

Assessment of the Threats and Weaknesses of Entrepreneurship Education in the Management Universities in South-East, Nigeria

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Abstract. The study assessed the treats and weaknesses of entrepreneurship education in the management of Southeast Universities, Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives, two research questions and hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study was composed through a multi-stage sampling technique. This gave a sample of 463 respondents used for the study. A questionnaire titled Treats and Weaknesses of Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire (TWEEQ) was designed and used for the study. This instrument was validated and the overall reliability ascertained to be 0.77. From data collected, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while T-test statistic was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Results show that universities have opportunities of managing entrepreneurship education. Results further show that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the management of entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria. Based on this, the work recommends that, the universities authorities should make provision for lecturers to go for workshops or seminars so as to be exposed to current trends in EED programme. The Federal Government of Nigeria should maintain a policy aimed at making adequate fund available for entrepreneurship education in the universities.

Keywords: Threats, Weaknesses, Entrepreneurship, Education and University.

1. Introduction

The standard of education and its functionality has been a major concern for educational administrators in Nigeria, especially in this 21st century. This is probably due to global interest in

education which has been identified as a means of development by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targeted towards eradication of poverty across the globe. In a bid to improve educational standards in Nigeria, different governments had come up with different policies in education, all aiming at solving inherent social and economic problems like arm-robbery, kidnapping, hostage taking, and graduate unemployment amongst others. Literature is replete with the fact that many Nigerian graduates leave the university without jobs and with little or no hope of securing any for many years. For instance, Dabalén, Oni and Adekola (2000) observe that, unemployment among graduates in Nigeria is high, and their prospects for job have been worsened over time and without hope. They recycle themselves as postgraduates. Others without such opportunity and no hope of self-sustenance engage in various anti-social and nefarious activities such as cultism, armed robbery and insurgency (Hinde, 2000). These challenges, according to Nwosu and Ohia (2009) are common among university graduates in the South East states like Imo, Abia, Anambra, Enugu and Ebonyi. As a result, several graduates of Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Uli have indulged in acts of cultism, armed-robbery and other vices, worthy of university graduates. This problem is indeed, a fallout of the inability of the government, especially in Anambra State (since the inception of democracy in 1999), to provide 4 opportunities for the steaming graduates in the State.

As a result of the above problem, entrepreneurship education was introduced by the government in institutions of learning. The idea was to enable the students to appreciate the true and dynamics of entrepreneurship, and subsequently, the acquisition of skills that would make it possible for them to

develop functional skills which would enable them to depend less on government jobs, but rely on their abilities to provide for themselves the means of livelihood. In this regard, Nwosu and Ohia (2009) contended that, entrepreneurship education (Ed) is central to national development as it prepares students for jobs and careers based on annual or practical activities, and help them develop skills in a particular trade that promotes considerable self-employment for socio-economic, cultural and even political advancement of a nation. Entrepreneurship education has academic aspect (Curriculum and Pedagogy) and administrative aspect which determine the entrepreneurship institutional quality. Both aspects heavily contribute to the quality and success of the overall entrepreneurship education (Brown, 2003). The ultimate goal of entrepreneurship education is to facilitate the creation of an entrepreneurial culture as stated by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Essien (2006), which in turn would help potential students to identify and pursue opportunities. Aina (2012) also stressed that, entrepreneurship education inculcates in trainees the ability to assess their strength; seek information and advice; make decisions; plan their time; carry an agreed responsibility; communicate and negotiate; deal with people in power and authority; solve problems; resolve conflict; evaluate performance; cope with stress and tension; and achieve self-confidence. These abilities are what could be termed employable skills. Students could therefore, be trained to succeed in entrepreneurship irrespective of their gender and educational background so as to enhance the development of core entrepreneurship traits and skills such as: diligence and capacity for hard work (task orientation); confidence; risk taking; decision making skills; interpersonal skills; leadership skills; and goal setting to improve individuals (Chiaha & Agu, 2008). The benefits of entrepreneurship education to students are numerous and include such positive outcomes as increased sense of locus of control; greater awareness of personal talents and skills; improved school attendance; higher academic achievement; enhanced creativity skills in business situations; enhanced business opportunity recognition skills; ability to handle business situations ethically; problem-solving skills; understanding of steps essential in business startup; enhanced awareness of career and entrepreneurial option; use of strategies for idea generation and assessment of feasibility of ideas; understanding of basic free market economy; enhanced basic financial concepts; increased awareness of social responsibility and entrepreneur's contribution to society; and greater likelihood of graduating to next education level (Broecke & Diallo, 2012).

