



ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ACQUISITION OF REQUISITE SKILLS FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education is seen in its ability to be able to equip its recipients with necessary requisite skills to make them to be self-reliant and to reduce the way many graduates seek for non-existent white collar job at graduation. Therefore, this paper investigated the relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills necessary for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigerian universities. The study adopted descriptive research design of the survey type. The population of the study consisted of all undergraduate students of Ekiti State University Ado Ekiti. The sample size was made up 270 undergraduate students. Thirty students were selected from each of the nine faculties in the university using simple random sampling technique. A self -designed instrument tagged "Entrepreneurship Education and Skills for Job Opportunities Questionnaire (EESJOQ) was used to collect data for the study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the reliability coefficient of EESJOQ which stood at 0.78. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The two hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The finding revealed that there was significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates. However, finding also showed that there was no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and willingness to establish enterprises among undergraduates. It was recommended that the government should provide all necessary equipment and facilities in the tertiary institutions in order to make the teaching of entrepreneurship education practical oriented in all Nigerian universities.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship Education, Requisite Skills, Job Opportunities.*

Introduction

Nigeria's population is said to have reached about 195million people in 2018 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Similarly, the population of unemployed youth is rising every year. In 2016 the rate of unemployment was 16:2%, it raised to 18:8% in 2017. It is important to note that almost half of Nigeria population is made up youth. At least, about 1.8million youths are entering the labour market every year. Government at various levels have been mounting series of programmes to address the menace of youth unemployment so that graduates of tertiary institution will be self-reliance after graduation, to curb the rate of unemployment among youths.

To this end, the government, through the Federal Ministry of Education makes entrepreneurship education one of the compulsory general studies courses for students in universities across the country. This is seen as a positive step in the right direction. This is to inculcate in the youths the spirit of self reliance. This development will not only address the problem of unemployment and under-employment but will also ensure an entrepreneurial human capacity for national development.

Entrepreneurship education is the kind of education given to people with a view to developing entrepreneurship qualities properly followed up with support services for smooth take off and successful running of business.



The essence of entrepreneurship education is to build in the students entrepreneurship spirit and culture (Olufunmilayo, 2009). The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education made it clear on the need for functional, relevant, practical and acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competence as equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute to the development of their society (Aladekomo, 2004). According to Adeyeye (2010), government expects entrepreneurial education to contribute to job creation, economic growth, skill enhancement and the development of an entrepreneurial culture. To create an understanding of basic business issues, creative work attitude and an entrepreneurial approach among learners, entrepreneurship education is essential to assist them in their quest to start their own business.

Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurship success in a variety of settings. According to Paul (2005), the objective of entrepreneurship education include: offer of functional education to youths to be self-employment and self-reliant, provide youth graduates with adequate training for them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities and establish a career in small and medium scale businesses, reduce high rate of poverty and rural-urban migration and create employment that would serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development among others.

Entrepreneurial education is expected to increase the awareness and understanding of the process involved in initiating and managing a new venture as well as to enhance learners of small business ownership as serious career option (Henry, Hill, and Leitch, 2005). The entrepreneurship spirit is a pre-requisite to an entrepreneurial society and culture.

Entrepreneurship is the capacity to harness the right quantity, quality and combination of resources that are consistent with profit making under risks and uncertainty. Essien (2006) defined entrepreneurship as the totality of self-asserting attributes that enable a person to identify latent business opportunities, together with capacity to organize need resources with which to profitably take advantage of such opportunities in the face of calculated risks and uncertainty.

Aruwa (2004) posited that entrepreneurship is the ability of some people to accept risks and combine factors of production in order to produce goods and services. It can also be seen as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment, and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. It can be seen as the ability to create something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompany financial, psychic and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence (Hisrich & Peter, 2002). This spirit is required for the overall economic growth of any nation especially developing ones like Nigeria.

Skills acquisition has been described by many as the recipe for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by creating avenues for employment, thereby creating an avenue for jobs and wealth creation while instilling self-sufficiency and reliance (Isaac, 2011). It has been observed that skills acquisition is the key in the fight for the elimination of hunger and poverty, reduction or elimination of joblessness in the society and reduction of crime through effective engagement of youths. Skills acquisition is the ability to learn a skill, which can be intellectual such as learning to listen, speak, read and



write or manual such as learning to build or make something.

