

The Need for the Development of Entrepreneurial Skill in Benue State University Students, Makurdi

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Abstract—This paper investigated the need for the development of entrepreneurial skills for Benue State University students. The population consisted of all 1,500 final year students in Benue State University. A sample of 100 students was selected using simple random sampling. A 12-item self-constructed and content validated questionnaire by research experts titled, the Need for the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills in Benue State University Students (NDECBSUS) was used to collect the data. The questionnaire items were rated using a 4-point modified rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, assigned the following scores of 4,3,2 and 1, respectively. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher with the help of two research assistants through the primary source. Simple percentages and chi-square were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, respectively. The findings revealed that in business management, business management skills, personal skills, and technical skills need to be developed in students for them to become effective and efficient entrepreneurs and concluded that the acquisition of these skills will reduce the challenge of unemployment. The study recommended that funds should be made available by all education stakeholders for such programmes to remain functional.

Keywords—Entrepreneurial skill, entrepreneurship, need for development, university students.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE development of an entrepreneurial consciousness in students at Benue State University is a welcome idea, “Entrepreneurship education prepares youth to be responsible enterprising individuals who can take risks, manage results and learn from the outcomes” [1]. Reference [2] also sees entrepreneurship as:

“A term which refers to the creation of innovations which occurs when a person or group of people develop a new business idea, which they implement using self or borrowed assets to achieve their goal.”

References [1] and [2] further noted that an entrepreneur conceives the idea on what to produce and at the same time takes the business risks involved in the activities conceived.

Nigerian society has evolved with accompanying changes in technology, increased pressure on the standards of living without a corresponding means to meet such demands [3]. But

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the basic “step” towards success is the development of a mind conscious of success, and in support, [4] states that both poverty and riches are the result of a state of mind.

An analysis of sources of economic growth by [5] highlighted that the biggest differences between developed and developing economies are in innovation performances. It emphasizes that while entrepreneurship and innovation are very critical for economic growth, they have also become increasingly important for addressing major development challenges, such as the ones related to poverty, inclusion and sustainability.

According to the World Institute for Development Economic Research (United Nations University), it is expected that entrepreneurship will continue to make significant contribution to growth and employment generation in advanced, emerging, and least developed economies alike [6]. But as of 2004 to 2012, Nigeria had a measure of the growth of entrepreneurship of 0.32% to 0.91%; however, the country still lags significantly behind developing economies such as Uganda 1.17%, Tunisia 1.52%, Malaysia 2.28%, South Africa 6.54% and Singapore 8.04% [7]. Therefore, there is a need to consciously transform the structure of Nigeria’s economy by propelling positive industrial trends through the growth of small and medium scale industrial groups by involving a major revolutionary effort to galvanize and motivate the entire citizenry to adopt the entrepreneurial mindset, and a holistic review of the policies and incentives on the ground to promote enterprise development.

Youth shows interest in different types of education all over the world for different reasons: economic, political, technological and so on. Unemployment problems are real, and the government of Nigeria cannot continue to create employment for all of its younger citizens, hence there is the need for students to begin to think of what skills to shape and develop when they graduate university that will earn them employment. This is in line with [8], as they maintain that reinforcing and building skills must include behavioural skills such as ability to think critically, communicate well and work effectively in teams, therefore, creativity, risk taking and flexibility in the face of change are becoming increasingly important in the development of entrepreneurial education job creation skills.

The nation must be ready at all times to produce more adequately equipped students who are well informed, innovative and creative, as well as technologically sophisticated, with globally competitive skills. The negative attitude of youths in this country towards self-employment needs to change with the re-orientation of their knowledge of

what life has in “store” for them after university. This thus, informs the decision of the National Universities Commission (NUC) to direct that entrepreneurship education be made compulsory for every university student for at least two semesters in the course of study. This directive came in a paper NUC/SSS/08/VOL.1B/156, the NUC director of students support services directed that the full take-off of the programme for all universities must be completed by the 2007/2008 session [3].

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the proliferation of universities across Nigeria, compared to the number of universities in the country in the past few years, in conjunction with the inability of planners to integrate skilled knowledge that is job-oriented into the curriculum, is an issue that requires urgent attention. If graduates accomplish attaining a paper qualification and are also be able to function freely on their own in the Nigerian society, as it is stipulated in the country’s educational philosophy and policy statements, the issue of unemployment will become a thing of the past. To arrest this ugly trend by reducing the rate of unemployment and the challenges faced by Nigerian graduates, and also to promote self-reliance in educated youths, there is a compelling need for the development of entrepreneurial skills.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this paper is to address the need for the development of entrepreneurial skill for Benue State University students, specifically the paper seeks to:

1. Examine the need for the development of business management skills for Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurial education and programmes.
2. Ascertain the need for personal skills development in students within the course of university entrepreneurship education programmes.
3. Determine the need for technical skills development in students in the course of entrepreneurial education programmes in the university.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the need for the development of business management skills for Benue State University students in the course of their entrepreneurial education programme?
2. What is the need for the development of personal skills in students in the course of entrepreneurship education programmes?
3. What is the need for the development of technical skills in students in the course of entrepreneurial education programmes in the university?

