

LECTURERS' EVALUATION OF THE OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS' ADEQUACY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPONENT OF GENERAL STUDIES IN NIGERIA UNIVERSITIES EDUCATION

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Abstract

The objectives of any curriculum is usually premised on the needs, aspirations, and interests of a society and the actualization of the objectives to a large extent is determined by the selected content of the curriculum. This study therefore aimed to find out the adequacy of entrepreneurship education objectives and content as a component of general studies in Nigerian universities All the lecturers handling the course in the study locale formed the study's population. The target population comprises the 102 University lecturers of entrepreneurship education in North-central Nigeria. 48 lecturers, who are one of the major stakeholders in the field of entrepreneurship education were sampled for the study. This was done through proportional quota and random sampling techniques. Data were collected through a researcher-designed instrument. This instrument was validated and tested for reliability with 0.78 and 0.75 obtained respectively. Frequency and percentage were used to answer the research questions raised for the study. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the lecturers attested that the objective of entrepreneurship education is

adequate. It also showed that the content on venture creation and management were adequate. Whilst the content on core entrepreneurial skills were inadequate. The study therefore recommends that the relevant stake holders need as a matter of urgency to review the curriculum and inject the lacking content for a full actualization of the laudable objectives of the curriculum.

Keywords: General Studies, Entrepreneurship education, Curriculum Objective, Curriculum content, Evaluation

Introduction

The needs, aspirations, interests, and educational goals of a society are articulated in the curriculum objectives and translated as learning experiences for the development of individuals through the teaching and learning process (Emmanuel, Peter, & Emmanuel, 2020). These needs, aspirations, and interests are captured as the educational goals of the society. Thus, the educational goals of any society dictate what the curriculum objectives. As stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE), one of the goals of education in Nigeria is the development of appropriate skills, mental, physical, and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to society (FRN, 2013). It is stated further that, the university shall make an optimum contribution to national development by making entrepreneurial skills acquisition a requirement for all Nigerian university undergraduates through the General Studies (GNS). GNS is an interdisciplinary academic field that encompasses a broad range of disciplines which is a requirement for all undergraduates regardless of their specialization. General studies courses are designed to provide students with a better understanding of different disciplines outside of their field of study, allowing them to perform better in their chosen subject and, in the long term, become better members of society (Umunadi, 2011).

As a way of actualizing the above-stated goals, entrepreneurship was included in the university education programme as one of the GNS courses. However, the aim of GNS in the university education as stated in the Benchmark for Academic Standard (BMAS) is to produce well-rounded, morally and intellectually capable graduates with vision and entrepreneurial skills in an environment of peace and social cohesiveness (National

University Commission, NUC, 2007). Entrepreneurship education is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge that culminates to an individual becoming self-employed, and self-reliant and then creating jobs and wealth for himself. It is the form of education through which the learners acquire skills, knowledge, and competencies that will enable them to maximally use the available resources for firm career marketing service or being employees of an organization. According to Iyekekpolor (2007), the ultimate goal of this kind of entrepreneurship education is the production of an individual who is self-reliant and an employer of labour.

Meanwhile, for the goals of any educational programme or objectives of a curriculum to be actualized certain contents which students would be exposed to must be selected. Contents as noted by (Omoniyi, 2009) refers to the bodies of organized worthwhile knowledge which consists of skills, concepts, values, facts, ideas, principles, theories, generalizations, techniques, etc which have been accumulated over time in a particular field of study to which learners need to be exposed in the school. However, he further stressed that there is always the problem of choosing from a wide range of a pool of knowledge which must satisfactorily lead to the actualization of the educational aims. The content as opined by (Ajidagba, 2014) should have a direct bearing on the set aims, goals, and objectives. This according to him will promote and facilitate the attainment of the desired purpose or predetermined objectives of the curriculum.

Curriculum content as noted by (Ereh, Anthony, & Ikpo, 2019) can be described as all the academic content taught in schools or a specific course or programme. It can also be seen as the knowledge, skills, attitudes as well as extracurricular activities imparted to learners through teaching and learning. It is the subject matter or topics consisting of facts, concepts, ideas, and knowledge within a particular course, based on duration and how it will bring about a relatively permanent change in an individual and society. The curriculum content has to be comprehensive and well-arranged, with up-to-date facts concerning the specific course. It is believed that when the curriculum content is not relevant to the needs of the individuals, students, and society students' interest will not be in the teaching and learning. This will no doubt affect effective learning. The system is therefore bound to produce poorly skilled graduates who cannot defend their certificates, thereby unable to secure employment.