De Weert (2011), defined skill as the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience. Skills acquisition involves the development of a new skill, practice or a way of doing things usually gained through training or experience. Skill development has been man's means of materials transformation from the earliest of time. However, for development to take place it takes trained hands and minds to apply the knowledge and techniques effectively. Thus, skill is the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience that is needed while acquisition is the act of getting new knowledge, skill, that can be transferable on and to the job. This skill can be obtained through education, training or experience that will inculcate into the individual how to carry out or discharge effective responsibilities very well with the new knowledge. This is because any work carried out by skilled people cannot be compared with those tasks performed by unskilled people. Entrepreneurial skills are the ability of an individual to exploit an idea and create an enterprises (small or big) not only for personal gain but also for social and development gain (Olagunju, 2004).

Requisite job skills are those essential skills that are needed to get most jobs, help employee to stay in a job and facilitate their promotion. The skills are flexibly adapted, applied and transferred under different context necessary for gainful employment. According to Ahmed (2017), requisite job skills include a breadth and depth of specialized knowledge that are needed in the labour market profile.

Kearns (2001) defined requisite skills as the skills which can be used across a large number of different occupations. They include the key competencies or key skills but extend beyond these to include a range of

other cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills which are relevant to employability. Globally, requisite skills have been defined by a number of terms including core skills, key skills, essential skills, basic skills, generic skills and workplace skills. The construct of requisite skills for the 21st century maintained that it is essential life skills as well as enterprise and requisite job skills.

Requisite skills are those skills that students develop during the lesson. According to Olateju (2013) the acquisition of the requisite skills is a means of increasing the productive power of any nations. Consequently, they added that the Nigeria society should recognize the fact that every citizen should be equipped to contribute effectively to the welfare of the country. The acquisition of such practical skills is important in entrepreneurship education because when efficient and skilful hands are employed in any fields of human endeavours, high productivity is usually achieved. Practical skills expected from an entrepreneur. Graduates of entrepreneur education should be able to handle tools, equipment and at same time know how to join one or two objects to produce new things. An entrepreneur should be able to transform materials into products and services.

Okeke (2010) listed the following as skills required in entrepreneurship:

Technical Skills: These include writing, oral communication, monitoring environment, technical business management, technology, interpersonal, listening, ability to recognize, network building, management style, coaching and being a team player.

Business Management Skills: These include planning and goal setting, decision making, human relationship, marketing, finance, accounting, management, control, negotiation, venture, launch and managing growth.



Personal Entrepreneurial Skills: These include inner control discipline, risk taking, innovative, change oriented, persistent visionary leader and the ability to manage change.

Innovative Skills: These are creative skills to enable graduate to introduce something new, to generate ideas of doing thing different from the way such is being done before. This skill make individual to think of a new product, good and services that will be of great benefit to the society. When students are trained to develop such skills, they will contribute positively to their nation's economic growth and development through job creation.

Self-Motivation: Having acquire innovative skills, an entrepreneur should be able to develop self motivation skills. Self -motivation is the ability to be self- confident with extra drive and commitment to make sure necessary steps are taken to make dreams of successful business a reality (Umunadi, 2010). Without the self-motivation skills an entrepreneur would not be able to establish themselves or be self-employed.

Financial Resources Skills: This is an important skill that will enable an entrepreneur to handle money judiciously. This type of skill enables an entrepreneur to know how to stretch the limit start up capital, spending only when needed, identifying the best pricing structure for business in order to get the best return for product and services (Fasehun, 2013). It must be noted that in an attempt to establish a successful enterprise, spending frivolously must be avoided.

Marketing Skills: This is a requisite skill that involve thinking about how to reach the targeted audience for product and service produced by an entrepreneur. This entails what people want, listen to the people's need and interacting well with customers. Any entrepreneur who acquire this type of

skill will be able to cross the bar of unemployment because with this marketing skills he will be able to sell his products at profit.

According to Akpomi (2010), entrepreneurship education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in widely different context. The propensity to behave entrepreneurially is not exclusive to certain individuals. Different individuals will have a different mix of capabilities for demonstrating and acquiring entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes. These behaviours can be practiced, developed and learned; hence it is important to expose all students to entrepreneurship education. This paper sought to investigate the extent to which entrepreneurial education provided the requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigerian universities. To this end it is imperative to determine the strength of entrepreneurship education in acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigeria universities.

