



## Full Length Research Article

### APPRAISAL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDIES PROGRAMME IN UNIVERSITIES FOR ENHANCED ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION IN NIGERIA

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#### ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in Ebonyi State to find out the opinion of students in the University on entrepreneurship education as a means of economic diversification in Nigeria. The study is a survey research designed guided by four research questions. All the students in Ebonyi State University (EBSU) Abakaliki and Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo (FUNAI) were used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select twenty (20) students each from the eight faculties in EBSU and same from five faculties in FUNAI giving a total of 260 respondents as the sample size. Researcher structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The data collected were analysed using mean score. The findings of the study revealed that there are inadequate trained instructors, instructional facilities/materials for teaching entrepreneurship education but the entrepreneurship curricula content and skills are relevant for economic diversification in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended that regular training and retraining of instructors by the school authorities for competence in the teaching of entrepreneurship education, provision of requisite facilities and materials by the government for instructional efficiency and effectiveness above all government and private individuals should collaborate to provide financial and material assistance to the graduates in order to put the entrepreneurial skills they have acquired into practice as this will go a long way in realizing the much emphasised diversification of the Nigerian economy.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The word Entrepreneur was first used in the 18th century by Richard Cantillon, an Irish who lived in France to mean a person who perceives business opportunities and take advantage of the scarce resources available (Edobor and Imade, 2013). The word entrepreneur is also traced to a French word "entreprendre" which mean "to do something". An entrepreneur is therefore a person who has the ability to create job for himself with a tolerance for the risk he believed was inherent in providing for one's own economic well being. That is why Egwu (2011) described an entrepreneur as a person who see opportunity where others cannot, a visioner, a problem solver, a creative genius wealth generator, an innovator and inventor and one who produces job for others. On the other hand, entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur. It is in this regard that Diana cited in Edobor and Imade (2013) defined entrepreneurship as the process of

searching out opportunities in the market place and arranging resources required to exploit these opportunities for long term gains. Put simply, entrepreneurship is the ability and willingness to seek out investment opportunities and to run it as an enterprise for profit making. Entrepreneurship is therefore regarded as the engine room for every country's economic development because it is a sure way of generating employment opportunities, providing needed manpower for industrial development, marketing and market factor growth, capacity building on the citizenry and resource distribution which are necessary paraphernalia for economic diversification. The need for entrepreneurship education in any developing country such as Nigeria need not to be over-emphasized. This is because Nigeria like other developing countries is faced with high rate of graduate unemployment or underemployment as a result of poor trade liberalization and graduates' inept ability for global competitive labour market. It is in line with this that Caston and Karlsson (2009) cited in Shamaki (2015) maintained that many developing countries have suffered from economic backwardness and high rate of school leavers and graduates unemployment as a result of their

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neglect of entrepreneurial education in their various school systems. It is against this backdrop that Gartner (2001) cited in Asooso, Agbideye and Aboho (2014) opined that entrepreneurship education is a must now because graduates are mass-produced every year without job opportunities or entrepreneurial skills for self employment thereby leaving them with the only option of craving for white collar jobs which are not forthcoming and this has plunged the nation into the present condition of economic quagmire. Ayeni (2012) in his study observed that there was a significant relationship between transformation of students through acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and becoming employers of labour. This implies that entrepreneurial studies programme if well implemented in Nigerian universities will translate to making the graduate employers of labour as well as cue into the government efforts to diversify the economy. Nigeria government in her deliberate effort to address the ever increasing graduate unemployment, and other social vices has through the National University Commission (NUC) directed all Nigeria universities to include entrepreneurship education in their academic programmes beginning from 2007/2008 academic year.

In response to this directive, Ebonyi State University and Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo started offering entrepreneurial studies to undergraduates as general study (GST). Entrepreneurship education and studies are very important measures for meeting the national development goals and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) programme of the federal government of Nigeria. This is rooted on the overall aim of education in Nigeria that the quality of instruction at all levels will be oriented toward inculcating among other values, acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance (Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN, 2004). Therefore, higher education curricular development should be geared towards producing people that will align with the world of work, create trades and mercantilism, create labour and employment, build skills and boost innovative drives with inherent intent in production of goods and services for the nation's economic diversification (Onyene, 2014). In the foregoing, it is obvious that Nigeria is looking forward to promoting education for entrepreneurship at all levels from primary through secondary to higher education to discourage the over dependence of oil as the sole mover of the economy. Osalor (2009) in Asooso, Agbideye and Aboho (2014) noted that the over reliance of Nigeria's economy on oil proceeds has led to unemployment and underemployment of our youths; therefore the economy need to be diversified through the introduction of entrepreneurship education at all levels of education system for the realization of the vision 20:2020 which aim at Nigeria becoming among the 20 industrialized nations in the world. Entrepreneurship education in the world over seeks to prepare students especially youths to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs and who contribute to economic growth of self community and nation at large.