Entrepreneurship education therefore, appears to be a formal structured instruction which conveys entrepreneurial knowledge and develops in students, focused awareness relating to opportunity, recognition and the creation of new ventures. Nwosu and Ohia (2009) defined entrepreneurship education as the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize Commercial opportunities and the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act on them. Acknowledging the view above, Brown (2003) contends that, entrepreneurship education and training programmes are aimed directly at stimulating entrepreneurship which may be defined as independent small business ownership or the development of opportunity-seeking managers Within companies. Brown added that, these innovative, creative, independent and self-reliant qualities are lacking in most university graduates, who have become mere white-collar jobseekers rather than job-makers. However, entrepreneurship seem to be the hub of both small and medium enterprises in America, Europe, Asian Tigers, among other advanced countries Where private sector compliments the efforts of government in provision of employment opportunities, social security and welfare services to the citizenry.

The realization of the importance of entrepreneurship education and its implementation in universities is basically the concern of two main groups of staff in universities. But despite the structural organization of entrepreneurship education, Banabo and Ndiomu (2011) identified the challenges affecting entrepreneurship education in federal and state universities in the North Central states to include lack of sufficient and skilled manpower, inadequate funding, poor state of infrastructure, and lack of relevant reading materials. For Okebuola (2011), these challenges include cultism, lack of vibrant staff development programme, frequent labour disputes and the closure of universities, inadequate information technology facilities, poor leadership and poor policy implementation. It is important to note that, three types of universities exist in Nigeria. They are: federal, state and private universities. The major difference between them lies in the funding. While the federal government funds federal universities, state universities are funded by their various state governments, whereas private universities are funded by private individuals that own them. Nevertheless, they are all under the supervision of the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) that ensures quality and minimum standards in the universities while the various funding bodies make administrative policies. However, some universities like Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Imo State University, Owerri, Nnamdi Azikiwe University,

Awka; Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Uli; Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike and Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike amongst others, in the South East States of Nigeria appears to be bedeviled by the challenges of effective entrepreneurship education management.

Based on the above, this study proposes a strategic management of the challenges facing entrepreneurship education in universities in South East States of Nigeria, through the application of a SWOT, which denotes Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats. Johnson and Scholes in Hinde (2000, p. 14) stated that the aim of SWOT analysis is to identify the extent to which the current strategy of an organization and its more specified strength and weakness are relevant to, and capable of dealing with the change taking place in the management of universal education. This means that, every university in the North Central Nigeria needs to increasingly become aware of their Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats in managing the challenges of entrepreneurship education. To succeed in any field, weakness must be overcome through strength and threats must be transferred into opportunities. Based on the above, the fundamental questions to be asked are that: Have all the universities in the South East States zone complied with the directive on entrepreneurship education? Has the entrepreneurship education been properly integrated into the universities' curriculum in the universities in the South East States of Nigeria? Do the universities have adequate personnel in terms of quality and quantity for the entrepreneurial education? Do they give adequate facilities for entrepreneurial education? Are they producing entrepreneurs in the various disciplines? Have the university graduates stopped seeking for paid employment? Are majority of them self-employed? These posers have suggested that, there may be challenges facing universities in the implementation of the entrepreneurship education policy, especially in South East states of Nigeria, which this study is set to investigate and find out how they can be strategically managed in the interest of achieving the objectives of entrepreneurship education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

