

National Transformation Agenda As A Veritable Tool For Challenges Facing Entrepreneurship Education In Federal Polytechnics In Nigeria: Students' Perspectives

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Abstract

The Nigerian government in her effort to ensure job opportunities for students after graduating from the tertiary institution introduced a compulsory Entrepreneurship Education course into the curriculum of tertiary institutions. The government believed that with the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills, students can set up business enterprises rather than remain jobless for a long period after graduation. This paper focuses on the National Transformation Agenda as a veritable tool on challenges facing entrepreneurship education in Federal Polytechnics in South-West Geo-Political Zone. Three research questions were formulated and a questionnaire tagged "Challenges in Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire (CEEQ) was designed to obtain data. The sample consisted of 300 students drawn from three Federal Polytechnics. Random sampling technique was used to select 100 students from each of the three Polytechnics. Data collected were analysed using simple percentage and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results revealed that entrepreneurship education delivered in Federal Polytechnics in South-West Geo-Political Zones is not challenging enough while lecture method was the prominent way of teaching. It was further revealed that strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics will not significantly influence students' attitudes towards self-reliance ($f_{cal} = 2.260 < f_{table} = 3.840 < P = .05$). Also, the study revealed that to some extent National Transformation Agenda has significant influence on entrepreneurship education in the Polytechnics ($f_{cal} = 4.1172 > f_{table} = 3.840 < P = .05$). It is therefore recommended that Entrepreneurship Education should be encouraged by managing and delivering the compulsory course in such a way that it will provoke students' inquisition, knowledge and greater performance and government should provide adequate funding for effective implementation of the Programme.

Key Words: *Challenges, Entrepreneurship Education, Federal Polytechnics, Students' Attitude, Self-Reliance.*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education attempts to provide the knowledge and learning experiences to help students develop the skills associated with starting a business venture. These include visioning, leading,

communicating, listening, problem solving, managing change, networking, negotiating, and team building (Adenuga & Ayodele, 2013; Sahlman & Stevendson, 1992).

The World Economic Forum (2009) posited that entrepreneurship education is critical for developing entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and behaviours that are the basis for economic growth. They went further to say that access and exposure to entrepreneurship within educational systems at all levels are important as they are the outreach to target audiences outside traditional educational systems. Furthermore, they opined that entrepreneurship education provides a mix of experiential learning, skill building and, most importantly, mindset shift. Certainly, they say that the earlier more widespread the exposure to entrepreneurship and innovation, the more likely students will become entrepreneurial, in one form or another, at some stage in their lives.

While buttressing the above, they quoted Drucker (1985) who says that most of what you hear about entrepreneurship is all wrong. It is not magic; it is not mysterious; and it has nothing to do with genes. It is a discipline that can be learned. Therefore, entrepreneurship education can help promote an entrepreneurial and innovative culture by changing mindsets and providing the necessary skills. Schools systems have traditionally focused on providing basic skills and ensuring students to secure future jobs – not on teaching students to become entrepreneurs. Meanwhile globalization, the rapid development of technology and the lower cost of travel have changed the nature of work.

However, enhancing youth development especially undergraduates in job and wealth creation is therefore becoming increasingly important in the socio-economic development of both developed and developing economies as they account for significant percent of the operators of the economy tomorrow (Ogunyemi, 2005; Kjeldsen & Nielson, 2000). Youth entrepreneurs make a substantial contribution to national economies through their participation in start-ups and their growth in small and medium businesses (United Nations, 2006). Their interests and activities in the economic growth and development especially in the area of SMEs have received outstanding interest of researchers. This notwithstanding, entrepreneurship is usually seen from the perspective of class driven economy (economy controlled majorly by the rich), Ayodele, (2013), and Gelin (2005) due to its complexity, particularly, the role of entrepreneurship education and its challenges have not been properly documented in Nigeria.

The role of entrepreneurship education as a strategy for enhancing the labour market in creation of employment, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and provision of resources has helped tremendously to increase the number of entrepreneurial ventures in the world. The emergence of the private sector as the major participant/player in the industrial development of many countries has also improved individual access in employment opportunities, also in coping with the challenges of unemployment and the vicious cycle of poverty, the development of self-employment due to entrepreneurship education in schools became the last resort for them.