Entrepreneurship is necessary for the achievement of economic diversification in a given society since it encourages creativity, innovation and foster a business oriented culture among youths. Economics diversification entails developing a wider range of products, goods, services skills etc in order to be more successful or reduce risk which are adequately capture in objectives of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and world at large. This also calls for diversification of higher

education so that the system will be more varied in its orientation and operations.

The objectives of entrepreneurship education according to Mbiewa (2011) include to:

- Provide graduates with necessary skills that will make them to be creative.
- Provide small and medium size companies with the opportunity to recruit graduates who possess relevant skills to manage business enterprises.
- Provide the graduates with enough training skills that will enable them meet manpower needs of the society.
- Provide graduates with enough training in risk management due to uncertain business environment.
- Stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed areas.

In the same vein, Jimah and Unigbokhia (2011) identified the following objectives of entrepreneurship education as:

- To offer functional education for youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self reliant.
- To provide the graduate youths with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
- To serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
- To reduce high rate of unemployment, underemployment and poverty among graduate youths.
- To reduce the rural-urban migration of graduate youths.
- To provide the graduate youths with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium scale businesses.

A close look on the objectives of entrepreneurship education as presented above show that they are encompassing and its curricula content suppose to be infused into the core courses the students undertake in the course of their programme of studies. In another development, due to the novel nature of entrepreneurial studies programme in the Nigeria universities; there is need to train or retrain the lecturers who will teach the new programme of studies so that these laudable objectives could be achieved. It is in this regard that the European Commission (2011) report on the challenges of entrepreneurship education observed that teachers need to be equipped with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to be able to provide students with the new curricular, pedagogy and learning environment that they will need if they are to acquire entrepreneurial competencies. In the same vein (Iloputaife, Onoh and Nnadi (2011) observed that lack of qualified entrepreneurship trainer or teachers to develop the right contents in our school curriculum poses serious challenge to the implementation of the newly introduced entrepreneurial studies programme especially in the higher education levels. Also at the 9th convocation ceremony of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka in 2011, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria represented by the Hon. Minister of Education, Prof. Riqayyatu Rufia reiterated the government intention of making entrepreneurial studies become a degree course in Nigeria Universities soon. In the same vein, nwekeaku (2013) noted that though many universities have embraced the entrepreneurship education, there is not yet fundamental change in the teaching and learning process of

entrepreneurship education. He also observed that most lecturers have not acquired new and special skills, the teaching methodology has not changed from the old system, adequate and appropriate equipment and facilities are yet to be procured and the value system which favours certificate acquisition in preference to practical demonstration and ability is still in vogue despite the commencement of the programme since 2007/2008 academic session in all the universities. This is a clear indication that entrepreneurship education is yet to be fully implemented in Nigeria universities. It is on this premise that this study on the appraisal of university entrepreneurship education as a means for economic diversification in Nigeria became imperative.

### Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship education was advocated to be introduced at all levels of the education systems in Nigeria to help address the increasing rate of youth and graduate unemployment, over dependence on white collar jobs, economic growth and overall national development. This is because it is envisaged that entrepreneurial skills students acquire through entrepreneurship education will encourage make graduates to be creative, innovative and self-reliant. Despite the celebrated contributions of entrepreneurial education in the entire education system, a close look at the current state of affairs in Nigeria still show that the type of education given to students still emphasizes on the conventional core academic areas with much reverence to certificates for graduates, who in most cases are trained to be job seekers rather than job providers. It is in the light of the above that the problem of this study is posed in a question form thus; what is the readiness of the entrepreneurial studies undertaken by universities for economic diversification in Nigeria.

### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to appraise the Nigeria universities entrepreneurship education for enhanced economic diversification. Specifically, the study sought to find out the following:

- Adequacy of trained teachers for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities.
- Adequacy of facilities/equipment for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities.
- Adequacy of instructional materials for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities.
- Relevance of universities entrepreneurship education curricula contents to the Nigeria labour markets.

