
Perceived Strategies for Stimulating Life Skills and Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities

By

James, Okoro

Institute of Education,
Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria
jimkorokpeu@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Business Education is a program aimed at imparting life skills and entrepreneurship skills to enable graduates function effectively in the world of work. Unfortunately, the programme is bedevilled with myriads of constraints resulting in non-achievement of the objectives of the programme. Therefore, this study assessed the strategies for stimulating life/entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A questionnaire containing 26 items which was adequately validated with reliability coefficient of 0.75 was administered to a total sample of 126 lecturers in Business Education programmes in Nigerian Universities in the South-South geo-political zone. Mean scores were used to analyse the data and t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was revealed that inadequate lecturers, teaching facilities, non-availability of a clear policy document on NUC minimum standard, inadequate laboratories, outdated curriculum were some of the constraints to life skills/entrepreneurship acquisition. It was accordingly recommended that NUC minimum standard on business education should be provided. The curriculum should be updated and teaching facilities provided to stimulate life skill/entrepreneurship education.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Business, Nigerian Universities, Strategies, Perception

INTRODUCTION

Education is expected to lead to empowerment which is more than just raising the level of consciousness and providing leadership training for people. Empowerment according to Manguwal (1998) goes beyond participation and consciousness raising. Empowerment through education is expected to help the people to understand the reality of the environment in which they live. The focus of education according to the National Policy on Education (2004) is directed towards preparing the individuals for the enterprise

as employees, entrepreneurs, employers of labor and be self-employed. The dynamic nature of Nigeria economy has to be shifted from education of seeking white collar jobs to education for self and self-reliance.

The introduction of Business Education into Nigerian Colleges of Education and Universities is therefore very important to the country. Here, skills acquisition is expected to enable the graduates of the programme to be self-employed and self-reliant citizens without depending on white collar jobs. Anao in Ekpenyong and Ojo (2008) stated some

major goals of Business Education which include:

- i. Adopting the various business concept acquired in class to real life situation.
- ii. Acquiring skills and competences required for the performance of basic jobs for example, taking simple administrative decision and dealing with correspondence.
- iii. Keeping simple record of financial and other transactions in the office.
- iv. Playing productive roles in a free enterprise economy.

According to Obikoya in Filani (2006), education is consisting of the total activity that is planned, organised and developed in favour of preparing youths for responsible economic in the community. Ulinfun and Anao in Okoro (2009) define Business Education as the education for and about business or training in Business skills necessary for office occupation; Business Education was introduced into Nigerian universities immediately after independence at University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1965. In Business Education, wide range of courses are taught such as Accounting, Management, Office Practice, Marketing. In the recent time, the above courses could lead to successful introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Entrepreneurship education into Business Education has been a topic issue in the recent years. Entrepreneurship education is synonymous with the life skills. These are skills necessary to establish personal businesses in life. (Omeje, 2006). Entrepreneurship has been given various definitions and descriptions by various

authorities. Osuala in Awojobi (2005) sees entrepreneurship as the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and combining them with management and organisational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby creating wealth.

According to Meredith in Onyekonwe (2008), entrepreneurship has characteristics, financial means and resources within the environment and taking advantage of them for rewarding outcome. All these definitions and descriptions are summarized in the words of Terry and Franklin (1982) as follows:

“Entrepreneurs are persons who conceive the idea for a new business venture, gather the necessary human, financial and physical resources to start the venture, start the operations of the venture and growth to the point where more people are added to the organisation and they usually bear the most personal and financial risk in the beginning of the venture”. Therefore, entrepreneurship education/life skills education is a special training given to students to acquire the skills, ideals, management abilities for successful running of business enterprise for self-reliance.

The curriculum design for vocation and technical education with particular reference to Business Education in Nigerian Universities is to meet entrepreneurial demands of Nigerian graduates (Unemezia, 2006). Unfortunately, the implementation of entrepreneurship education life skills is hampered with adequate teachers, teaching faculties, outdated curriculum, inadequate classroom (Omeje, 2006, Isimeyi 2008). Odu (2007) also identified ‘dearth of teachers, inadequate resource inputs, inadequate tools, equipment and materials, as some of

the constraints to effective implementation of the curriculum for life skills acquisition. The fate of Business Education students will be at a risk after graduating if entrepreneurship skills, are not acquired while in school. It will inevitably lead to unemployment problem among Business Education graduates.

