

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development: Way Forward

By

Dr. P.U. Okpe

priscillaokpe@gmail.com

Mbakara Ekpenyong

mbakaraekpo20@gmail.com,

Amaechi, Amarachi Gift

amaechiamarachi1010@gmail.com

Nwankwo, Chinyere Hope

chihope700@gmail.com

Njoku, Chinwe

Department of Educational Management

Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike

Abstract

The study identified challenges and ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria. The design of the study is descriptive survey. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Population of the study is 461 lecturers. The sample size is 347 lecturers who served as the respondents. The instrument used for data collection was a 18 item questionnaire on Managing Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development (MEESND). The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, two from Department of Educational Management and one from Measurement and Evaluation unit of Science Education all from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia state, Nigeria. The reliability and internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability coefficient is 0.69. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using chi-square statistics. The findings revealed various challenges of entrepreneurship education in the universities to include: poor funding, inadequate infrastructural support for practical experiences, inadequate entrepreneur lecturers, non-inclusion of entrepreneurship studies in the general school curricula among others. The findings also identified ways of promoting entrepreneurship education among others to include: adequate funding, establishment of curricula which are skill -based and counselling students to develop interest in acquiring skills. The study recommended among others that stakeholders in education industry should ensure adequate supply of fund to

universities, provide infrastructural materials for practical work and also counsel students to develop interest in acquiring skills.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, Education, Sustainable, National Development, Federal Universities, Southeastern Nigeria.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the activity of setting up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit. It is the ability and readiness to develop, organize and run a business enterprise in order to make profit. Entrepreneurship is an indispensable part of a nation's capacity to succeed in an ever-changing and more commentating global market place. Entrepreneurship education is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria, it is an age long tradition, a culture and a habit consistently transferred from one generation to another within the diverse ethnic nationalities in the country. In Nigerian traditional settings prior to arrival of colonial masters, Nigerians were entrepreneurs. They were either on a farm working or in an apprenticeship of a particular trade (Gbenga, 2021). Apparently, the capacity for acquiring and demonstrating entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attitudes can be learnt, developed and practiced. Entrepreneurship is a learnable process that can be taught, nurtured, supported and enhanced through various types of education and training.

Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Variety of entrepreneurship education are offered at all levels of education from primary, secondary to university levels. Entrepreneurship education is about developing students' ability to create social, cultural or economic value. It creates enabling experiences for thinking critically and creatively, undertake complex problem solving, negotiate, communicate and lead (Gbenga, 2021). Entrepreneurship education is viewed by Okeke (2021) as a venture which can also contribute to developing students' entrepreneurial mindset, creativity, innovation, and collaboration. These attributes according to Adenike (2022) are highly valued in universities today as it encourages job

creation for sustainable development in the midst of unemployment and poor economic development in a country like Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship education is seen as an effective means of economic development and sustainable living among university graduates. It has been canvassed as an effective means of skill learning which invariably has become an obvious complement to venture capital and tools to propelling economic advancement (Milian & Vesper, 2023). Investigating the relevance and modalities of utilizing entrepreneurial education as strategy for channeling the energies of youth in Nigeria away from paid employment to self-employment, Ike (2021) suggested counselling student on benefits of skill acquisition. In support of this assertion, Yini (2020) stated that the basic assumption is that entrepreneurial skill competencies can be learnt in a short period and therefore can reduce the effects of unemployment among university graduates in Nigeria. Special entrepreneurship education became evident as the labour market got saturated, was no longer able to absorb the youth in various institutions at all levels. Entrepreneurship education focuses on developing real world skills that will help students live an exceptional life in a rapidly changing world (Ike, 2021). Entrepreneurship education teaches students crucial life skills such as: how to collaborate and work with a team; how to use curiosity and creativity to fund innovative approach to different problems and how to use social media as an advocacy tool. These skills can be learnt in universities through practical activities that converts a person's innate ideas, information and inventions into products and services that meet the demand and aspiration of the society.

University education is seen as an instrument per excellence for effecting national development through entrepreneurship (Adebisi, 2021). What a nation makes out of her education system to a large extent, dictates the tempo of the match to national development and self-sufficiency. From historical perspective, western education in the Nigerian setting had been viewed as a potent force in the development of the society through skill acquisition (Ubogu, 2020). It has been considered as an instrument for social change. It functions as a change agent, which assists the reconstruction and transformation in the life of the society. Indeed, not only is university education the greatest force that can be used to bring about redress, it is also the greatest investment that any society can use for the quick development of its economy through skill

acquisition (Yini, 2020). Still stressing on the importance of university education as an instrument of development, Rogas (2021) stated that all over the world, university education is considered as a life transforming activity, which empowers its receiver to make positive contributions to a society through job creation. This consideration is based on the idea that, education improves the productive capacity of societies and their potential, economic and scientific institutions. The objective of university education according to 2014 national policy on education are that university education shall make optimum contribution by:

- a. Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high-level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation;
- b. Making professional course contents reflect our national requirements;
- c. Making all students part of a general programme of all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge, nationalism and information technology (IT); and
- d. Making entrepreneurial skills acquisition a requirement for all Nigerian universities.