One observes with dismay, the deepening level of graduate unemployment in Nigeria, and this is in a country that is blessed with abundant natural resources such as ore, coal, chromium, cobalt, hydroelectric power, manganese and millions of hectares of uncultivated farmland and abundance of oil and gas. Regrettably, able-bodied men and women have become beggars on the streets of their

fatherland. Realizing the above danger, entrepreneurship education was introduced and made a compulsory course in Nigerian universities. The idea was to enable graduates to acquire skills for the development of functional skills which would enable them to depend less on government jobs, but rely on their own abilities to provide for themselves the means of livelihood. This, apart from addressing the problem of graduate unemployment, would also strategically position the Nigerian economy for leadership in Africa. Ever since entrepreneurship education was introduced in Nigerian universities, many graduates still remain unemployed for a long time after graduation. It appears that, the entrepreneurship education delivered to undergraduates does not meet the aims and the objectives of the course. Consequently, the challenge of graduate unemployment, with its attendant effects has continued to undermine chances of survival in Nigeria, thus making mockery of the content and philosophy of entrepreneurship education in the federal and state universities in the South East States. Such universities are faced with the challenge of effective entrepreneurship education management. This research is therefore, an attempt towards understanding the above malaise in terms of the content of entrepreneurship education; how the programme is managed; what impact it has on the socio-economic progress of university graduates in the South East States of Nigeria, and how this challenges could be addressed in the interest of achieving sound entrepreneurship education in the management of Southeast Universities, Nigeria South East States universities, and Nigerian universities at large.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the treats and weaknesses of entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in the South East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Find out the threats to entrepreneurship education in universities in the management of Southeast Universities of Nigeria.
- Ascertain the weaknesses of entrepreneurship education in universities in South East State of Nigeria

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What are the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in the South East, Nigeria?

- What are the weaknesses of entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in the South East, Nigeria?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers coordinators on threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in the South East, Nigeria.
- There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers coordinators on the weaknesses of entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in the South East, Nigeria.

2. Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in the South East of Nigeria. The population of the study is 126 respondents, comprising of 116 Entrepreneurship Education lecturers, ten (10) entrepreneurship education coordinators in the ten universities. The use of the coordinators and lecturers is due to the fact that they have direct relationship with the management of universities. Due to few numbers of the respondents, the entire population was used, which include the 10 Entrepreneurship Education coordinators and 116 lecturers. The instruments for data collection were the researcher’s designed questionnaire tagged “Treats and Weaknesses of Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire (TWEEQ).” The questionnaire has two sections, A and B. Section A is structured to collect the demographic data of the respondents. Section B is structured to collect information on the treats and

weaknesses of entrepreneurship education. It has two clusters, cluster 1 is on the threats to entrepreneurship education, and cluster 2 focuses on the weakness of entrepreneurship education. The items are designed on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) and weighed 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The questionnaire was subjected to face-validated by presenting the initial draft of the instrument to three experts. The experts were distributed as follows: two from the area of Educational Administration and Planning and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. These experts were requested to critically and analytically examine the research instrument. They were also requested to point out to the researcher, statements that were poorly worded and those that did not agree with the purpose of the study. In addition, they were also asked to advise the researcher on the suitability of the rating scale. Their recommendations were taken into consideration in the modification of the initial draft leading to the development of the final instrument. The validated instrument was trial tested with twenty (20) university staff (two entrepreneurship education coordinators and eighteen entrepreneurship education lecturers) from University of Benin, Benin-City, and Delta State University, Asaba both in the South-South of Nigeria. These States were selected because they were outside the area of study and the universities possess the same characteristics with respondents under study. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, cronbach’s Alpha correlation coefficient was used for its analysis. Reliability coefficients for the cluster were as follows; A: 0.78 and cluster B: 0.76. These gave an overall reliability score of 0.77. The result indicated that the instrument was reliable and therefore considered appropriate for use.