Despite the importance of entrepreneurship education in the development of national economy and despite the various efforts of government to accord entrepreneurship its place in its programmes and policies, much still need to be achieved in the development of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. Over the years, it has also been observed that Entrepreneurship Education delivered to post-secondary school students in their various levels seem not to be meeting the aims and the objectives for the compulsory course. Many Nigerians including both male and female undergraduates do not have the managerial ability needed to establish and manage modern businesses successfully; this is a minus in the area of job creation and economic empowerment (Adenuga & Ayodele, 2013). Ability is a function of the level of education, skills, attitude and experience of the individuals. Several studies have shown that the major crucial factors leading to unemployment of the youth in most countries of the world is lack of entrepreneurial skills. Therefore, the study seeks to assess the impact of national transformation agenda as a veritable tool for challenges facing entrepreneurship education in Federal polytechnics in south-west geo-political zone.

Objectives of the Study

This paper aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- i. To identify the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics.
- ii. To examine the influence of Entrepreneurship Education on students attitudinal behaviour toward self-reliance.
- iii. To investigate the challenges facing entrepreneurship education in Federal Polytechnics in South-West Geo-Political Zone.

Research Questions

1. What are the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the Polytechnics?
2. To what extent has the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the Polytechnics influence students' attitudes towards self-reliance?
3. To what extent has National Transformation Agenda influence entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics?

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted an ex-post-facto survey research design where questionnaire were used to collect data from the respondents on the studied variables.

Population

The population of the study consisted of entire students in the Federal Polytechnics in South-West Geo-Political Zone. A sample of 300 respondents were randomly selected across all disciplines in three (3) Polytechnics in South-West Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria which were selected through simple random sampling techniques, these are The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, The Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti and The Federal Polytechnic, Offa. The random nature of the sampling procedure ensures that the sample selected is a true representative of the population. The respondents were equally represented in terms of gender. The mean age of the respondents was 19.5 with an age range of 17-25 years.

Measures

Biographical Information Sheet

The biographical data information sheet was used to collect information on the participants' fact.

Challenges in Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire (CEEQ)

CEEQ was self-developed questionnaire by the researchers and was made up of 30 items. CEEQ was factor analyzed into four subscales. The scale adopts a five-point Likert-type format ranging from 1 (minimum attraction) to 5 (maximum attraction). The Cronbach's alpha for the instrument in this study is .79.

Procedure

The researchers, with the help of two other assistants, administered the inventory on the participants. The data collection lasted 4 weeks. The completed inventories were thoroughly checked to ensure that they

were properly filled. All the inventories were returned. 283 questionnaires were properly filled and valid for analysis, thus, 94.3% inventory administration was recorded.

Data Analysis

Product moment correlation and hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to analyses the data collected.

Result

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Respondents

S/N	Variable	Category	N=(283)	Frequency	%
1	Sex	a.	Male	131	46.3
		b.	Female	152	53.7
2	Age	a.	17- 20years	182	64.3
		b.	21-25years above	101	35.7
3	Educational Status of Parents	a.	Illiterate	42	14.8
		b.	Primary School Leaver	65	23.0
		c.	Secondary School Leaver	74	26.2
		d.	Higher Education	102	36.0
4	Fathers' Profession	a.	Trading/Marketing	57	20.1
		b.	Civil Servant	79	27.9
		c.	Teaching	40	14.1
		d.	Banker	34	12.1
		e.	No response	73	25.8
5	Mother's Profession	a.	Trading/Marketing	94	33.2
		b.	Civil Servant	42	14.8
		c.	Teaching	83	29.3
		d.	Banker	21	7.4
		e.	No response	43	15.2

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The result of the analysis of the demographic variables of the study revealed that male respondents were 131 representing 46.3% while female respondents were 152 (53.7%). Respondents between 17 and 20years of age were 182 (64.3%) while those above the ages of 21-25years were 101 (35.7%). The educational status of the respondents' parents were grouped into four namely no educational background were 14.8%, primary school leaver were 23%, secondary school leaver were 26.2 while the highly educated (higher education) were 36%. The demographical data on the fathers' professions shows that 20.1% were traders or marketers, 27.9% were civil servants, 14.1% were in teaching profession, 12.1% were bankers, while 25.8% did not indicate their fathers' profession. Statistics on the frequency on the mothers' professions show that 94 (33.2%) were trader/marketer; 42 (14.8%) were civil servants; 29.3% were teachers, 7.4% were bankers, while 15.2% failed to indicate their mothers' profession.

Table 2: Entrepreneurship education and strategies involved in its teaching

SN	Teaching strategies	Often	Occasionally	Rarely
1	Lectures	283(100%)	-	-
2	Practical	104(36.7)	113(40)	66(23.3)
3	Peer projects	101(35.7)	88(31.1)	94(33.2)
4	Sole projects	157(55.5)	39(13.8)	87(30.7)
5	Seminars	81(28.6)	100(35.3)	102(36)
6	Field Trip/ excursions	73(25.8)	99(35)	111(39.2)
7	Case studies (Local)	67(23.7)	123(43.5)	93(32.9)
8	Case studies (Foreign)	29(10.2)	56(19.8)	198(70)

Note: N=283; Percentages (%) are in brackets.