The objective of entrepreneurship education as stated in the (BMS) is to Prepare students for a post-university life with opportunities for job creation and entrepreneurial skills. To ensure the realization of this objective, appropriate and adequate content must be selected. Furthermore, the course content should be structured in such a way that it includes content that corresponds to the skills and abilities that are said to be demonstrated by real-world entrepreneurs, such as the ability to recognize opportunities, the ability to create new products/services, business planning skills, resource management skills, selling skills, and the ability to form and manage teams (Kuratko, 2005).

A critical look at the objective as stated above shows that it focuses on two main areas: job creation and possessing entrepreneurial skills. This means that the content of the curriculum should also focus on the two areas. According to (Sirelkhatim & Ganji, 2015) and Enu (2012), the content of entrepreneurship education may be divided into three categories: personal development, business development, and entrepreneurial skills development. The select content for entrepreneurship education in the Nigerian university education system are as follows: Introduction to Entrepreneurship and New Venture Creation; Entrepreneurship in Theory and Practice; The Opportunity, Forms of Business, Staffing, Marketing, and the New Venture; Determining Capital Requirements; Raising capital; Financial planning and management; Starting a new business, Feasibility studies; Innovation; Legal Issues; Insurance and environmental considerations are among the topics covered in the BMAS for Nigerian university education. Nigeria may offer commercial prospects. According to Oyebola, Irefin, and Olaposi (2015), this content is adequate.

Despite the recent expansion of entrepreneurship courses, according to Gedeon (2014), there is no unanimity on exactly what should be taught in entrepreneurship education. This is because each training school has a unique approach to developing an entrepreneurial curriculum (Mwasalwiba, 2010). The substance of entrepreneurship education differs so much that it's hard to tell if the courses are even designed for the same thing. Bennett (2006) attributes this difficulty to the lack of a consistent definition of entrepreneurship as well as the lack of a cohesive theoretical framework in entrepreneurship education.

However, (Ereh, Anthony, & Ikpo, 2019) noted that in ensuring proper inculcation of entrepreneurial skills such as creativity, problem-solving, time management, communication, and leadership skills in graduates towards gaining knowledge, to be able to understand the way the economy and market forces work, the educational system therefore needs to strengthen entrepreneurship education with a rich and appropriate curriculum course content. Entrepreneurial development of university students is described as the development of critical thinking abilities, idea generation competencies, and a commitment towards the achievement of entrepreneurial goals at graduation (Caloghirou, Protogerou, & Deligianni, 2013) .

Considering the important role of the entrepreneurial development of undergraduates in the achievement of desired goals of an entrepreneurship programme, an entrepreneurship curriculum should motivate the entrepreneurial development of the learners especially because the curriculum is the basic tool and instrument for the conveyance of entrepreneurial learning experiences to students. Many empirical studies have provided evidence of the influence of entrepreneurship curriculum on the entrepreneurial development of university students in terms of the development of critical thinking abilities and business idea-generation competencies Bodnar, Clark, & Besterfield-Sacre 2015)

It has been noted that students in the country seem to have not still been able to acquire the basic skills such as creativity, innovation, problem-solving, time management, and communication skills, to become useful to themselves or society after graduating from school (Ereh, Anthony, & Ikpo, 2019). There are complaints from parents and society about graduates' poor skills and attitudes depending on their abilities or ideas. The reasons for this could be attributed to inadequacies in curriculum content arising from a shallow curriculum devoid of practical experiences in the curriculum content resulting in abstract learning, and poor development of entrepreneurship skills. This might be the reason for increased unemployment, resulting in robbery, prostitution, human trafficking, organ harvesting, smuggling of migrants, and kidnapping amongst others that are rampant in our society today (Ereh, Anthony, & Ikpo, 2019).

Similarly, (Unachukwu, 2009) researched to determine the extent to which entrepreneurship education curriculum content enhances undergraduate development of entrepreneurship skills towards self-employment in Anambra State, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that 78% of the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship curriculum content has a significant effect on graduate students' development of entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.