3. Results

Research Question 1: What are the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in the South East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	Lecturers N= 116			Coordinators N = 10		
		\bar{X}	SD.	Dec.	\bar{X}	SD.	Dec.
1.	Lecturers have poor knowledge of the curriculum content.	1.25	0.87	Disagree	1.08	0.67	Disagree
2.	Transport services are not made available for staff to go out and see what others are doing.	2.83	1.04	Agree	3.55	0.66	Agree
3.	There is rise in student involvement in examination malpractice.	2.88	0.78	Agree	2.51	0.73	Agree

4.	Increasing rise in the cost of university education.	2.79	0.85	Agree	2.65	0.73	Agree
5.	There is shortage of qualified manpower.	2.70	0.84	Agree	2.68	0.70	Agree
6.	There is an increasing rate of graduates' unemployment.	2.72	0.83	Agree	2.69	0.76	Agree
7.	Budgeting allocation to universities is reducing year after year.	2.67	0.87	Agree	2.52	0.68	Agree
	Cluster Mean	2.54	0.86	Agree	2.53	0.61	Agree

Key: N = number of respondents, \bar{X} = mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Dec. = Decision

As can be seen in Table 1, the results of data analysis that answered research question one shows that both the lecturers and coordinator disagree with only item 1 which says (lecturers have poor knowledge of the curriculum content) as one of the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria. Item 1 had a mean score below the criterion mean of 2.50. However, all the other items were accepted by both lecturers and coordinators as the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria. The overall cluster mean value of 2.54 and 2.53 for both lecturers and coordinator show that they agreed with the items as the threats to entrepreneurship education challenges in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What are the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Summary of mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	Lecturers N= 116			Coordinators N = 10		
		\bar{X}	SD.	Dec.	\bar{X}	SD.	Dec.
1.	Equipped entrepreneurship centers are not enough.	3.25	0.67	Agree	3.08	0.71	Agree
2.	Lack of workshops for the teaching of EED practical programme.	2.78	1.70	Agree	2.67	0.39	Agree
3.	Lack of interest from students.	2.67	0.65	Agree	3.06	0.41	Agree
4.	Lack of involvement of staff in the practical aspect of EED programme.	2.56	0.49	Agree	2.98	0.55	Agree
5.	Most of works on entrepreneurship education in the library bare outdated.	1.70	0.60	Disagree	1.68	0.65	Disagree
6.	Lack of exposure to practical and information on existing opportunities.	2.88	0.62	Agree	3.01	0.62	Agree
7.	Lack of capital to finance acquired skills.	2.87	0.76	Agree	2.67	0.77	Agree
	Cluster Mean	2.67	0.78	Agree	2.74	0.56	Agree

Key: N = number of respondents, \bar{X} = mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Dec. = Decision

From table 2, the results of data analysis that answered research question two shows that both the lecturers and coordinators agreed with all the items except items 5 as the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in Universities in South East, Nigeria. This implies that all the items apart from 5 in this cluster had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria include; equipped entrepreneurship centers are not enough, lack of exposure to practical, lack of information on existing opportunities; lack of capital to finance acquired skills; lack of involvement of staff in the practical aspect of entrepreneurship education programme; lack of workshops for the teaching of entrepreneurship education practical programme; and lack of interest from students. The overall mean value of 2.67 and 2.74 for lecturers and coordinator also show that all the items agreed on are the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of t-test statistic on significant difference between the mean response of lecturers and coordinators on the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Df	Sig.	Level of sig.	Decisions
Group Lecturers	116	3.15	0.38	-1.92	124	.07	0.05	Accepted
Coordinators	10	3.36	0.24					

As shown in Table 1, the result of data analysis for hypothesis four indicates that the exact probability value of 0.07 is greater than the ‘a priori’ probability value of 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis one which states that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the threats to entrepreneurship education in the Universities is not rejected, $t(124)=-1.92, p=0.07$. This is an indication that both lecturers and coordinators have similar ideas on the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of t-test statistic on significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Df	Sig.	Level of sig.	Decisions
Group Lecturers	116	3.26	0.64	-1.22	124	.33	0.05	Accepted
Coordinators	10	3.15	0.55					

As shown in table 4, the results of data analysis for hypothesis two indicates that the exact probability value of 0.33 is greater than the ‘a priori’ probability value of 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis two which states that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the Universities is not rejected, $t(124)=-1.22, p=0.33$. This is an indication that both lecturers and coordinators have similar views on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria.

