	SD	Decisions
1	Lecture	3.05	0.46	Agree
2	Textbook assignment	2.99	0.58	Agree
3	Apprenticeship	1.25	0.86	Disagree
4	Discovery	1.28	0.85	Disagree
5	Straight lecture	3.36	0.34	=ditto=
6	Homework	2.01	0.62	''
7	Excursion	1.99	0.65	''
8	Heuristic	2.00	0.61	''
9	Deductive	2.41	0.50	''
10	Spontaneous	2.25	0.60	''
11	Planned discussion	2.39	0.59	''
12	Permissive	2.31	0.36	''
13	Team Learning	1.84	0.53	''
14	Learning by instalment	1.95	0.50	''
15	Battery plan	1.46	0.49	''
16	Dramatic	2.31	0.57	''
17	Complete cycle approach	2.21	0.59	''
18	Programmed instruction	2.21	0.38	''
19	Individual project	2.61	0.61	Agree
20	Class project	2.08	0.60	Disagree
21	Non-graded instruction	1.88	0.55	''
22	Workshop	2.04	0.60	''
23	Role playing	1.99	0.65	''
24	Recorded telephonic dialogue	1.20	0.84	''
25	Question and answer	3.64	0.29	Agree
26	Demonstration	2.19	0.58	Disagree
27	Questioning	2.54	0.47	Agree
28	Debate	1.21	0.84	Disagree
29	Illustrated lecture	2.34	0.60	''
30	Observational	1.22	0.85	''
31	Logical	1.34	0.76	''
32	Play way	2.00	0.61	''
33	Induction	1.34	0.76	''
34	Large group	3.70	0.25	Agree
35	Panel discussion	2.14	0.58	Disagree
36	Games and simulation	1.94	0.68	''
37	Leaderless	2.20	0.57	''
38	Project (Term Paper)	2.86	0.60	Agree
39	Term teaching	1.87	0.67	Disagree
40	Learning by thinking	1.94	0.69	''
41	Simulated office plan	2.02	0.64	''
42	Class Report	2.05	0.60	''
43	Case study	2.18	0.58	''
44	Small group project	2.42	0.49	''
45	Adversary	1.64	0.62	''
46	Committee	1.58	0.71	''
47	Conference	1.89	0.71	''
48	Institutional	2.00	0.61	''
49	Workbook	3.56	0.32	Agree
50	Problem-solving	1.83	0.70	Disagree
51	Educational Television	1.20	0.84	''
52	Guest Speaker	1.64	0.62	''
53	Laboratory	2.35	0.60	''
54	Socratic	2.19	0.58	=ditto=
55	Experimental	1.45	0.70	''
56	Experiential	1.88	0.67	''
57	Research	1.20	0.84	''
58	Brainstorming	2.19	0.57	''
59	Seminar	2.12	0.59	''
60	Story telling	1.12	0.87	''
61	Symposia	2.14	0.60	''
62	Interview	1.65	0.62	''
63	Devil Advocate	1.69	0.60	''
64	Mixed ability	2.09	0.58	''
65	Mastery learning approach	1.89	0.66	''
67	Old war stories	1.55	0.70	''
68	Planning approach	1.65	0.62	''
69	Generic action	1.36	0.78	''
70	Computer Assisted Instruction	2.07	0.58	''

Source: Field Trip, 2014

With reference to questionnaire items 1 – 70, see Table 2, only items 1, 2, 5, 19, 25, 27, 34, 38, and 52 received mean scores of 2.50 and above. The implication here is that lecturers who teach EDE courses to OTM students mainly used teaching strategies and tools that are teacher centred strategies in which classroom activities are centred on the lecturers. Obviously, with these teaching strategies, students do not take active part in the

teaching-learning process as they seem underrated.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to identify those teaching strategies and tools used by OTM lecturers who teach entrepreneurship development education. It was discovered that lecturers used the traditional (teacher-oriented) strategies and tools when teaching EDE courses to students. This finding was supported by earlier studies by Terdoo (2014), Umoru (2011), Esene (2011), and Akanbi (2005) which noted that the implementation of EDE curriculum does not promote the acquisition and practical application of entrepreneurial skills, but rather entrepreneurial skills acquisition are taught by incapable hands or taught theoretically (as more intellectual) than a deliberate process or endeavour to provide opportunities and insight into the world of human and economic survival.

Conclusion

The inclusion of entrepreneurship development education into the present OTM curriculum of polytechnic education is a welcome development in the educational system. Higher educational institutions are fertile grounds on which every curriculum is implemented for the development of manpower for the nation. The EDE courses as presently taught by lecturers to OTM students cannot help them to acquire the relevant entrepreneurial skills needed for the world of work. It is concluded that lecturers should be acquainted and competent in both methodology and content in order to impart the saleable and marketable skills on students.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, and the conclusion reached, it is hereby recommended that:

- the curriculum of entrepreneurship development education should be constantly reviewed, revised and adjusted in order to meet the challenges brought about by information and communication technology.
- lecturers should be trained and retrained in order to keep them abreast with the current trends in curriculum and instruction of EDE courses, and for effective service delivery.
- lecturers should be encouraged to access TETFUND for the purpose of attending local and international workshops, seminars, and conferences for their academic and professional growth and development.
- the teaching of EDE courses should be placed in the hands of capable lecturers in order to inculcate and equip the right entrepreneurial skills for self-employment and/or paid employment.
- EDE lecturers should be exposed to indoor and outdoor conferences, seminars and workshops on the use of student-centred teaching strategies as a means of enhancing students' achievement in EDE courses.

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