

INFLUENCE OF PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH ON ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP READINESS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NORTH WESTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on influence of pedagogical approach on entrepreneurial competencies and entrepreneurship readiness of undergraduate students in North-western Nigeria. Two research objectives were stated. Two null hypotheses were stated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 200 final year business education students from Federal universities in North-western Nigeria Total population sampling technique was adopted; hence no sampling was made. The instrument was validated by experts. The instrument was pilot tested outside the study area. Multivariate analysis was used to test the null hypothesis. The results of the findings of the study revealed that pedagogical approach adopted in teaching entrepreneurship education has no significant influence on student's acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies in North-western Nigeria. The study also indicated that pedagogical approach has influence on undergraduate entrepreneurship readiness in North-western Nigeria From the result of the study, it was concluded that the pedagogical approach used in teaching entrepreneurship education courses in these universities have not adequately provided business education with the entrepreneurial competencies required for self-employment. One recommendation that was made based on the findings of the study was that there is need for paradigm shift from teacher-centered approach of teaching entrepreneurship education to practical and student center approach. This will enable students to acquire adequate skills and knowledge needed for self-employment.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial, Pedagogy, Competencies, Readiness, Education

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has witnessed an improvement in research in entrepreneurship education worldwide. This can be attributed to modern day challenges to the entrepreneur and the paradigm shift in education which are essentially changing the curriculum of entrepreneurship education (Bikse, Riemere and Rivza, 2014). Available literature have consistently painted a gloomy picture of the unemployment situation in Nigeria (Nnadozie, Akanwa and Nnadozie (2013). The report of National Bureau of Statistics (2017) indicated that unemployment among youths has increased from 6.4% to 18.8% from January 2015 to July 2017. In the face of various challenges encountered by thousands graduates to secure employment in Nigeria, entrepreneurship education seems to be the vital tool to address this challenge. This is so because the jobs for which they have spent the better part of their lives acquiring knowledge and skills are virtually non-existent (Fasasi and Etejere, 2009).

Underlying this situation of graduate unemployment in the country is that the training given to tertiary institution students has not been fully successful in equipping the students with desirable skills and competencies required for job creation and self-employment (Madumere-obike, 2006, Amaewhule, 2007 and Nwangwu, 2007). In an

effort to address the curricula inadequacies in meeting employment problem, the National Universities Commission (NUC) in July, 2004, organized a workshop on entrepreneurship for Nigerian universities as a way forward. The NUC workshop produced a draft curriculum on entrepreneurial studies for Nigerian Universities (Ekpoh and Edet, 2011). To this end, the Federal Government of Nigeria through the Ministry of Education announced the introduction of entrepreneurship education as mandatory entrepreneurship studies to all the students. This was integrated into the University curriculum as a compulsory course for students irrespective of area of specialization in 2006 and the implementation started in the 2007/2008 academic session (Okojie, 2009 and Agbonlaho, 2016). The mandatory entrepreneurship education in universities is offered at various levels in the Universities with each course allocated 2 credit units. Agbonlaho (2016) stated that it was envisaged at conception, that entrepreneurship education will not only equip graduates with the skills and motivation for successful entrepreneurship, it will also provide the needed prop to boost private sector investment to curb the problem of unemployment among school graduates.

The overall objective of the programme according to Rufai (2011) is to continuously foster entrepreneurship culture amongst students and faculty with a view of not only educating them but to also support graduates of the system towards establishing and also maintaining sustainable business venture, including but not limited to those arising from research. It is believed that, the introduction of the course will help the university graduates to acquire necessary skills, knowledge and understanding needed for self-reliance. This probably explains why scholars such as Adamu and Abdul (2015) opined that the mandatory entrepreneurship education would help to provide students with a sense of independence and self-confidence, makes them to be aware of alternative career choices and provide them with knowledge that can be used to develop new entrepreneurial opportunities.

