



Assessment of Efficacy of Mandatory Entrepreneurship Education on University Business Students' Skills Acquisition for Self Reliance in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the efficacy of mandatory entrepreneurship education on university business students' skills acquisition for self-reliance in Nigeria. Two objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the researcher. A survey research design was used for the study. The researcher targeted 2 management staff, 2 lecturers and 61 students' final year students. Four rating scale structured questionnaire was used for data collection which was validated by experts. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions while ANOVA was used to test the null hypothesis. The results of the findings of the study revealed that the extent general study entrepreneurship courses adequately prepared business students for skill acquisition for self-reliance was low. It was also observed from the study that the extent general study entrepreneurship course contents provided business students with skill for self-reliance was high. From the result of the study, it was concluded that General study entrepreneurship education courses in these universities have not adequately prepared business students for self-reliance. Recommendations were made on ways to improve General study entrepreneurship education courses among which were that emphasis should be made more on skills such as creative thinking and business start-up.

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of unemployment and under employment among school graduates has become an issue of national discourse in Nigeria. Thousands of university graduates join the existing unemployed graduates in search of white collar jobs yearly. Scholars such Akpan and Etor(2013) attributed the scourge of graduate unemployment in Nigeria on the university curriculum which has been geared towards stereotyped goals and jobs without adequate practical work. Oyebola, Ireline and Olaposi(2015) noted that the problem with Nigerian educational programmes is that too much emphasis is laid on the value of the qualification rather than the holder. In other words, under graduates struggle hard to obtain the degree rather than the knowledge and skills that would make them self-reliant. It therefore means that graduates from universities acquire knowledge without entrepreneurial skills which would enable them to become self-reliance.

To make Nigerian graduates more resourceful and self-reliant, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the National Universities Commission (NUC) made entrepreneurship education a compulsory course for all undergraduate students

in Nigerian universities (Yahya, 2011, Akpan and Etor, 2013). The directive was implemented in 2007/2008 academic session. Two entrepreneurship education courses are offered as Mandatory (GST) at varying semester in Nigerian universities. The overall objective of Mandatory entrepreneurship education according to Rufai (2011) is to continuously foster entrepreneurship culture amongst students by equipping the undergraduate students with saleable skills, knowledge and understanding needed for self-reliance upon graduation.

The introduction of General study's entrepreneurship education into the curriculum of universities in Nigeria is perceived as a realistic approach for reducing the prevalent problem of graduate unemployment in the country. Studies revealed that where appropriate skills, attitude and knowledge accompanied with appropriate practical work are taught to the students. The philosophy of the integration of the entrepreneurship education as a core course is to enable graduation become self-employed and employers of labor (Okah & Odelola, 2009). However, what seem evidence from studies indicated that graduates of tertiary institutions who are unemployed and had studied entrepreneurship



education with the aim of building a passionate career as entrepreneurs have being on the increase (Jiddah, 2016). A situation where students are poorly trained in the relevant and valuable skills for national development, education will be deemed to have failed to serve its purpose. It is therefore imperative to strengthen the skills acquired by undergraduate students in order to make them more effective in the workplace. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to determine the extent to which strengthening Mandatory entrepreneurship education are important for skill acquisition of undergraduate business students for skills acquisition in Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

It is worrisome that graduates from Nigerian universities have little or no skill to initiate business ideas that will make them job creators. Statistical evidence has shown that youth unemployment (graduates inclusive) has increased from 9.77% in 2013 to 13.41% in 2017 (International Labour Organisation, 2017). This reported information is an indication that graduates are not acquiring the requisite skills needed for a particular trade after graduation. Depicting this issue of graduate skill acquisition, Okolie et al (2014) stated that graduates from our universities have little or no business development awareness and relevant skills to establish small scale businesses that will enable them earn livelihoods. Several interrelated factors could be responsible for inability of graduate to make use of knowledge acquired in Mandatory entrepreneurship education. Agbonlahor (2016) specifically stated that entrepreneurship education is taught as a one-time 2 credits hour with a very shallow content. By implication, the persistent graduates' unemployment in the country is increasing despite the introduction of mandatory entrepreneurship education. What could be the problem?, Is the curriculum faulty?, are the students not ready for entrepreneurship? The situation urged the researcher to carry out the study.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically the students intended to:

1. Determine the extent to which mandatory entrepreneurship education courses adequately prepared business students with skill for self-reliance.
2. Determine the extent to which mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents provided undergraduate business students with skills for self-reliance.