Table 2 above shows the pattern of students' responses to the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics. It was observed from the table that those methods of teaching that can stimulate easy learning of entrepreneurship education were less rated by the students (for instance, practical teaching was rated 36.7% often used, 40% occasionally used, and 23.3% rarely used) while lecture method was the most frequently used in the teaching of entrepreneurship (100%).

Table 3: Summary of Analysis of variance on the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics influence students' attitudes towards self-reliance

Source of variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean of Square	F-value	Sig.
Between group	29.398	1	29.398		
Within group	3667.974	282	13.007	2.260	.000
Total	3697.372	283			

The calculated value of $f = 2.260$ which is less than the critical value of $f = 3.84$ indicates that strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics will not significantly influence students' attitudes towards self-reliance ($f_{cal} = 2.260 < f_{table} = 3.840 < P = .05$).

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of variance of the influence of national transformation agenda on entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics

Source of variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean of Square	F-value	Sig.
Between group	33.419	1	33.419		
Within group	2664.618	282	9.449	4.172	.017
Total	2698.037	283			

The calculated value of $f = 4.172$ which is greater than the critical value of $f = 3.84$ indicates that to some extent national transformation agenda has significant influence on entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics ($f_{cal} = 4.1172 > f_{table} = 3.840 < P = .05$).

Discussion of the Findings

The result of the analysis on the students' responses to the strategies involved in the teaching of entrepreneurship education by lecturers is less satisfactory. The result revealed that lecture method is the most frequently strategy used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education by lecturers. Since education is a vital vehicle through which any nation can experience growth and development. It could then be deduced that if the teaching of entrepreneurship education by lecturers is pragmatic enough and carefully conducted in schools, the knowledge of entrepreneurship will enable one to overcome the problem of unemployment and business challenges by being resourceful, ingenious, innovative, and enduring. This is supported by previous researchers (Adidu and Olannye, 2006; Nwaogwugwu and Ugiagbe, 2008; Anerua and Obiazi, 2009; Agetue and Nnamdi, 2010).

The result indicated that the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics will not significantly influence students' attitudes towards self-reliance. The implication of this is that students should more expose to business opportunities through adequate training and development in workshop and seminars, entrepreneurship education that must be more meaningful them. This study support the findings of Alcalde, Cohard and Rueda-Cantuche (2005) that challenges facing Entrepreneurship Education is enormous and affects students the same way no matter their gender. This result is in line with Lee (2006) that reported that the type of institutions attended by students determines their level of entrepreneurial intention.

It was also revealed that that national transformation agenda has significant influence on entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics. This corroborates the views of Igbokwe (2006) and Osaseri (2010) that government, private individuals, banks and Non- Governmental Organization (NGOs) have been assisting schools with funds, logistics (information), and facilities (where available) that can be used for training students as enshrined in the National Transformation Agenda.

Conclusion

The Entrepreneurship Education delivered in Nigeria tertiary institutions is not challenging enough. Since the goal of entrepreneurship education is intended to empower our youths with skills that will enable them engage in income yielding venture, if they are unable to secure jobs in the public sector. Entrepreneurship education should be a reorientation from job seeking to job creation.

Based on the analysis made and the influences deduced from the study, it was concluded that students responses to the strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnics is less satisfactory. The strategies used in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the Polytechnics will not significantly influence students' attitudes towards self-reliance and that to some extent, the National Transformation Agenda has significant influence on entrepreneurship education in the Polytechnics.

Recommendations

For Entrepreneurship Education to overcome its numerous challenges, the following are the researcher's recommendations based on the findings of the study:

- The policies with regard to entrepreneurship education need to be reviewed. Teachers involved in the teaching of entrepreneurship education should be involved in this review process, as this would allow them to claim ownership of the policies. If teachers understand the goal of the policy they will strive to achieve the goal. Furthermore, a policy framework needs to be established with controls in place to ensure that policies are correctly implemented and where problems are experienced corrective measures must be taken. The policy framework must also make provision for a support system for teachers teaching the subject. This support system must be able to provide guidance to teachers and assist in enhancing the way the subject is taught.
- Ongoing training through regular workshops is required to support teachers and to enhance the teaching of entrepreneurship education.
- Government should increase the budget for the mandatory entrepreneurship education to adequately fund the teaching and acquisition of entrepreneurial skill and the budgeted sum should be released in good time in order to actualize the purpose of the fund.

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