Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS), Vol.6 No.2 June, 2023; p.g. 113 – 121; ISSN: 2695-2319 (Print); ISSN: 2695-2327 (Online)

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF GRADUATES SELF-RELIANCE IN STATE UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined entrepreneurship education and the challenges of graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was used. The population of the study comprised undergraduate students of Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State and Lagos State University (LASU), Lagos State for the academic session of 2019/2020. A total of six hundred (600) undergraduate students of OOU and LASU were selected using purposive sampling technique. Researcher Instrument tagged: Entrepreneurship Education and Self-Reliance Questionnaire (ENESRQ) with 0.75 as reliability coefficients was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics of mean and bar-chart were used for answering research questions one and two. Multiple regression analysis was used in answering research question three. The findings revealed that inadequate funding, inadequate teaching facilities, entrepreneurship curriculum contents, hasty preparation and poor enterprising culture were among the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving it is primary aims and objectives. Curiosity, time management, creativity, strategic thinking, efficiency, resilience, communication, networking, finance, branding and sales/marketing were among the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance. About 79% of the variance in graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria was accounted for by the linear combination of the independent variables. It was recommended that entrepreneurship village should be established across universities in Nigeria to equip the undergraduate students' entrepreneurship skills needed for self-reliance after graduation. Upgrading of lecturer quality through employment of professional and qualified lecturers and provision of in-service training and re-training.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Challenges, Undergraduates, Self-Reliance, State Universities.

INTRODUCTION

The challenges of graduates' self-reliance in Nigeria have become an issue to government, stakeholders in education and the society at large. Evidence had showed that significant number of public universities graduates today in Nigeria still remained unemployed. Public universities in Nigeria had been producing out graduates that have continued, to clog up the labour-market and increasing the growth rate of unemployed youths in the nation. Creating market-relevant educational training opportunities that will provide undergraduates with the skills necessary to become more employable is crucial to increasing employment and strengthening economic development and this might enables undergraduates to acquire basic knowledge, skills, attitudes and ideas which can stimulate the capacity for self-reliance after

graduation. Self-reliance relates to the graduates self-sufficiency. It refers to graduates abilities or acquired skills that can stimulates self-employment, job creation and become employer of labour. Evans-Obinna (2016) defined self-reliance as the personal initiative in the ability and effort to identify, harness and manage effectively and efficiently the personal and collective resources, human or natural in the immediate surroundings in order to uplift one's or a people's life quality, standard and condition of existence. He noted that self-reliance cautions against dependency-syndrome on the government as the monopoly of development. Self-reliance and its kin-terms accentuates people's primary role as principal agents of development and self- determination both on the individual and collective levels.

Government of Nigeria in year 2006 introduced entrepreneurship education into the curriculum of tertiary institutions as a pathway to stimulate self-reliance culture in undergraduates. The justification for the introduction is to ensure undergraduates take advantages of personal resourcefulness to be self-reliance and self-employed after graduation. This is because entrepreneurship education concerns the persistent pursuit of opportunities to create wealth through innovative creation of a product or service that meets customer's needs using scare resources in a way that results in a growth enterprise which satisfies the expectation of stakeholders whose roles sustain the business. Otegbulu, Nnabuike, Ani and Ngozi (2015) see entrepreneurship education as the training opportunities which are specifically designed to develop in an individual or group of individuals the skills which they can use to establish and run businesses or ventures effectively. Nwosu, Oforka and Omeje (2010) defined entrepreneurship education as training which is several towards the development of entrepreneurial attitudes, skills and certain personal qualities requisite for the creation of new business and the minimizations of the failure risk of an entrepreneur. The fundamental goal of entrepreneurship education is to equip the undergraduates with the knowledge, skills, and competencies for embarking on entrepreneurial endeavours in a variety of economic settings. Entrepreneurship education is designed to teach on the skill and knowledge he or she needs for establishing and running new business venture.