Going by the objectives of the programme of providing students with skills for self-employment, evidence after more than a decade of the introduction of the programme, graduates unemployment has been on the increase. Study conducted by Ajagbe, Kelechi, Kimuli and Cho(2015) indicated that 80% of Nigerian graduates annually find it difficult to secure gainful employment. In the same lane, Jiddah (2016) equally observed that graduates of tertiary institutions who are unemployed and had studied entrepreneurship education with the aim of building a passionate career as entrepreneurs have been on the increase. These assertions point to a gap between the entrepreneurship education programme and the intended outcomes. Many reasons have been advanced to explain the rising level of unemployment amongst graduates in the country. Obose(2016) attributed the blame to the pedagogy where he stated that teaching entrepreneurship education course is theory-based at the expense of practical training to enable students acquire competent entrepreneurial skills prior to graduation. Experts have also hinted on the readiness of students to be self-employed. This is affirmed by Nnadozie et al.(2013) who asserted that it is the general orthodox orientation of Nigerian graduates to depend on paid employment upon graduation rather than use their training and exposure to create jobs and allied economically-viable businesses. It is against this background that the study specifically intends to: (1) determine the influence of pedagogical approach on entrepreneurial competencies for self-reliance of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria; (2) determine the influence of pedagogical approach on entrepreneurship readiness for self-reliance of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H0₁: Pedagogical approach has no significant influence on entrepreneurial competencies for self-reliance of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria.

H0₂: Pedagogical approach has no significant influence on entrepreneurship readiness for self-reliance of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The design enabled the researcher to collect firsthand information from the respondents and subject it to statistical analysis. According to Akuezilo (1993) a descriptive study seeks to find out and describe the condition or opinions held by a population by collecting and analyzing data from people who are considered to be representative of the entire group. The choice of the survey design was based on the suggestion of Ndagi (1997) who stated that when study involves collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing practices, beliefs, attitude, on-going process, descriptive research should be employed.

Population/Sample of the Study

The population of the study comprised 200 final year business education students from Federal universities in North-western Nigeria. The population was manageable, hence the Total Population Sampling technique was adopted; hence the entire population of 200 was used for the study. This is in line with Crossman (2018) who stated that the entire population should be used when it is manageable. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) described TPS as a technique where the entire population meet the criteria (e.g. specific skill set, experience, etc.) and are included in the research being conducted. Based on the foregoing, there was no sampling and sampling technique for the study.

Instrument for Data collection

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. The instrument was pilot tested outside the study area. Data collected from pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.79 was obtained from the pilot survey. The instrument was considered reliable based on the suggestion of Uzosike (2008) who opined that, the average value of correlation co-efficient should not be less than 0.65.

Method for Data Collection

The instrument was administered by students by researchers assisted by 3 research assistants. Direct Contact Method was used for Data collection in which the researchers visited the students in their schools. Out of the 200 copies of questionnaire distributed, 180 (90%) copies were properly completed and returned.

Method for Data Analysis

The retrieved copies of questionnaire were coded into Statistical Packages of Social Science version 23. The package was used to run Multivariate analysis which was used to test the hypotheses at the significant level of 0.05.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The results of the study are presented in Table 1.

H0₁: Pedagogical approach has no significant influence on entrepreneurial competencies for self-reliance of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria

The multivariate analysis used to test null hypothesis one in Table 1 revealed the F/2, .050 with p=.951. The p-value obtained was greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The result therefore shows that the independent variable (pedagogical approach) has no significant influence on the dependent variable (entrepreneurial competencies) of undergraduate business education students in North-west, Nigeria. This can also be seen in the obtained adjusted R² of .011 which suggested that the independent variable has only 1.1% variability on the dependent variable. The obtained value was not significant. The hypothesis was retained.