Research Questions

- i. How adequate are the stated objectives of the entrepreneurship education curriculum as a component of General Studies in the university's education in Nigeria?
- ii. How adequate is the content of entrepreneurship education curriculum as a component of General Studies in university education in Nigeria?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design of survey type. The study used North-Central Nigeria as a locale. All lecturers of the entrepreneurship education component of General Studies in universities formed the study's population. The target population is the lecturers in the study locale. 12 out of 29 and 36 out of 92 lecturers were sampled from private and public universities respectively. This was done through proportional quota and random sampling techniques. The instrument used for the study was a researchers-designed one. It was structured on a four-point Likert scale: Very Adequate, Adequate, Inadequate, and Grossly Inadequate. This instrument was validated and tested for reliability with 0.78 and 0.75 obtained respectively. Frequency and percentage were used to answer the research questions raised.

Results

Research Question 1: *How adequate are the objectives of the entrepreneurship education curriculum as a component of General Studies in the university education in Nigeria?*

The responses from respondents on the objectives of entrepreneurship education were subjected to percentage calculation. Given that the

instrument on the objective of entrepreneurship education contained a single item structured in a four-response-type, participants with the scores 4, 3, 2, and 1 signified that the objective was ‘Very Adequate’ ‘Adequate’, ‘Inadequate’ and Grossly Inadequate’ respectively. The summary statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Adequacy of the Objective of Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum

Objective of EE	School Type		Total (%)
	Private (%)	Public (%)	
Inadequate	1	4	5
Adequate	9	23	32
Very Adequate	2	9	11
Total	12	36	48

As revealed in Table 1, the majority (43) of the tutors from the universities attested that the objective of entrepreneurship education curriculum as a component of General Studies as contained in the Benchmark Academic Standard (BMAS) was adequate. The results on the table therefore imply that the objective of the curriculum is adequate.

Research Question 2: *How adequate is the content of entrepreneurship education curriculum as a component of General Studies in the university’s education in Nigeria?*

Tutors’ responses on the content of the entrepreneurship education curriculum were subjected to percentage analysis. Given that the questionnaire on the content of entrepreneurship education curriculum instrument contained 15 items on venture creation and management component and 14 items on core entrepreneurial skills structured in a four-response-type, participants with the scores 4, 3, 2, and 1 signified that the objective was ‘Very Adequate’ ‘Adequate’, ‘Inadequate’ and Grossly Inadequate’ respectively. The summary statistics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Adequacy of the Content of entrepreneurship education curriculum

Content of Entrepreneurship Education curriculum	School Type		Total (%)
	Private (%)	Public (%)	
Adequate	9	28	37
Very Adequate	3	8	11
Total	12	36	48
Content on Core entrepreneurial skills			
Inadequate	7	26	33
Adequate	5	8	13
Very Adequate	0	2	2
Total	12	36	48

As revealed in Table 2, all 48 of the tutors who responded to the items on this question (from private and public) attested that the content on the venture creation and management component of the entrepreneurship education curriculum was adequate. However, the majority of the respondents (from both private and public universities) noted that the content on core entrepreneurial skills was inadequate. The results in Table 2 therefore imply that the venture creation and management component of the curriculum was adequate. While the core entrepreneurial skills component of the curriculum was inadequate.

Discussion of the Findings

The first finding of the study revealed that the objective of the curriculum as stated in the BMAS to prepare students for post-graduate life with opportunities for job creation and entrepreneurial skills of entrepreneurship education is adequate. This is adjudged adequate because the respondents that judge it to be adequate are stakeholders in the field and as such can judge the adequacy. The second finding of the study revealed that the venture creation and management aspect of the content is adequate in both private and public universities. This is judged adequate for the fact that the content found in the document prepared for the course by the sampled universities is in line with the content listed in the BMAS. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Oyebola, et al (2015) who found in a study

conducted in some selected Nigerian universities that the content of entrepreneurship education is adequate for venture creation.

However, the study also revealed that the content on entrepreneurial skills is lacking in the courses in all the sampled universities. This component of the content is judged inadequate because they are content capable of equipping any would-be entrepreneur with skills that have been established in the literature as common attributes of all entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study as discussed, it was concluded that the objective, as well as an aspect of the content of the entrepreneurship education curriculum, is adequate. However, adequate attention should be paid to the content on core entrepreneurial skills such as critical and creative thinking skills; teamwork, and leadership skills. This is because these skills are the most needed skills of the 21st century.

Recommendation

Going with the findings of this study, the study therefore recommends that:

- i. The relevant stakeholders in university education in Nigeria should, as a matter of urgency, review the content of entrepreneurship education in the university and inject content on core entrepreneurial skills in the curriculum to actualize the objective of the curriculum.

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