Some factors have been affecting the actualization of entrepreneurship education aims and objectives in Nigeria tertiary institutions. Evidence had showed that Nigeria's tertiary institutions lack sufficient funds to carry out their entrepreneurship education programme. Proper planning is fundamental to the successful implementation of any educational programme. This is true of the fact that planning is the systematic and intelligent preparation for realizing the identified goals any educational programme. Indeed, it is planning that provides guidance and direction for the effective implementation of educational programme regrettably, there were no well thought out plans and strategies for implementing entrepreneurship education programme in Nigeria's tertiary education institutions. Some tertiary education institutions in Nigeria do not have enough qualified lecturers to successfully implement the entrepreneurship education curriculum. The lecturers that impart entrepreneurship knowledge and skills to students were drawn from pre-existing departments and faculty and they were not specially groomed for entrepreneurship education. Learning takes place better and faster in a school environment with adequate provision of buildings, classrooms, accommodations, furniture and equipments than in a school environment where these are lacking. Also, teachers teach better in a school that is well equipped with infrastructural facilities and equipment than in a school where these are lacking. Amadi and Amakodi (2019) lamented that shortage of qualified lectures, inadequate

facilities, inadequate teaching techniques, poor funding and lack of government support hinders the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The success of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions according to Amadi and Amakodi (2019), suppose to translate into acquisition of entrepreneurship competencies among graduates of universities. Entrepreneurship competencies or skills relates to underlying competencies/skills or characteristics such as generic and specific knowledge, motives, traits, self-images, and social roles which results in venture birth, survival and growth. Entrepreneurial or entrepreneurship skills combine a range of technical, management and personal skills. Nwosu and John categories entrepreneurship competencies to include technical competencies (communication, environment monitoring, problem solving, technology implementation and use, interpersonal, organisational skills); business management competencies (planning and goal setting, decision making, human resources management, marketing, finance, accounting, customer relations, quality control, negotiation, business launch, growth management, compliance with regulations skills); and personal entrepreneurial competencies (self-control and discipline, risk management, innovation, persistence, leadership, change management, network building, and strategic thinking). Government and private sectors alone in Nigeria cannot provide and secure graduates with needed job and the need for entrepreneurship education become significant. Given the enabling environment, entrepreneurship education enlightens and equips the graduates with modalities for operating and managing enterprises. However, as a means of empowering Nigerian graduates for sustainable self-employment and wealth creation, the integration of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of universities for graduates' self-reliance constitute the need of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Evidence had shown that graduates unemployment situation in Nigeria is disturbing and even more disheartening that the country's economic condition cannot absorb and optimal proportion of its labour force. This issue is of major concerns to government and stakeholders in the Nigeria economy at large. This form part of the reasons Federal Government of Nigeria introduced entrepreneurship education in year 2006 with the sole aim of equipping graduates with necessary skills and competencies needed for self-employment and self-sufficiency after graduation. Despite the introduction of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian tetiary institutions many graduates still remain unemployed for a long period of time after graduation. Many factors might have contributed to these ugly circumstances. The entrepreneurship education delivered to students seem not to be meeting the aim and objectives of the compulsory course. The content and management of the course seem to be porous. The purpose of establishing the entrepreneurship courses seem to be defeated. The current study examined entrepreneurship education and the challenges of graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine entrepreneurship education and the challenges of graduates self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.