The goal of university education in Nigeria is to contribute to sustainable development through entrepreneurship education for its graduates. The advancement of knowledge which is important for sustainable development is best cultivated in tertiary institutions especially universities. This implies that managing education for sustainable development through entrepreneurial skills is important in a challenging country like Nigeria. It is on record that “sustainable development” came into general usage following publication of 1987 report of the Brundtland commission, when it defined sustainable development as economic and growth that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs (United Nations Department of Social Affairs and Economics, (UNDSAE) 1987. Sustainable development integrates social, economic and environmental factors. It requires attitudinal change on the people, acceptance, and motivation for shared responsibilities and adoption to new technologies (Okpe & Esobhawan, 2016). The Brundtland commission posits that sustainability means equitable balance in environmental, social and economic considerations in the pursuit of development and improved quality of life. The role of education in achieving this balance is very important. In view of the significance of education in planning for and sustaining national

development, it should be aimed at the future, that is, it should foresee and planned in a certain way that will satisfy the needs of future generation. On the other hand, development as a concept is a multi-faceted process. At the level of the individual, it implied increase in skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-disciplined, responsibility and material well-being (Ominyi & Opa, 2018). Development, as applicable to the society, is fundamental transformation of the society's mode of production so as to bring about qualitative changes in the community's living condition. It is argued that this ominous function of education has not been achieved in Nigeria due to such factors like inadequate funding, inadequate trained entrepreneur educators, and insufficient planning (Ogwo, 2021, Njoku, 2020 and Offor 2019).

National Universities Commission (NUC) 2023 indicated that Nigeria has forty-nine federal universities graduating not less than six hundred thousand students yearly yet there are no available jobs for the graduates for sustainable living in the society. The quest for production of high-level manpower by universities has not been able to satisfy the yearnings and aspirations of the nation Nigeria. It is obvious that if Nigeria as a country would realize sustainable development dream through education, entrepreneurship education should be emphasized (Joel, 2020). In support of this assertion Ubogu, (2022), Adenike (2022) and Agba (2023) stated that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has a lot of challenges such as poor regular supply of fund for revitalization of universities, inadequate instructional facilities, and inadequate personnel in entrepreneurship education. In view of this, Aide (2018) and Yini (2020) suggested that to promote entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities, there is need for curriculum review and adequate monitoring of the programme by all stakeholders in education industry. It is also worthy of note that these two writers Okeke (2020) and Ike (2021) observed that the mission of university education in transforming the nation through entrepreneurship education can only be actualized through counselling students to develop interest in skill acquisition and adequate supply of needed resources for teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education. The thrust of this study therefore, is to X-ray the challenges and ways of promoting entrepreneurship education in universities in Southeastern Nigeria for sustainable national development.

Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study:

Research Questions:

1. What are the challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria?
2. What are the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria?

Hypotheses:

Two null hypotheses were stated and tested at 0.05 level of significance as follows:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern, Nigeria
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the male and female lecturers on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design and was carried out in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria which comprises five states, namely: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, and Imo states. Multistage sampling was employed in drawing the sample for the study. Initially, three universities out of the five federal universities in the research area were randomly sampled. There are three faculties of education in the three universities selected, 40 departments and 461 lecturers. Using proportionate random sampling technique ten (10%) of the lecturers were drawn from the forty departments giving a total of 347 (157males and 190 females) respondents in the three universities selected. The lecturers were chosen because they are responsible for teaching and learning in universities and can suggest ways of promoting entrepreneurship education in the universities. A structured questionnaire of 4-point likert type on Managing Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National Development (MEESND) was developed and used for the study. The reliability and internal consistency coefficient was established with Cronbach Alpha and found to be 0.69.

Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while Chi-Square statistics was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed, while any item with a mean rating less than 2.50 was regarded as disagreed.

Results

1. **Research Question 1:** What are the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviations of the respondents' opinions on the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria.