Mohammed (2007) pointed out some strategies stimulating entrepreneurship education such as government provision of instructional facilities, employing qualified teachers, employing adequate teachers, providing sufficient funds to schools, procurement of more computers, and teacher motivation. Lortyer and Udoeye (2008) also pointed that business educators should teach with pragmatic approach, encouraging students to develop the skills.

In facing the fast-challenging environment, many policy makers and educators get confused with uncertainties and ambiguities and lose their directions in the rapid globalization (Ugeh and Akpotohwo, 2008). There is need for comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of Business Education, to meet the challenges of unemployment among Business Education graduates in the new millennium.

Entrepreneurship education and life skills had been introduced as education for skill acquisition in Nigerian universities. Unfortunately, the tenets of entrepreneurship has been underrated by the government as such the programme has suffered from inadequate teachers, teaching facilities, laboratories/tools and equipment, inadequate training to teachers and so on. The problem of this study therefore is to determine the perception of lecturers in Universities on some strategies for

stimulating entrepreneurship education/skills education in Universities.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the perception of lecturers in the strategies for stimulating life skills/entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. Specifically, the objectives are to:

- i. Determine the perception of lecturers on the constraints facing the implementation of life skill/entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities.
- ii. Determine the perception of lecturers on the strategies for stimulating life skills and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study.

- i. What are the constraints facing effective implementation of life skill and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian Universities?
- ii. What are the strategies for stimulating life skills and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian Universities?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis are formulated to guide the study.

- i. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers perception of constraints facing the effective implementation of

life skills and Entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

- ii. There is no significant difference between experienced and less experience lecturers' perception of strategies for stimulating life skills and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian university

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was a descriptive survey. The population for the study comprised 126 Business Education lecturers from nine universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. There was no sampling since the entire population in the zone was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a 26-item questionnaire structured on a four- point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly D (SD). The content and face validity of the instrument was validated by three experts in Business

Education and the test-retest method was used to establish its reliability. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation which yield a coefficient of 0.75. The data were analyzed using means Strongly Agree - 4 points, Agree - 3 points, Disagree - 2 points while Strongly -1 point. A cut-off point of 2.50 was set to accept or reject items on the instrument. Mean above 2.50 shows agreed, while less than 2.50 shows disagreed. T-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. If the calculated value (tc) is less than table value (tv) 1.96, the hypothesis is therefore retained, on the other hand, t-calculated (tc) which is above table value (tv) hypothesis is therefore rejected.

RESULT

Research Question One: What are the constraints facing the effective implementation of life skills and entrepreneurship education in business education programme in Nigerian universities?

Table 1: Means response of lecturers on Constraints Facing the Effective Implementation of Life Skills and Entrepreneurship Education in Business Education Programme in Nigerian Universities

S/N	Constraints to Effective Implementation of Life Skills/Entrepreneurship Education	X	Remarks
1	Business education curriculum tilted towards theory	3.31	Agreed
2	Business education curriculum is outdated	3.56	Agreed
3	There are inadequate laboratories	2.78	Agreed
4	There are adequate lecturers	2.48	Disagreed
5	There is insufficient fund allocated to the programme	2.11	Disagreed
6	There is a written document on minimum standard in business education from national universities commission	2.02	Disagreed
7	There is adequate lecture halls to accommodate students	2.36	Disagreed
8	Students have interest in learning the programme	2.32	Disagreed
9	There is adequate information and communication technology	2.00	Disagreed

	facilities		
10	There are adequate textbooks for the programme	2.40	Disagreed
11	There is uniformity in course offered in business education	2.11	Disagreed

Table I reveals that business education is tilted towards theory, rather than practical, outdated, inadequate laboratories, lecturers, classrooms, insufficient funds and no national

universities minimum standard. The mean scores are below 2.50.

Research Question Two: What are the strategies for stimulating life skills/entrepreneurship education in business education in Nigerian universities?

