



Entrepreneurship Implementation Strategies and Challenges in Universities in Rivers State

Dr. Victoria Sam-Kalagbor¹, Dr. Kenneth Amadi², Okwu Francis Bogbula³

¹Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education Rivers State University, Nkpolu Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt.

Email: Victoria.sam-kalagbor@ust.edu.ng

²Department of Educational Management, Rivers State University, Nkpolu Port Harcourt.

Email: kristamadi2016@gmail.com

³Department of Educational Management, Rivers State University, Nkpolu Port Harcourt.

Email: okwu.francis@ust.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

The study focused on entrepreneurship implementation strategies and challenges in universities in Rivers State. Two purposes, two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study, the population of the study was one hundred and fifteen (115) entrepreneurship lecturers in universities in Rivers State. The entire population was used for the study since it was small. The researcher designed an instrument titled "Entrepreneurship Implementation Strategies and Challenges in Universities Questionnaire (EISACIUQ)". The instrument was face and content validated by three experts and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was achieved through test-retest method using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses. Findings of the study show that university-related challenges to the implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State are: assignment of unqualified lecturers to handle entrepreneurship courses, lack of uniform outline for entrepreneurship studies etc. The findings also agreed that the strategies to implementing entrepreneurship studies are: linking entrepreneurship to real business challenges, encouraging students to start up micro business through students' project, engaging successful entrepreneurs and student focusing more on practical examples or case studies etc. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended as follows: there should be a unified outline for the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship in universities and entrepreneurship studies curriculum should be linked to real business.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Entrepreneurship Studies is an interdisciplinary programme that provides opportunities for students to learn about entrepreneurship. It involves the process of creating value through recognizing and developing opportunities. Entrepreneurship on the other hand, is the skills, action and attitude of an individual or individuals starting a new business (Otuya, 2005). "An individual, private entrepreneur is a creative person and a risk bearer who is good at: recognizing opportunity; analyzing opportunity; making a decision to act upon it; marshaling necessary resources; and implementing a programme leading to a new enterprise and profits." The business may be small and he or she needs some managerial skills like analytical thinking, marketing, accounting, finance, and manufacturing.

Large corporate bodies can also be entrepreneurial by management style and initiatives. Entrepreneurship within on-going large organizations is sometimes referred to as intra-entrepreneurship because such organizations are large, senior management cannot always create chemistry usually found in small firms with the atmosphere of familiarity, close communication and mutual support that characterize small entrepreneurial companies. Inside such entrepreneurial organizations people will be required to have the drive and energy to stand up and gather resources to take advantage of this change and become a person who is not only willing to take a risk, but to love that risk (Iheonunekwu, 2003).

The main function of the school system is to prepare individuals (mainly the young people) primarily for gainful employment. In this current situation, gainful employment is a critical issue. Getting the youths out of the streets into jobs that meet their yearnings and aspirations is one of the cardinal objectives of education and it is advanced by the goals of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE), which center principally on training the youths to obtain practical skills for gainful employment (National Policy on Education, 2004) and National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS, 2005). This is because, in whatever form of employment, whether self employment wage earning, the level of schooling strongly influences one's opportunities in the labour market. Entrepreneurship Studies as a skill development programme has grown tremendously. This is aided by the growing influence of information and communication technology applications. This development in part, makes Entrepreneurship Studies popular as every activity of production and service delivery hovers around the services it provides.

There is growing evidence that the transition from school-to-work which forms a significant phase in the maturation of young people is being delayed by a period of prolonged unemployment. It is believed, that being employed is an initiation of young people into the adulthood world (Winefield, 1993). It is asserted that through employment the vast majority of people no longer depend on their parents for financial support. And in a state of active employment, most people begin to nurture a sense of responsibility, such as being punctual to work, being industrious, meticulous at doing things and earnest evaluation of things done or words spoken. That fabric of the family expectation is no longer coming to pass. Certainly, Entrepreneurship Studies has tremendous role to play in preparing the young people for alternative forms of employment as the period of waiting on government and organized private sector to provide all employment needs is well over. This is what Entrepreneurship Studies must address.