. Specifically, the study examined the:

1. Challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving it is primary aims and objectives in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.
2. Needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.
3. Joint influence of entrepreneurship skills on graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving its primary aims and objectives in state universities in South-West, Nigeria?
2. What are the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria?
3. To what extent entrepreneurship skills jointly influence graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Literature Review

The study of Nwosu, Oforka and Omeje (2015) revealed that there are several factors impeding the success of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, which might be affecting the production of employable graduates in our universities. Salabson (2020) examined the influence of entrepreneurship education among secondary school students and found out that entrepreneurship education has an influence on students' self-reliance as well as it motivate students to be job creators. Kareem, Ademoyewa, Jolaosho, Ojenike and Sodiq (2015) examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-reliance with a view to assessing its implication on sustainable development of the state and the country in general. They found out that the most problem observed during entrepreneurship education was lack of modern equipment. Uzoegwu and Egbe (2014) find out the challenges and prospects of inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of Nigerian universities for self reliance. They revealed that there were attitudinal and methodological challenges facing entrepreneurship education at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Some strategies were also found to be capable of boosting the prospects of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. Abdullahi and Jabor (2019) investigate the influence of entrepreneurial education on skill acquisition and attitudes of university graduates towards self-reliance in Nigeria. According to them, entrepreneurship education provides recipients with requisite skills needed for self-reliance. They concluded that through entrepreneurship education, students are likely to recognize business opportunities, pursue the opportunities, create and operate a business.

Akpan and Etor (2013) find out lecturers' perception of the relevance of entrepreneurship education to graduate self-employment; the types of entrepreneurial skill students should acquire to empower them for job creation and the constraints to effective teaching of entrepreneurial courses in Nigerian universities. The result of the study showed that lecturers were positive in their perception of the relevance of entrepreneurship education as an empowerment strategy for graduate self-employment. Afolabi, Kareem, Okubanjo, Ogunbanjo and Aninkan (2017) examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among science and technology students of Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. The result obtained indicates that entrepreneurship education is a good policy and it has positive effect on self-employment initiatives. Amadi and Amakodi (2019) examined the factors influencing the effective implementation on

entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. They revealed that shortage of qualified lectures, inadequate facilities, inadequate teaching techniques, poor funding and lack of government support hinders the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used. A total of 9 state universities were in South-West, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised undergraduate students of these state universities. Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State and Lagos state university (LASU), Lagos state were the two states universities selected. A total of six hundred (600) undergraduate students of OOU and LASU were selected using purposive sampling technique. Researcher Instrument tagged: Entrepreneurship Education and Self-Reliance Questionnaire (ENESRQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts from relevance fields. The reliability of the instrument was carried out twice at Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED), Ogun State. Data collected was subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and yielded 0.75 as reliability coefficients. Descriptive statistics of mean and bar-chart were used for answering research questions one and two. Multiple regression analysis was used in answering research question three.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving its primary aims and objectives in state universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Responses on the Challenges Preventing Entrepreneurship Education from Achieving it is Primary Aims and Objectives in State Universities in South-West, Nigeria

Items Raised	Mean	Remarks
Funding	2.64	Agreed
Inadequate teaching facilities	3.21	Agreed
Curriculum	3.51	Agreed
Hasty preparation	3.48	Agreed
Poor enterprising culture	2.81	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