Table 2: Men responses of lecturers on the strategies for stimulating life skills/entrepreneurship education in Business Education in Nigerian Universities

S/N	Strategies for effective implementation of life skills/entrepreneurship education	X	Remarks
12	Business education curriculum should be restructured to reflect life skills and entrepreneurship education.	3.28	Agreed
13	Business education curriculum should be reviewed and updated	3.06	Agreed
14	The curriculum should be tilted towards practical instead of theoretical based	3.10	Agreed
15	School authorities should provide adequate laboratories	3.21	Agreed
16	Adequate lecturers should be employed	3.36	Agreed
17	National universities commission should set up a committee to provide minimum standard for business education programme	3.48	Agreed
18	adequate lecture halls should be provided by school authorities	3.00	Agreed
19	Students should be proud of business education programme	3.06	Agreed
20	Students should have interest in business education programme	3.11	Agreed
21	Information and communication technology facilities should be provided by school authorities	2.75	Agreed
22	Business education curriculum should be harmonized in courses offered	3.22	Agreed

The above table revealed that business education curriculum should be restructured, updated, provision of laboratories for practical, employing of adequate lecturers, provision of adequate lecture halls, provision of LC facilities and provision NUC minimum standards. The mean scores range 2.50 and above.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers’ perception of constraints facing the effective implementation of life skills and Entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Table 3: T-test analysis of the mean scores of male and female perceptions of lecturers on constraints facing the effective implementation of life skills and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Variable category	N	X	SD	Df	Level of sig	t-cal	t-val	Decision
Male lecturers	77	2.38	0.96	124	0.05	1.08	1.98	Accept
Female lecturers	49	2.42	1.02					

Since the t-calculated (tc) 1.08 is less than table value (tv) 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis earlier stated is therefore retained.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between experienced and less

experience lecturers' perception of strategies for stimulating life skills and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Table 3: t-test analysis of the mean scores of experienced and less experience lecturers' perception of strategies for stimulating life skills and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Variable category	N	X	SD	Df	Level of sig	t-cal	t-cal	Decision
Experiences lecturers	68	3.01	1.04	124	0.05	1.14	1.98	Accept
Less experiences lecturers	58	3.12	0.98					

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Business Education is a programme introduced to Nigerian Universities to impart necessary life skills to the students to enable them become employable in the future after graduation. Hence varieties of course to accomplish these goals are taught. Accounting, Management, Office Practice, Marketing, recently Information and Communication Technology and Entrepreneurship education have been introduced. The findings reveal that Business Education curriculum is tilted towards theory rather than practice, outdated curriculum, inadequate laboratories, inadequate lecturers, absence of minimum standard and inadequate information and

communication facilities. This study is consistent with the earlier studies of Omeje (2008), Isinèyi (2008), Odu (2007) who have earlier identified some constraints to Business Education programme. The study also revealed some strategies for stimulating Life Skills/Entrepreneurship Education. Restructuring of Business Education curriculum, to reflect Life Skills and Entrepreneurship, review and updating of Business Education curriculum, provision of laboratories, information and communication technology fettes, provision of adequate lecturers, lecture halls by school authorities and provision of minimum standard for Business Education. This study is also consistent with earlier findings for

boasting Entrepreneurship Education (Mohammed 2007, Odu 2007 and Isineyi 2008).

CONCLUSION

Life Skills and Entrepreneurship Education is a skill needed by Business Education graduates to be employees in order to be self-sustaining rather than seeking white collar jobs. Therefore, business education programme in Nigeria universities should be designed towards imparting necessary practical skills instead of theories. The graduates need functional and reliable skills for the world of work and employers of labour should know the necessary areas in which their employees should be trained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the study:

1. National Universities Commission should provide a minimum standard for Business Education.
2. Adequate funds should be provided by the government to boost entrepreneurship education programme in Nigerian universities.
3. Training and retraining of Business Education graduates should be done by the government to help entrepreneurship education programme in Nigerian universities.
4. Entrepreneurship education programme should be introduced in all Nigerian universities and should be offered at least two semesters to boost life skills.

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