According to Raposo and Paco (2011), entrepreneurship education prepares the youths to be responsible and enterprising. In similar vein, UNESCO (2008) viewed educational entrepreneurship as all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. In essence, educational entrepreneurship provides a platform for youths to transform opportunities to business ventures and to manage those ventures to become a medium for job creation for themselves and others. Enu (2012) argues that the ultimate goal of educational entrepreneurship is all about increasing the student's ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes. In other words, through educational entrepreneurship education students are developed creativity ability for the good and benefits of the larger society. They are also empowered to take initiatives, responsibilities and risks.

The aim of entrepreneurship education is to develop understanding and the ability to search for entrepreneurial behavior, skills and attributes in very different contexts. Entrepreneurship skills and attributes can benefit society even when they cannot be applied to economic activities. It is clear that the personal qualities of entrepreneurship, such as creativity and initiative, can help everyone in their professional and daily responsibilities. Likewise, appropriate technical and business skills should be provided to those who decide to be self-employed and / or start their own business, or who could do so in the future (Sunday, 2012).

Nigeria is no exception among the countries with the highest number of unemployed graduates. This is partly due to the country's lack of economic growth, largely due to our education system, which is deeply rooted in classical and literary programs. Thus, the school prepares its graduates as job seekers rather than job creators (Asuru, 2008). This has led to many unemployed and, in most cases, to unemployed graduates. Unemployment causes psychological imbalances and related social problems, such as prostitution, armed robbery, the militancy and other criminal activities as a means of survival and recognition in society. This explains why so many of our young people have turned to crimes to survive. This is a serious indictment of our education system, especially higher education. Denial of higher education opportunities, means denial of opportunities to:

- a. "Contribute to national development through high level of man power training;
 - b. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and the society; and
 - c. Acquire both physical and intellectual skill which will enable the individual to be self-reliant and to be a useful member of the society."
- (FRN (2013).

The above applies to our graduates in educational management, vocational education (including entrepreneurship education).

Statement of the Problem

"One of the goals of tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria is to produce individuals who will become productive workers, self-reliant entrepreneurs upon graduation from institutions of higher learning. But this goal of self-reliance has not been attained in Nigeria. Research has shown that graduates from institutions of higher learning in the country face the problem of unemployment. Majority of them are not capable of starting off a business of their own and managing it. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria surged from 11.9% in 2006 to 14.6% in 2007 and 21.1% in 2010" (FRN cited by Babalola, 2012). Emejo (2013) emphasized that the number of jobs generated yearly in Nigeria is extremely inadequate to match the number of people looking for jobs and that this is a major challenge. An economist Eze Onyekpere (2019), says unemployment in Nigeria's jumped by 30% this year. "In the ranking carried out by World Economic Forum for 2011-2012, Nigeria ranked 127 out of 142 countries with a score of 3.46. Since 2007, Nigeria embraced entrepreneurship study in all academic programmes in universities aimed at helping to reduce unemployment. However, progress has been slow since it seems that not all universities have fully embraced it." Although, literature is replete on entrepreneurship study, strategies for implementing it may not have caught public attention. Also, challenges currently facing Rivers State universities in trying to sufficiently strengthen entrepreneurship education as an important part of the curriculum in all disciplines have not been studied.

This study attempts to fill this gap by examining the entrepreneurship implementation strategies and challenges in universities in Rivers State and make recommendations that will lead to sustainability of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate Entrepreneurship Implementation Strategies and Challenges in Universities in Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Identify the strategies for implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.
2. Examine university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in universities in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. What are the strategies for implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State?
2. What is the university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated in the study:

H₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers in Federal and State universities on strategies for implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

H₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers in Federal and State Universities on university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in Universities in Rivers State.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted by the researcher with a population of one hundred and fifteen (115) entrepreneurship lecturers in Rivers State Universities. The entire population was used by the researcher since the population was manageable and accessible. The researcher designed an instrument titled "Entrepreneurship Implementation Strategies and Challenges in Universities Questionnaire (EISACIUQ)". The instrument was designed using the four points modified Likert rating scale of Strong Agreed (SA) = 4 points, Agreed (A) = 3 points, Disagreed (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1 point. The reliability coefficient was established at 0.98 using the Pearson product moment correlation. The (115) copies of the questionnaire were distributed, filled correctly and retrieved. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation statistics to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Any value from 3.50 – 4.00 was regarded as Very High Extent, from 2.50 – 3.49 as High Extent, from 1.50 – 2.49 as Low Extent, and from 0.50 – 1 – 49 as Very Low Extent. A null hypothesis was accepted if the calculated z-value is less than the critical z-value of 1.96 and rejected if the calculated z-value is greater than the critical z-value of 1.06.