H0₂: Pedagogical approach has no significant influence on entrepreneurship readiness of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria

The result of the research hypothesis two in Table 1 revealed the F/2, 13.599 and the p-value obtained was less than the alpha value (.000<0.05). The result indicated that the independent variable (pedagogical approach) has significant influence on dependent variable (entrepreneurship readiness) of undergraduate students in north western Nigeria. The adjusted R² which stood at .123 suggested that the independent variable (pedagogical approach) has 12.3% influenced on the dependent variable (entrepreneurship readiness) of undergraduate students. The obtained value was significant, hence the hypothesis was rejected.

Table 1. Multivariate analysis on influence of pedagogical approach on competencies and entrepreneurship readiness of undergraduate students

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	EC	.070 ^a	2	.035	.050	.951
	ER	8.734 ^b	2	4.367	13.599	.000
Intercept	EC	364.960	1	364.960	525.698	.000
	ER	688.267	1	688.267	2143.140	.000
PAA	EC	.070	2	.035	.050	.951
	ER	8.734	2	4.367	13.599	.000
Error	EC	122.880	177	.694		
	ER	56.843	177	.321		
Total	EC	831.000	180			
	ER	1272.000	180			
Corrected Total	EC	122.950	179			
	ER	65.578	179			

a. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = .011)
 b. R Squared = .133 (Adjusted R Squared = .123)

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of research hypothesis one indicated that the pedagogical approach adopted in teaching entrepreneurship education has no significant influence on student’s acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies in North-western Nigeria. The finding concurred with the findings of other previous studies from Pittaway and Cope, (2007). Their findings revealed that the teaching of entrepreneur education in tertiary institutions is characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty as such students are not achieving the desired goals. The finding is equally in line with earlier finding of Salimn (2003) who blamed the high rate of university

graduate unemployment to lack of collaboration between lecturers and methods of pedagogy delivery. Additionally, lack of awareness of many teachers regarding the true approach for implementing entrepreneurial education was noted and likely due to the teacher not receiving education about entrepreneurial education (European Commission, 2013). Study conducted by Okoro (2014) revealed that there is poor utilization of entrepreneurship education pedagogies in the teaching of entrepreneurship education. Obose (2016) equally noted that teaching entrepreneurship education course is theory-based at the expense of practical training to enable students acquire competent entrepreneurial skills prior to graduation. Recent study by Agbonlahor(2016)revealed that the present method of teaching Entrepreneurship education has been described as a mechanistic delivery. The method leaves no room for the students to engage individually with the hard realities of the business environment.

The result of null hypothesis two shows that the pedagogical approach has influence on undergraduate entrepreneurship readiness in North-western Nigeria. The finding is tandem with the study of Olaleye(2009) who carried out a study in three universities in Southwestern Nigeria on entrepreneurship education. The findings of the study revealed that 92.2% of the students were aware of the programmes in their universities and were ready to set up their own businesses. The finding is also similar with that of Iqbal, Melhem and Kokash (2012), their finding indicated satisfying level of students' intentions on entrepreneurship and their willingness to put their efforts in entrepreneurship activities. The study is also in consistent with the study of Mani (2017) indicating that students are highly interested in starting their own business. The outcome of the study is also similar to the study of Marvin and Tchana (2014) who stated that students are ready to become an entrepreneur. Furthermore, the findings of Pulka, Rikwentishe and Ibrahim (2014) agreed with this result, where the results showed that the students are holding strong favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it can be deduced that entrepreneurship education has not been helping undergraduate's students to acquire the skills needed to take up the challenges of becoming self-employed. Though, the pedagogical approach provided students with entrepreneurial readiness but it failed to provide them with competencies required for self-employment. Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that for university students to acquire the competencies for self-employment, appropriate pedagogy must be employed in teaching entrepreneurship education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. There is need for paradigm shift from teacher-centered approach of teaching entrepreneurship education in universities to practical and student center approach. This will enable students to acquire adequate skills, knowledge and competency needed for self-employment
- ii. The curriculum planners should incorporate into entrepreneurship education curriculum practical application of requisite skills and competencies needed for business initiation and management. This would enable students graduate with basic skills needed for self-reliance in Nigeria.

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