### Significance of the Study

The finding of this study will be of immense benefit to government, educational administrators, students and the large society. The findings of this study will provide the appropriate agencies of government with the true position of entrepreneurship education in the Nigeria universities for necessary improvement in the right direction. Education administrators will be informed of the needed institutional interventions required as recommended in this study for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in their various institutions of learning. Students will be enlightened through the findings of this study on benefits accruable from entrepreneurship education and the need to

take the programme. The findings of this study will help to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in the entire citizenry since it will be made accessible as academic literature. This will go a long way in reducing over dependency on white collar job, create employment to the teaming unemployed youths, curb ever increasing crime wave in the society today and enhance economic diversification for national development.

### Scope of the Study

The study focused on appraising Nigeria universities entrepreneurship education for enhanced economic diversification. It specifically examined the adequacy of trained teachers, facilities and materials for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities and the relevance of the universities entrepreneurship education curricular contents to the Nigeria labour market.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- What are the adequacy of trained teachers for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities?
- What are the adequacy of facilities/equipment for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities?
- What are the adequacy of instructional materials for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities?
- How are the universities entrepreneurship education curricula contents relevant to the Nigeria Labour markets?

### Research Methods

The study is a survey research designed to assess the entrepreneurship education in universities to enhance economic diversification in Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all the students in Ebonyi State University (EBSU) and Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo (FUNAI) all in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select twenty (20) students each from eight (8) faculties in EBSU and five faculties in FUNAI giving a total of two hundred and sixty (260) respondents as the sample size. Researcher-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument has two parts (1 and 2). Part one contains the personal data of the respondents while part two contains a twenty questionnaire items patterned on a 4-point rating scale to elicit responses from respondents. The response options are rated thus: Strongly Agree (SA) – 4 points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1 point. Decision rule was got through the scales 2.g  $4+3+2+1 \div 4$ . Therefore is the criterion references point at which to accept an item as being agreed or disagreed on. The instrument was validated by three experts – two from Educational Foundations and one from Science Education both in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability estimate through test re-test method was 0.82. The score was high enough to consider the instrument suitable for the study. The copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondent with the help of two research assistants and collected same after completion. The data collected were analysed using mean scores.

## RESULTS

The data collected from the respondents in respect to the responses to the questionnaire items were presented on the table and analysed as shown below

### Research Question One

What are the adequacy of trained teachers for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities?

**Table 1. Mean rating of respondents on the adequacy of trained teachers for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities**

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	X	Decision
1	Teachers are adequate to teach entrepreneurial studies	50	60	80	70	260	610	2.35	Disagree
2	Specialist teach entrepreneurial studies	45	60	75	80	260	590	2.27	Disagree
3	Teachers have good knowledge of the subject matter of the entrepreneurial studies	40	50	80	90	260	560	2.15	Disagree
4	Teachers deliver the lesson appropriately in line with the entrepreneurial studies curriculum contents	30	40	110	80	260	540	2.07	Disagree
5	Teachers attend entrepreneurial studies classes as at when due	60	80	70	50	260	670	2.58	Agree
	Grand mean							2.35	

**Table 2. Mean rating of respondents on the adequacy of facilities/equipment for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	X	Decision
1	The classrooms are adequate for teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies	45	60	75	80	260	590	2.27	Disagree
2	The classroom has p0ublic address system for teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies	40	50	80	90	260	560	2.15	Disagree
3	Practical entrepreneurial studies are carried out in the laboratories/workshops	25	30	125	80	260	520	2.0	Disagree
4	The laboratories/workshops are adequately equipped.	30	40	100	90	260	530	2.03	Disagree
5	There are uninterrupted power supply during entrepreneurial studies classes	20	30	120	90	260	500	1.92	Disagree
	Grand mean							2.07	

**Table 3. Mean rating of respondents on the adequacy of instructional materials for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	X	Decision
1	The available textbooks are adequate for entrepreneurial studies	25	30	125	80	260	520	2.0	Disagree
2	Entrepreneurial studies textbooks are accessible to students	50	60	80	70	260	610	2.35	Disagree
3	Library provides necessary textbooks for entrepreneurial studies to students	30	40	110	80	260	540	2.07	Disagree
4	Students get most of the materials for entrepreneurial studies through internet	70	80	60	50	260	690	2.65	Agree
5	Teachers improvise instructional materials for entrepreneurial studies	40	50	70	100	260	510	1.96	Disagree
	Grand mean							2.21	