Results

Research Question 1

What are the strategies for implementing entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

Table 1: Summary of respondents' mean ratings on strategies for implementing entrepreneurship studies in universities in rivers state.

S/NO	ITEM STATEMENT	Federal N=47			State N= 68		
		\bar{x}	SD	REMARKS	\bar{x}	SD	REMARKS
1.	Linking entrepreneurship curriculum to real business challenges can enhance the implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	3.17	0.53	Agreed	3.00	0.50	Agreed
2.	Encouraging students to start up micro-business through students. project can enhance the implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	2.56	0.43	Agreed	2.52	0.42	Agreed
3.	Engaging successful entrepreneurs as guest lecturers can enhance the effective implementation of entrepreneurship studies	3.17	0.53	Agreed	3.09	0.52	Agreed
4.	Encouraging mentorship culture between successful entrepreneurs and students can enhance the effective implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	2.98	0.49	Agreed	2.76	0.46	Agreed
5.	Focusing more on practical examples or case studies can enhance the effective implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	3.52	0.59	Agreed	2.81	0.47	Agreed
6	Making entrepreneurship class to be practical not theoretical alone can enhance the effective implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	2.82	0.47	Agreed	2.55	0.43	Agreed
Grand mean/Standard deviation		3.04	0.50		2.79	0.47	

The analysis in table 1 shows that all the mean are above the 2.50 acceptance region. This shows that some of the strategies for implementing entrepreneurship studies are; linking entrepreneurship curriculum to real business challenges, encouraging students to start-up micro-business through their projects, engaging successful entrepreneurs as guest speakers, encouraging successful mentorship culture between successful entrepreneurs and students, focusing more on practical examples or case studies and making entrepreneurship class to be practical and not theoretical alone.

Research Question 2

What is the university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in universities in Rivers State.

Table 2: Summary of respondents' mean ratings university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in universities in Rivers State.

S/NO	ITEM STATEMENT	FEDERAL N=47			STATE N= 68		
		\bar{x}	SD	REMARKS	\bar{x}	SD	REMARKS
1.	Assignment of inappropriate or unqualified lecturers to handle entrepreneurship courses affects the implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	3.00	0.75	Agreed	2.88	0.72	Agreed
2.	Lack of uniform outline for entrepreneurship studies in universities affects its implementation.	3.92	0.98	Agreed	2.90	0.73	Agreed
3.	Lack of harmonized examination questions for the course amongst lecturers affects the implementation of entrepreneurship studies.	3.12	0.78	Agreed	2.95	0.74	Agreed
4.	Lack of facilities for the effective teaching of entrepreneurship studies affects its implementation.	2.81	0.70	Agreed	2.69	0.67	Agreed
Grand mean/Standard deviation		3.21	0.80		2.86	0.72	

The analysis in table 2 shows that all the mean are above 2.50 acceptance region. This shows that university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation are assignment of inappropriate or unqualified lecturers to handle entrepreneurship courses affects the implementation of entrepreneurship studies, lack of uniform outline for entrepreneurship studies in universities affects its implementation lack of harmonized examination questions for the course amongst lecturers affects the implementation of entrepreneurship studies and lack of facilities for the effective teaching of entrepreneurship studies affects its implementation.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers in federal and state universities on strategies for implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

Table 3: Summary of z-test analysis of mean ratings of lecturers in federal and state universities on strategies for implementing entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

Institution	N	\bar{x}	SD	α	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Fed.	47	3.04	0.50	0.05	113	27.7	1.96	Rejected
State	68	2.79	0.47					
115								

The z-test analysis in the Table 3 shows that the z-cal of 27.7 is greater than the z-critical of 1.96 ($z\text{-cal} > z\text{-crit}$). Thus; the hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers in federal and state universities on strategies for implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers in federal and state universities on university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in universities in Rivers State.

Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis of mean rating of lecturer in federal and state universities on university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementations in university in rivers state.