CHALLENGES OF ENTREPRENURSHIP EDUCATION							
S/N	ITEMS	Male		REMARK	Female		REMARK
			SD			SD	
1	Poor funding	3.54	0.38	Agreed	3.56	0.47	Agreed
2	Insufficient planning	3.35	0.40	Agreed	3.56	0.43	Agreed
3	Use of curriculum that relies more on theory than practical	3.36	0.38	Agreed	3.58	0.42	Agreed
4	inadequate infrastructural support for practical experiences	3.47	0.37	Agreed	3.57	0.45	Agreed
5	inadequate entrepreneurial lecturers	3.36	0.38	Agreed	3.58	0.43	Agreed
6	Non-inclusion of entrepreneurship studies in the general school curricula	3.52	0.46	Agreed	3.56	0.47	Agreed
7	Low interest of students in entrepreneurship education	3.54	0.38	Agreed	3.55	0.46	Agreed
8	Laying more emphases on university certificate than skill acquisition	3.58	0.37	Agreed	3.59	0.47	Agreed
9	Inadequate staff development		0.46	Agreed			Agreed
		3.52					
					3.58	0.43	

Xm=mean for male lecturers Xf=mean for female lectures

Data presented in Table 1 showed that the mean ratings of the respondents on the nine (9) identified items relating to the challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in southeastern Nigeria had mean values which were greater than the acceptable mean limit of 2.50 on a 4-point scale. The data in the table indicated that the respondents agreed that all the nine (9) items are the challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria. The standard deviation values for the respondents on the nine (9) items ranged from 0.37 to 0.46 and 0.42 to 0.47 for the male and female lecturers respectively. This showed that the respondents' opinions were similar and their responses were not far from the mean.

Research Question 2: What are the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable

national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of respondents' opinions on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria?

Ways of Promoting Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable National development							
S/N	ITEMS	Male		REMARK	Female		RMK
			SD			SD	
10	Adequate funding of federal universities	3.64	0.32	Agreed	3.63	0.42	Agree
11	Establishment of curriculum which is skill based	3.66	0.31	Agreed	3.68	0.36	Agree
12	Counselling students to develop interest in learning skills	3.74	0.33	Agreed	3.75	0.44	Agree
13	Retraining of lecturers to be technologically driven	2.15	0.43	Agreed	2.17	0.46	Disagree
14	Regular review of existing curriculum	3.68	0.38	Agreed	3.66	0.38	Agree

15	Adequate supply of needed resources for entrepreneurship education	3.83	0.33	Agreed	3.84	0.37	Agree
16	Ensuring good monitoring	3.64	0.36	Agreed	3.63	0.36	Agree
17	Organizing seminars and workshops for lecturers on new technologies	3.84	0.33	Agreed	3.85	0.44	Agree
18	Maintaining effective quality assurance mechanism	3.69	0.38	Agreed	3.74	0.43	Agree
19	Commitment to best administrative practices	3.77	0.33	Agreed	3.71	0.36	Agree

X_m =mean for male lecturers X_f =mean for female lecturers

Table 2 showed that the mean ratings of the respondents on the ten (10) identified items relating to ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development had mean values that are above the cut-off mean except item 12 which had mean score below the mean limit of 2.5 for both male and female lecturers respectively. This shows that both male and female lecturers did not agree that retraining of lecturers to be technologically driven is a way of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development. The measure of variability values for the ten (10) items ranged from 0.31 to 0.43 and 0.33 to 0.44 for male and female lecturers respectively. This showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable development in federal universities in Southeastern, Nigeria.

Table 3: X^2 Analysis of male and female lecturers on the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Variables		N	Df	X	SD
Male	157	347	3	3.32	0.33
Female	190		3	3.25	0.35
Total				6.57	0.68

X^2 Cal =4.689, X^2 Crit/tab =5.815 df = 3, p –0.05

Table 3 clearly shows that X^2 calculated value of 4.689 is less than X^2 critical/table value of 5.815, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria is accepted. This means no significant difference exists between the perception of male and female lecturers on the challenges of managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Table 4: X^2 Analysis of male and female lecturers on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Variables	N	Df	X	SD
Male	157	3	3.32	0.43
Female	190	3	3.43	0.44
Total	347		6.75	0.87

$$X^2 \text{ Cal} = 4.824, X^2 \text{ Crit/tab} = 7.815 \text{ df} = 3, p = 0.05$$

Since X^2 Calculated of 4.824 is less than X^2 Crit/tab value of 7.815 the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that no significant difference exists between the perception of male and female lecturers on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this study were discussed under the following sub headings,

Challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

Results from research question 1 reveals that the mean ratings of the respondents on the 9 identified items relating to the challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for

sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria had mean values which are all greater than the acceptable mean limit of 2.50 on a 4-point rating scale. The data in the table indicated that the respondents agreed that all the 9 items are challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria. The standard deviation values for the 9 items ranged from 0.37 to 0.46 and 0.42 to 0.47 for male and female lecturers respectively. This shows that the respondents' opinions were similar and not far from the mean. Table 3 also shows that the X^2 calculated value of 4.689 is less than X^2 critical /table value of 5.815 therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria was accepted. This shows that the opinion of the male and female lecturers did not differ significantly This finding is in line with that of Offor (2019), Njoku (2020) Okeke (2020) and Ogwo (2021) who identified that inadequate funding, inadequate trained entrepreneur educators, inadequate infrastructural support for practical experiences and insufficient planning are major challenges confronting proper implementation of entrepreneurship education in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria.

Ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

A survey on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria, include among others; provision of adequate fund, establishment of curriculum which is skill based, counselling students to develop interest in skill acquisition, regular review of existing curriculum, adequate supply of instructional materials and equipment for entrepreneurial education, ensuring good monitoring, organizing seminars and workshops for lecturers on new technology and maintaining effective quality assurance mechanism. Table 2 showed that the mean ratings of the respondents on the ten (10) identified items relating to ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development had mean values that are above the cut-off mean except in item 12 which had mean score below the mean limit of 2.5 for both male and female lecturers respectively. This shows that both male and female lecturers did not agree that retraining of

lecturers to be technologically driven is a way of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development. The measure of variability values for the ten (10) items ranged from 0.31 to 0.43 and 0.33 to 0.44 for male and female lecturers respectively. This showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. Table 4 also shows that X^2 Calculated of 4.824 is less than X^2 Crit/tab value of 7.815 the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that no significant difference exists between the perception of male and female lecturers on the ways of promoting entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development in federal universities in Southeastern Nigeria

The finding of this research is in line with the discoveries of Ike (2021) and Ubogu (2022) who indicated that the mission of university education in transforming the nation through entrepreneurship education can only be achieved through counselling students to develop interest in skill acquisition and adequate supply of needed resources for implementation of entrepreneurship education. In the same way Aide (2018) and Yini (2020) observed that managing entrepreneurial education for sustainable national development to a large extent depends on ensuring good monitoring and maintaining effective quality assurance.

Conclusion

From the results and discussions of the findings, the researchers concluded that adequate funding, insufficient planning, use of outdated curriculum, inadequate infrastructural support, lack of practical experiences, inadequate entrepreneurial lecturers, non-inclusion of entrepreneur studies in general school curriculum, low interest of students in entrepreneurship education, laying more emphases on university certificate than skill acquisition are serious challenges in managing entrepreneurship education for sustainable national development. It has been discovered that such state of act leads to graduates who will suffer unemployment after graduation. This therefore, implies that when the needed resources are provided in sufficient quantity, entrepreneur lecturers will be able to deliver and students will be interested in learning.

Recommendations

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

School administrators and all stakeholders in education industry should endeavor to provide adequate fund for day-to-day management of universities

Government and university administrators should set up committees made up of lecturers for constant review of curriculum to be in line with the needs of the society.

There should be technical instructors to assist the lecturers in technical works

The students should be advised on the need for skill acquisition.

Provision of adequate space in the school for proper utilization of available equipment for entrepreneur education.

References

- Adebisi, A.A. (2021). Entrepreneurial Education in Nigeria: ways forward. *International Journal of Business education* 4(2) 145-155
- Adenike, A.A. (2022). Challenges of Entrepreneurial Education in Nigerian universities: Towards Responding for Impact. *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 6(1) 208-218
- Agba, C.C. (2023). Entrepreneurship Education and Sustainable Security in Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://himjournals.com>
- Aide, O.S. (2018). Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria: The ways forward. *Journal of Education and Practice* 3(14) 78-82
- Ike, E.A. (2021). Entrepreneurship Education as a 21st Century Strategy for Enhancing Employment among Youths in Abia State: The administrator's Role. *Journal of Nigerian Association of Educational Administration and Planning* 10(4) 146-159
- Joel, J.H. (2020). Toward Repositioning Better Impact. *UNILAG Journal of Business*. 6 (2) 26-41

Managing Tasks and Challenges in Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable Living. *International Journal of Business Education* 9(6) 348-356

Milian, M.C. & Vesper, B. (2023). Entrepreneurship Education: A Vehicle for Empowerment and Employment Generation. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education* 6(4) 36-51

Njoku, J.N. (2020). Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://www.globalacademicgroup.co>.

Offor, J. (2019). Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education: A Panacea to Graduates Unemployment in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*. Retrieved from <https://jsd-africa.com>.

Ogwu, E.N. (2021). Challenges in Implementing Entrepreneurship education *International Journal of Educational Management* 16(1) 209-219

Okeke, A.C. (2020). Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria Universities. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 47(8), 11-24

Okpe, P.U. & Esobhawan, B.I (2016). Lecturers' Expectation of the Role of Human Capital in Sustainable Community Development in Southeastern Nigeria Proceeding of the conference by Society for Community and Communication Development Research (SCCDR). Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, Nigeria. 161-166

Ubogu, J.B. (2020) Entrepreneurship Education: challenges and strategies. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 9(5) 125-137

Yini, C.C. (2020). Educational Technology and Information and Communication Technology in Nigerian Schools: Prospects and Challenges. *African Journal of Education* 26(3) 399-410