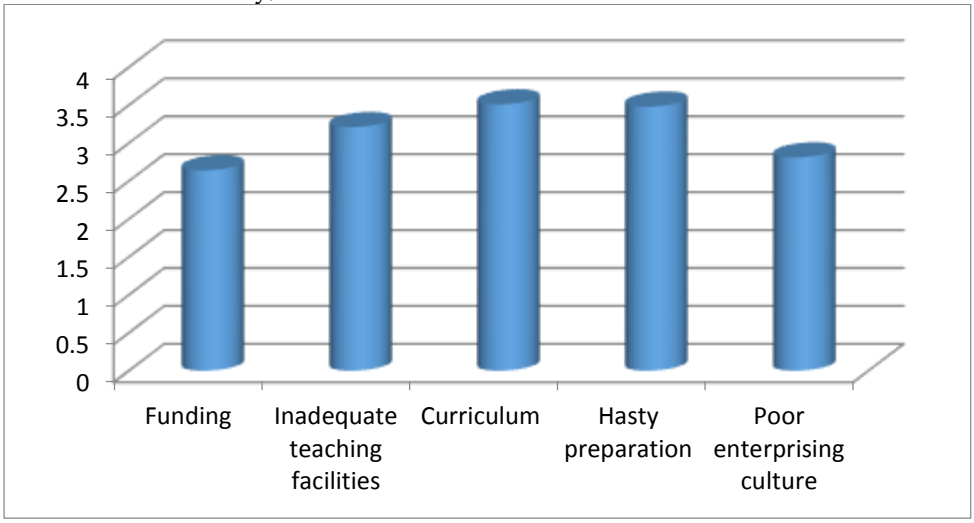


Figure 1: Bar-chart representing the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving it is primary aims and objectives in state universities in South-West, Nigeria

Table 1 indicated that inadequate funding, inadequate teaching facilities, entrepreneurship curriculum contents, hasty preparation and poor enterprising culture were among the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving it is primary aims and objectives in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What are the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Responses on the Needed Entrepreneurship Skills for Graduates' Self-Reliance in State Universities in South-West, Nigeria

Items Raised	Mean	Remarks
Curiosity	3.07	Agreed
Time management	2.61	Agreed
Creativity	2.87	Agreed
Strategic thinking	2.93	Agreed
Efficiency	2.54	Agreed
Resilience	2.78	Agreed
Communication	2.59	Agreed
Networking	2.65	Agreed
Finance	3.22	Agreed
Branding	2.77	Agreed
Sales/Marketing	3.23	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

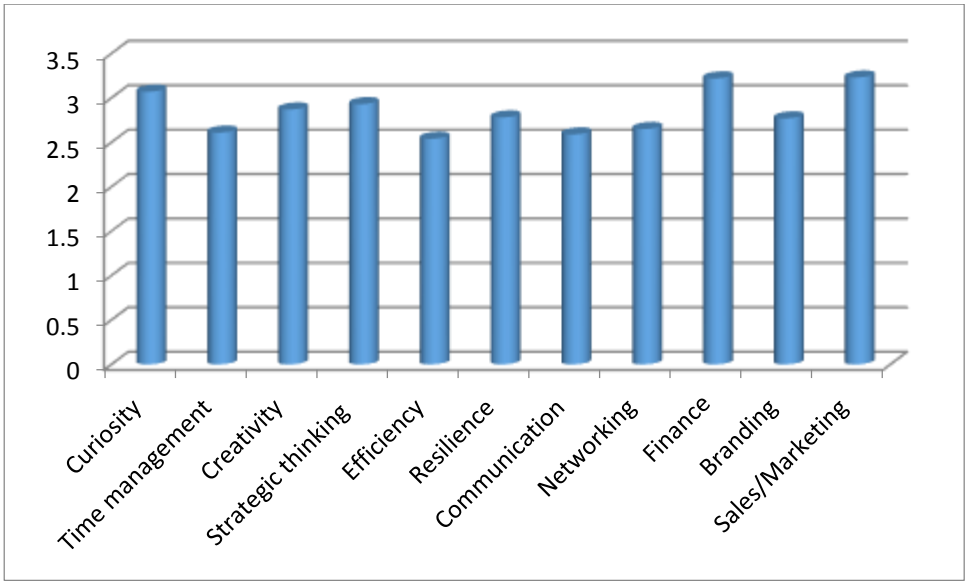


Figure 2: Bar-chart representing the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria

Table 2 indicated that curiosity, time management, creativity, strategic thinking, efficiency, resilience, communication, networking, finance, branding and sales/marketing were among

the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Question 3: To what extent entrepreneurship skills jointly influence graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 3: Extent to which entrepreneurship skills jointly influence graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria

R = .889					
R^2 = .791					
Adj R^2 = .791					
Std. Error = 2.29302					
ANOVA					
Source ofVariation	SS	df	MS	F-ratio	P_{value}
Regression	11894.87	2	5947.434	1131.131	.004
Residual	3138.997	597	5.258		
Total	15033.87	599			