**Table 4. Mean rating of respondents on the relevance of entrepreneurship education curriculum contents to the Nigeria labour markets**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	X	Decision
	Entrepreneurial skills you acquire through entrepreneurial studies will help you to establish business on your own	40	50	80	70	260	560	5.15	Disagree
	The curricular content of the entrepreneurial studies are relevant to your area of academic specialization	25	30	85	120	260	480	1.85	Disagree
	The knowledge you acquired through entrepreneurial studies is enough for you to practicalise the vocation or trade learnt.	50	60	80	70	260	610	2.35	Disagree
	You are satisfied with the skills provided to you through entrepreneurial studies	20	30	120	90	260	500	1.92	Disagree
	You can get employment outside your area of specialization due to the learnt entrepreneurial straining	55	60	75	70	260	620	2.38	Disagree
	Grand mean							2.13	

Result of data analysis in Table 1 shows that the respondents disagree with items 1-4 but agreed with only item 5. This means that teachers with requisite training are not adequate for the teaching of entrepreneurial studies in universities. However the available ions perform their official duties by going to entrepreneurial studies classes.

### Research Question Two

What are the adequacy of facilities/equipment fort entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities?

Table 2 data analysis revealed that the respondents disagreed with the entire item 6-10. This implies that the facilities/equipment available in universities are grossly inadequate for the teaching of entrepreneurial studies as shown by the grand mean score of 2.07.

### Research Question Three

What are the adequacy of instructional materials for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities?

The result of data analysis ion Table 3 indicates that the respondents disagreed with items 11, 12, 13 and 15 but agreed with item 14. This implies that instructional materials available in the universities are not adequate for teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies rather, students resort to internet for access to instructional materials which may be expensive for an average student.

### Research Question Four

How are the universities entrepreneurship education curriculum contents relevant to the Nigeria labour markets?

The result of data analysed in Table 4 shows that the respondents disagreed with all the items 16-20. This means that the universities entrepreneurship education curriculum contents students are exposed to; does not prepare them adequately to be employable outside their areas of specialization. This is evident from the grand mean score of 2.13 as shown on the table.

### Summary of the Findings

The findings of this study are summarized as stated below:

Specialist teachers are not adequate to teach entrepreneurial studies in Nigerian universities.

- Facilities/equipment available in the universities are grossly inadequate for the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies.
- Instructional materials for the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies in universities are not adequate.
- Universities entrepreneurship education curriculum content given to students does not equip them with adequate relevant knowledge and skills to be self-employed outside their areas of specialization.

### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of research question one show that trained teachers for teaching of entrepreneurial studies are not adequate in the universities. This finding is in tandem with Chinonye and Akinbode (2014) as they noted that lack of sufficient skilled manpower is a serious challenge of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The findings of research question two indicate that facilities/equipment available in the universities is grossly inadequate for the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies. Corroborating the above findings, Undie and Bassy (2012) observed that laboratories, workshops and facilities are in poor state in many Nigerian universities. They posit that infrastructural decay and obsolescence of equipment in the face of student's population explosion and shortage of academic staff among others are the challenges of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian higher institutions. The findings of research question three reveal that instructional materials for teaching and learning of entrepreneurial studies in the universities are not adequate.

This is in line with Utim (2013) where he noted that there are absence of relevant textbooks and other instructional materials for the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial education in Nigerian universities. This according to him was attributed to hasty introduction of the programme into the university education programme with laying strong foundations at the primary and secondary schools levels. The findings of research question four show that the universities entrepreneurship education curriculum contents does not equip students with adequate relevant knowledge and skills to be self employed outside their area of specialization. This finding was in line with the Oyebola, Irefin and Olaposi (2015) where they observed that there was no significant relationship between venture creation and content of entrepreneurship lectures received by students because entrepreneurship education delivered in Nigerian universities is good theoretical knowledge. They posit that government through its appropriate agents still need to do more in providing enabling environment

and other factors that may be needed to translate the theoretical knowledge to practical venture creation.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities is a right step towards curbing graduate unemployment and a guaranteed economic transformation. Although, entrepreneurship education is a welcome development in the country's bid for economic diversification but its implementation especially at the higher education level is still fraught with many challenges ranging from lack of skilled manpower, poor state of infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional materials curricula contents and pedagogical methodology. To this end, this study recommended that government through her appropriate agencies should take a comprehensive review of the entrepreneurship curriculum; including the right method to be adopted for teaching entrepreneurship education. Determine the right place in terms of adequate facilities, equipment and materials for teaching entrepreneurship education. Determine who teach entrepreneurship education by developing staff and teachers to be entrepreneurial in their teaching approach; and determine the outcome of entrepreneur establishment of entrepreneurial centres for practical acquisition of skills by students.

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