Research Objectives

1. To what extent do mandatory entrepreneurship education courses adequately prepared business students with skill for self-reliance?
2. To what extent do mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents provided undergraduate business students with skills for self-reliance?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference among the mean opinions of the management staff, lecturers and students extent the mandatory entrepreneurship education courses adequately prepared business students with skill for self-reliance.
2. There is no significant difference among the mean opinions of the management staff, lecturers and students extent mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents provided undergraduate business students with skills for self-reliance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The researcher targeted 2 management staff, 2 lecturers and 61 students from 400 level for the study. A self-constructed structured questionnaire was the instrument used for collection of data. The instrument was validated by experts and their inputs with reference to appropriateness, wordings, clarity, spellings and grammar were incorporated into the final copy of the questionnaire used for data collection. 65 questionnaires were administered to the respondents out of which 52 copies were returned. 50 copies were properly completed and used for analysis. The data collected was analyzed in three stages. Frequencies and percentage were used to analyze the bio-data of the respondents. Mean score with standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. For decision to be reached regarding mean, Very High and High were classified as "High" while Low and Very Low were classified as Low. In the analysis, items with mean score of 2.50 and above (>2.5) was considered "High" while less than 2.50 (<2.5) was considered as "Low". A cut off point of 2.50 was considered for the decision because it is average of the four rating scale $\{(4+3+2+1) \div 4\}$.



RESULTS

Research Question One: To what extent do mandatory entrepreneurship education courses

adequately prepared business students with skill for self-reliance?

Table 1: Mean ratings with standard deviation of respondents used to answer research question one

S/N	Mandatory entrepreneurship education courses adequately prepared business student with	Mean	Std. dev	Remark
1	Managerial skill	2.33	0.63	LE
2	Creative thinking skill	1.40	0.52	VLE
3	Problem solving skill	1.52	0.53	LE
4	Business opportunity identification skill	2.08	0.67	LE
5	Practical skill	1.29	0.43	VLE
6	Financial management skill	2.36	0.69	LE
7	Information skill	2.44	0.72	HE
8	Marketing skill	2.31	0.73	LE
Cumulative result		1.97	0.68	LE

The result of data collected in respect to research question one revealed the weighted mean score ranging from 1.40 (VLE) to 2.44 (HE). From the result, seven of the items indicated that the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education courses adequately prepared undergraduate business students with skills for self-reliance was very low. However, item 7 disclosed that the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education adequately prepared business students for skills was high. The summary of

the result revealed the weighted mean score of 1.97 with standard deviation of 0.68 which shows that the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education courses adequately prepared undergraduate business students with skills for self-reliance was low

Research Question Two: To what extent do mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents provided undergraduate business students with skills for self-reliance?

Table 2: Mean ratings with standard deviation of respondents used to answer research question two

S/N	Mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents provided business students with	Mean	Std. dev	Remark
1	Skills for business opportunity identification	2.05	0.69	LE
2	Skills for starting-up new business	2.27	0.67	LE
3	Management skills	2.40	0.72	LE
4	Skills in dealing with business challenges	2.23	0.68	LE
5	Marketing skills	2.38	0.74	LE
6	Financial skills	2.36	0.74	LE
7	Personal development skills	2.30	0.68	LE
8	Innovative skills	3.03	0.76	HE
9	Creative skills	1.23	0.54	VLE
Cumulative result		2.25	0.70	LE

The result of data collected in respect to research question two revealed the weighted mean score ranging from 1.23 (VLE) to 3.03 (HE). From the result, seven of the items indicated that the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education courses prepared undergraduate business student with skills was high. However, item 9 showed that the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education prepared business students for skills was low. The summary of the result revealed the weighted mean score of 2.25

with standard deviation of 0.70. This shows that the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents prepared undergraduate business student with skills was low.