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 showed that there was joint influence of the independent variables (entrepreneurship skills) on dependent variable (graduates' self-reliance); R = 0.889, P< .05. The table further revealed {79.1% (Adj. R^2 = 0.791)} that about 79% of the variance in graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria was accounted for by the linear combination of the independent variables. The ANOVA results from the regression analysis showed that there was significant influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables; F (2,597) = 1131.131, p<.05.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that inadequate funding, inadequate teaching facilities, entrepreneurship curriculum contents, hasty preparation and poor enterprising culture were among the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving it is primary aims and objectives in state universities in South-West, Nigeria. These findings support Nwosu, Oforka and Omeje (2015) study who revealed that there are several factors impeding the success of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, which might be affecting the production of employable graduates in our universities. Kareem, Ademoyewa, Jolaosho, Ojenike and Sodiq (2015) also found out that the most problem observed during entrepreneurship education was lack of modern equipment. Uzoegwu and Egbe (2014) find out the challenges and prospects of inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of Nigerian universities for self reliance. They revealed that there were attitudinal and methodological challenges facing entrepreneurship education at the University of Nigeria. Amadi and Amakodi (2019) revealed that shortage of qualified lectures, inadequate facilities, inadequate teaching techniques, poor funding and lack of government support hinders the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

It was also indicated that curiosity, time management, creativity, strategic thinking, efficiency, resilience, communication, networking, finance, branding and sales/marketing were among

the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria. These findings correlate with Abdullahi and Jabor (2019) who investigate the influence of entrepreneurial education on skill acquisition and attitudes of university graduates towards self-reliance in Nigeria and they concluded that through entrepreneurship education, students are likely to recognize business opportunities, pursue the opportunities, create and operate a business.

There was joint influence of the independent variables (entrepreneurship skills) on dependent variable (graduates' self-reliance); R = 0.889, P< .05. About 79% of the variance in graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria was accounted for by the linear combination of the independent variables. These findings correlate with Salabson (2020) who found out that entrepreneurship education has an influence on students' self-reliance as well as it motivate students to be job creators. Akpan and Etor (2013) showed that lecturers were positive in their perception of the relevance of entrepreneurship education as an empowerment strategy for graduate self-employment. Afolabi, Kareem, Okubanjo, Ogunbanjo and Aninkan (2017) indicated that entrepreneurship education is a good policy and it has positive effect on self-employment initiatives.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study had successfully examined entrepreneurship education and the challenges of graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria; the following conclusions were drawn based on the findings that inadequate funding, inadequate teaching facilities, entrepreneurship curriculum contents, hasty preparation and poor enterprising culture were among the challenges preventing entrepreneurship education from achieving it is primary aims and objectives. Curiosity, time management, creativity, strategic thinking, efficiency, resilience, communication, networking, finance, branding and sales/marketing were among the needed entrepreneurship skills for graduates' self-reliance. About 79% of the variance in graduates' self-reliance in state universities in South-West, Nigeria was accounted for by the linear combination of the independent variables. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were provided:

1. Entrepreneurship village should be established across universities in Nigeria to equip the undergraduate students' entrepreneurship skills needed for self-reliance after graduation.
2. Upgrading of lecturer quality through employment of professional and qualified lecturers and provision of in-service training and re-training.
3. Government (both federal and state) in Nigeria should give adequate funds to public tertiary institutions to procure teaching and learning facilities for meaningful learning.
4. The success of every programme is adequate supply of funds. For entrepreneurship education to be achieved by governments (Federal and States), there should enough funds and materials to be released to institutions of higher learning to enable them apply and utilize all the relevant skills and knowledge needed for the programmme.
5. The government should also create a good platform or enabling environment that will drive entrepreneurial education into a reality through the establishment of small and medium scale enterprises after graduation from the university. These include good roads, pipe borne water, and as well ensure regular electricity supply as no economy runs on 'lanterns and generators' can break-even in this modern age of high technology

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