4. Discussion of finding

The research question 1 sought to determine the threats to the entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria. It was found that staff do not attends workshop and seminars; lecturers have poor knowledge of the curriculum content; transport services are not made available for staff to go out and see what others are doing; there is a rise student involvement in examination malpractice; increasing rise in the cost of university education; lectures do not cover their scheme of work before the end of the semester. Moreover, the study unveils the fact that, there is evidence of shortage of qualified manpower as lecturers have excess workload; an increasing rate of graduates’ unemployment; staff low media competence level, and the dwindling budgetary allocation to universities year-in, year-out. These clearly indicate that universities in South East states need special attention if entrepreneurship education most achieves its desired objectives. The

analysis of data generated revealed that lecturers do not have poor knowledge of the curriculum content, and it may be based on this premise that the respondents are looking at their situation as being enhanced for productivity. The study confirmed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the threats to entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria. The present finding is in line with Mainoma and Arua (2012) who noted that such challenges included lack of sufficient and skilled manpower, outright lack of funding, Poor State of Infrastructure, lack of relevant reading materials. According to Aina (2012), the challenges range from brain drain, cultism and other vices like, lack of vibrant staff development programme, frequent labour disputes and the closure of universities, lack of information technology facilities, poor leadership and poor policy implementation.

Research question 2 sought to find out the weaknesses of entrepreneurship education in the management of Universities in South East, Nigeria. The analysis of data generated revealed equipped entrepreneurial centres are not enough, lack of exposure to practical, lack of information on existing opportunities, lack of capital to finance acquired skills, lack of involvement of staff in the practical aspect of entrepreneurship education programme, lack of workshops for the teaching of entrepreneurship education practical programme, lack of constant power supply, lack of interest from students, and most of the works on entrepreneurship education in the library are

outdated. The study confirms that there is significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and coordinators on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education challenges in the Universities. In other words, lecturers and coordinators have similar views on the weaknesses to entrepreneurship education challenges in the Universities. The present finding supports earlier findings of scholars like Hinde (2006), Ugwoke, Basake, Daria and Chukwuma (2013), which for instance, revealed a dearth of professional and qualified teachers for the teaching of vocational/technical subjects; inadequate infrastructure and equipment in schools; insufficient instructional materials and books in schools; and that schools are generally poorly financed. While Ugwoke et al (2013) revealed that, there were inadequate provision of funds, facilities and personal; Essien (2006) unveil the fact that, out of the sampled students, some have learnt significant self-employable entrepreneurial skills in 6 out of 36 vocational areas. Also, their entrepreneurial capability was found low, as there were no significant production of marketable goods and services to show for their practical knowledge.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings obtained from the study, the following conclusions were made: the entrepreneurship education programme in operation is a worldwide programme which is providing a solid foundation for lifelong learning, self-awareness, and citizenship and life skills. In order to ensure the effective achievement by substrung of the entrepreneurship education programme in Nigeria universities, University authorities would need to adopt Strategic management techniques, which will enable them build on their strength which Includes: the making funds available and encouraging high enrolment of students for the Programme. The entrepreneurship education programme holds viable prospect and opportunities, which includes amongst others, that the course involves hand-on learning-by-doing activities. the courses encourage creative thinking; and students from all backgrounds are enrolled into entrepreneurship education programme and that universities management should work on overcoming the threats and weaknesses while vigilant should be kept on Staff attendance to workshops and seminars; COS of university education; lecturers' workload and budgeting allocation to universities, as well as exposure to practical; funding; acquired skills; and power supply.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been proffered based on the findings and implication of the study:

- The universities authorities should make provision for lecturers to go for workshops or seminars so as to be exposed to current trends in entrepreneurship education programme.
- The Federal government of Nigeria should maintain a policy aimed at provide adequate funding for entrepreneurship education in the universities

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