Statement of the problem

Despite all the efforts of government in making entrepreneurship education available at all level of education especially at tertiary institutions in order to inculcate entrepreneurial spirit and skills in our university graduates with a view to empowering them to become wealth creator and be self sustained, it was observed that a lot of graduates are not engaged in any form of skill in a bid to make them productive and contribute significantly towards sustainable national socio-economic and human development. It appears that some of unemployed graduates who cannot engage themselves in any form of vacation either to start up a small business or to be self-reliant, acquire little or no skills in the course of their



studies in the university. It was also observed that even when there is availability of resources to start up a business some of these unemployed graduates still find it so difficult to start a business. However, the intention of introducing entrepreneurship education seems not to be met as the rate of unemployment still persists. There are several graduates from Nigerian Universities today who are not gainfully employed, thereby compounding the economic recession. This has brought a lot of worries, which could be as a result of inadequacy in requisite skills in the curriculum content and implementation of entrepreneurship education. It is against this background that this study investigated the relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigerian universities.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of relevant requisite skills for job opportunities among graduates of Nigerian universities. The study determined the relationship between the entrepreneurship education been given in the Nigerian universities and the willingness of graduates to establish or undertake successful enterprises.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigeria universities.
2. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and willingness to establish enterprises among undergraduates of Nigeria universities.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design of the survey type. The population of the study consisted of all undergraduate students of Ekiti State University Ado Ekiti. The sample size was made up 270 undergraduate students. Thirty students were selected from each of the nine faculties in the university using simple random sampling technique.

A self -designed instrument tagged "Entrepreneurship Education and Skills for Job Opportunities Questionnaire (EESJOQ) was used to collect data for the study. EESJOQ had three sections: Section A sought the background information of the respondents; Section B sought information on relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities and Section C sought information on relationship between entrepreneurship education and willingness to establish enterprises.

The instrument was validated by two experts, one each in Business Education and Tests and Measurement from Ekiti State University, Ado - Ekiti. The test-retest method of reliability was adopted for the instrument. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the reliability coefficient which stood at 0.78. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The two hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results of the study were presented as follows.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skill for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigerian universities.

Table 1. Correlation between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities.



Variable	N	Mean	SD
r-cal			
r-tab	Remark		
Entrepreneurship Education	270	12.83	2.26
0.318*	0.195		
Skill for job opportunity	270	80.92	10.71
P<0.05			

Table 1 shows that r-cal of 0.318 is greater than r-tab of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance,. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there was a positive significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates of Nigerian universities.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and willingness to establish enterprises among undergraduate of Nigeria universities.

Table 2: Correlation between entrepreneurship and willingness to establish enterprises by undergraduates.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal
r-tab	Remark			
Entrepreneurship education	270	37.84	12.13	0.046
0.046	0.195			
Willingness to establish enterprises	270	47.95	10.53	
P<0.05				

Table 2 shows that r-cal of 0.046 is less than r-tab of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there was no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and willingness to establish enterprises among undergraduates.

Discussion

Findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and

acquisition of requisite skills for job opportunities among undergraduates. This implies that entrepreneurship education is capable of equipping undergraduate students with necessary skills that would help them to secure job after graduation. This could be by way of organising their own ventures or fit into the world of work. It is important to note that entrepreneurship education was developed to equip the students with necessary skills with a view to make them employable and self-reliance. The outcome of this study is in line with De Weert, (2011)who stated that the goal of entrepreneurship education at all levels is to provide training in business, skills and to develop ability to use these skills in a work environment. Similarly, the findings of this study supports Adeleye (2010) who posited that there is link between entrepreneurship education and job opportunities.

Findings of this study also revealed that there was no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and willingness to establish enterprises among undergraduates. The outcome of this study could be attributed to weak implementation process of entrepreneurship education in some universities across the country. It was observed that much emphasis has not been given to practical aspect of entrepreneurship education. In some cases, some equipment needed for practical aspects of entrepreneurship education were not on ground. This would have made it difficult for students to acquire necessary skills that could motivate them into setting up of their own enterprises after graduation. The findings of this study corroborates Canning and Chan in Okeke (2010) who posited that there was a mismatch between training and labour market needs resulting in high rate of unemployment among graduates of entrepreneurial skills. The finding of this study also supports Akpomi (2010) who reported that only 20% Corps members used in a study were willing



to establish their own enterprises after completion of their service year.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that entrepreneurship education is capable of equipping undergraduates with requisite skills for job opportunities upon graduation. However, not all who received entrepreneurship education could establish their own business. This could be attributed to poor implementation of entrepreneurship education programme in the universities. Perhaps, some practical aspects which would have equipped students with requisite skills for establishing enterprises were not emphasised. This is coupled with insufficient equipment and facilities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. There should be regular review of the curriculum of entrepreneurship education by appropriate government agencies to make it responsive to the needs and aspirations of students in line with the current realities.
2. The government should try to provide all needed equipment and facilities in order to make the teaching of entrepreneurship education practical oriented in all universities across the country.

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