Institution	N	\bar{x}	SD	α	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Fed.	47	3.21	0.80	0.05	113	2.33	1.96	Rejected
State	68	2.86	0.72					
	115							

The z-test analysis in the Table 4 above shows that the z-cal value 2.33 is greater than the z-critical value (1.96) ($z_{cal} > z_{crit}$). Thus, the hypothesis was rejected. Hence there is significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers in federal and state universities on university-related challenges in entrepreneurship studies implementation in universities in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

On the Strategies to Implementation of Entrepreneurship Studies in Universities in Rivers State

The result obtained with respect to strategies to implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State respondents agreed that the strategies to implementing entrepreneurship studies are; linking entrepreneurship curriculum to real business challenges, encouraging students to start up micro business through students' project, engaging successful entrepreneurs students, projects, engaging successful entrepreneurs and students focusing more on practical examples or case studies, and making entrepreneurship to be practical and not theoretical alone.

The findings are in agreement with the view of Omoifo (2009), that the following strategies aid the implementation of entrepreneurship studies: teachers should use project work, case studies, field trips, link with successful entrepreneurs and successful implementation of the entrepreneurial curriculum. In agreement with the view of Omoifo., Sam-Ngwu and Wilfred-Bonse (2011), stated that the following strategies can be adopted for effective implementation of entrepreneurship education, adequate funding, employment of qualified and competent teachers, creating enabling environment/training centres and employing the right teaching technologies/method of teaching or teaching approach.

On the University-Related Challenges to Entrepreneurship Studies Implementation

The result obtained with respect to university-related challenges to entrepreneurship studies implementation in Rivers State Universities respondents agreed that; university-related challenges to the implementation of entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State indicated that the respondents agreed that university related challenges are; assignment of unqualified lecturers to handle entrepreneurship courses, lack of uniform outline for entrepreneurship studies, lack of harmonized examination questions for the course amongst lecturers and lack of facilities for the effective teaching of entrepreneurship. The findings are in agreement with the view of Amoor (2008), that the challenges to entrepreneurship studies implementation include: lack of lecturers with practical entrepreneurial training and consciousness, inability of most lecturers to understand the aim of entrepreneurship programme.

In agreement with the view of Amoor., Nwosu and Ohia (2009) assert that the following are challenges to entrepreneurial studies implementation, practical orientated curriculum content, inadequate finance, poor entrepreneurship mindset, inconsistent government policy and poor infrastructure such as lack of stable electricity and water supply. In agreement with the view of Nwosu, Ohia and Anyaogu (2009), opined that "the content and method of university curriculum are inadequate for the purpose of managing entrepreneurship studies which is geared to solving graduate unemployment biting the nation."

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that university-related challenges if handled properly and the right strategies adopted, it will go a long way to enhance and promote entrepreneurship studies in universities in Rivers State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommended that;

1. There should be a unified outline for the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship in universities.
2. Entrepreneurship studies curriculum should be linked to real business.

References

- [1] Amoor, S. S. (2008). Integrating entrepreneurship education into business education curriculum in Nigerian universities. *Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts*, 2(2): 33-41.
- [2] Asuru A. V. (2008). *Entrepreneurship education curriculum content for undergraduate students in Nigeria University*.
- [3] Cocodia (2008). Stated that most young people do not engage in self-employment because learning a trade is tedious and time consuming.
- [4] Emejo 2013. *The rate of Unemployment in Nigeria*.
- [5] Enu, D. B. (2012). Enhancing the entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. *American Journal of Social Issues and Humanities*, 2(4), 232-239.
- [6] FRN (2013). *The goals of tertiary education sixth Edition*.
- [7] Iheonunekwu, S.N. (2003). *Entrepreneurship: theory and practice*. Owerri: Crown.
- [8] NEEDS, (2005). *National Economic and Empowerment and Development Strategies*.
- [9] Nwosu, B. & Ohia, A, (2009). Managing entrepreneurship education at the university level in Nigeria: A panacea for graduate self-employment. *African Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 3(2): 49-53.
- [10] Otuya, (2005). "Entrepreneurship is an attitude, skills and actions of individual starting a new business.
- [11] Rapsoso, M. Paco A. (2011). *The relevance of entrepreneurship education to the development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMES) in Nigeria*.
- [12] Sam-Ngwu, L. E and Wilfred-Bonse, K.U. (2011). *Effective strategies for entrepreneurial skills development in the classroom using school industry links*.
- [13] Sunday A. O. (2012). *Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria*. *Journal of Education and Practice* 3(14).
- [14] UNESCO (2008). *Entrepreneurship as kind of experience that give student the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kind*.