TEST OF NULL HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference among the mean opinions of the management staff, lecturers and students on the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education



adequately prepared undergraduate business students with skill for self-reliance

Table 3: Analysis of Variance on Test of Null Hypothesis Two

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.918	3	1.639	2.591	.064
Within Groups	28.470	45	.633		
Total	33.388	48			

The test of null hypothesis one in Table 4 revealed the Sum of Squares values of 4.918 and 28.470 at degree of freedom of 3 and 45 for Between Groups and Within Groups. The Mean square obtained for Between Group was 1.639 and for Within Group was .633. These results yielded F-value of 2.591 which was not significant at .064. The p-value obtained was .64 greater than the p-value 0.05 (.064>0.05). The result shows that there was no significant difference among the mean opinions of the management staff, lecturers and students on the

extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents adequately prepared undergraduate business students with skill for self-reliance. The hypothesis was retained.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference among the mean opinions of the management staff, lecturers and students on the extent Mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents provided undergraduate business student with skills for self-reliance.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance on Test of Null Hypothesis One

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.543	3	3.181	2.577	.071
Within Groups	31.274	45	.695		
Total	40.816	48			

The result of test of null hypothesis two revealed the Sum of Squares of 9.543 and 31.274 at degree of freedom of 3 and 45 for Between Groups and Within Groups. The Mean Square for Between Group was 3.181 and Within Group .695. These results yielded F-value of 2.577 which was not statistically significant at .071. The p-value of .908 was equally greater than 0.05. The result therefore shows that there was no significant difference among the mean opinions of the management staff, lecturers and students on the extent mandatory entrepreneurship education course content provided undergraduate business student with skills for self-reliance. The hypothesis was accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of research question one indicated that that the extent the mandatory entrepreneurship education courses prepared undergraduate business student with skills was low. The result was affirmed by all the groups of respondents in test of null hypothesis one. This finding is in line with findings of Okolie et al (2014) who stated that entrepreneurship education has

made higher institution's students acquire little business, technical, managerial and marketing skills. The result of the study further confirmed earlier study of Akpan and Etor(2013) who noted that graduates from our universities acquire knowledge without entrepreneurial skills which would enable them, on graduation to practice what was learnt in school, create jobs for themselves and others and participate in economic development in Nigeria. This means that to improve graduate employment opportunities, Dollinger (2006) stated that entrepreneurial studies must prepare young people to develop skills that enables them survive, earn livelihoods, be responsible and enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs' thinkers and contribute to development and sustainable communities.

The result of research question two revealed which was affirmed by all category of the respondents in null hypothesis two indicated that the extent the mandatory entrepreneurship education course contents prepared undergraduate business student with skills was low. This revelation was in tandem with study of Oyebola, Irefin and Olaposi (2015)



where they observed that there was significant relationship between venture creation and content of entrepreneurship lectures received by students because entrepreneurship education delivered in Nigerian universities is good for theoretical knowledge. The study of Agbonlahor (2016) also affirmed that entrepreneurship education taught at tertiary institutions have a very shallow content. However, students to acquire saleable skills Enu (2012) opined that curriculum content entrepreneurship education is not enough to address the obvious shortcomings of present school system.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is apparent that management staff, lecturers and students are positive in their opinion of strengthening General study's entrepreneurship education courses with skills in order to provide undergraduate business students with requisite skills for self-reliance. They viewed General study's entrepreneurship course contents as the necessary tools for providing undergraduate business students with skills to become job providers, employers of labour and to make meaningful contribution to the economic development of the country. It can therefore be concluded that for the objective of General study's entrepreneurship education to be achieved, the students must be adequately prepared with saleable skills that will make them view the world differently from their contemporaries who are not opportune to receive the skills in terms of innovation and creativity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is need for the implementers of the Mandatory entrepreneurship education to emphasize more on generic skills such as creative thinking, personal skills, business start-up, this will enable the students to better prepare for future career.
2. Universities should develop active methods of engaging students to display their creativity, this will help a lot in identifying the exceptionality of entrepreneurial learning developments of students.

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