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were posited to guide the research:

1. There is no significant difference in the need for the development of business management skills in Benue State University students in the course of their entrepreneurial education programmes.
2. There is no significant difference in the need for developing personal skills in student in the course of their study in the university entrepreneurship education programmes.
3. There is no significant difference in need for the development of technical skills in Benue State University students the course of entrepreneurial education programmes.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The paper adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of all 1,500 final year students at Benue State University was used and a sample of 100 final years students were selected using simple random sampling technique; specifically, the hat-and-draw method. A 12-item questionnaire was constructed and the content validated by research experts. The questionnaire was used to collect data to answer three (3) research questions using percentages, while chi-square was used to test the three (3) null hypotheses. The questions were asked in statement form according to the three (3) hypotheses. The respondents were expected to choose from the following responses of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The responses were rated using a modified rating scale of 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. All the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- **Research Question 1:** The need for developing business management skills in Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurial education programmes?

Table I presents the results of the responses to questions 1 to 4 aimed at answering the research question on the need for developing business management skills in Benue State University students who are exposed to a course of entrepreneurial education programmes. The table shows the positive responses of (SA and A) 63.75% (225), while 36.25% (145) were the negative responses of (D and SD). This indicates that there is a need to develop business management skills in students of Benue State University in the course of the entrepreneurial education programmes since the positive responses of 63.75% is more than that of the negative responses of 36.25%.

- **Research Question 2:** The need for developing personal skills in the Students in the Course of study in university entrepreneurship education programmes.

Table II presents the results on question 5-8 on the positive responses of (SA and A) 72.75% (291), while 27.25% (109) were the negative responses regarding the need for developing personal skills in the students in the course of study in the university entrepreneurship education programmes. The 72.75% positive responses show that there is a need for developing personal skills in students against the negative responses of 27.25%.

TABLE I
RESPONSES ON THE NEED FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

S/NO	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	I need marketing skills for business management	49	20	20	11	100
2	I need financing skills for business management	42	21	15	22	100
3	I need to set goals for efficient business management	41	21	28	10	100
4	Accounting is important for effective business management	36	25	29	10	100
Total Percentage		225 63.75%	145 36.25%			400

TABLE II
RESPONSES ON THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING PERSONAL SKILLS IN STUDENTS

S/NO	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Total
5	I need to be innovative	41	26	30	3	100
6	I need the ability to take risk	26	36	29	9	100
7	I need to be able to manage risk	41	35	16	8	100
8	I need public relation skills	34	52	11	3	100
Total Percentage		291 72.75%	109 27.25%			400

- **Research Question 3:** The need for developing technical skills in the course of entrepreneurial education programmes.

Table III shows the results on responses to research questions 9-12 regarding the need for the development of technical skills in the students of Benue State University in the

course of entrepreneurial education programmes. The positive responses of 77.5% (310) (SA and A) and the negative responses of 22.5%, which shows that there is a need to develop technical skills in Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurship education programmes.

TABLE III
RESPONSES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL SKILLS

S/NO	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Total
9	I need oral communication skills	55	26	13	26	100
10	I need the ability to organize	40	41	15	4	100
11	I need technological skills	39	47	10	4	100
12	I need to build my self-esteem	49	33	16	2	100
Total Percentage		310 77.5%	90 22.5%			400

- **Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in need for developing business management skills in Benue State University students and their exposure in the course of their entrepreneurial education programmes.

Table V shows that the respondents accepted that there is a need for developing business management skills in Benue State University students in the entrepreneurial education programmes was 64%, contrary to the 36% who disagreed.

TABLE IV
CHI-SQUARE TEST OF NO DIFFERENCE IN THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Opinion	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	α -level	χ^2	χ^2_{tab}	P	Decision
NO	36	50	9	0.05	159.77	16.919	0.00	Significant
Difference								
Difference	64	50						
Total	100	100						

TABLE V
CHI-SQUARE TEST OF NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN THE N SKILLS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Opinion	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	α -level	χ^2	χ^2_{tab}	P	Decision
NO	27	50	9	0.05	164.515	16.919	0.00	Significant
Difference								
Difference	73	50						
Total	100	100						

TABLE VI
CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL SKILLS

Opinion	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	α -level	X2	X2tab	P	Decision
NO	22	50	9	0.05	16.919	169.265	0.00	Significant
Difference								
Difference	78	50						
Total	100	100						

The chi-square calculated value of 159.77 is greater than the chi-square tabulated value of 16.9 19 at 0.05 level of significance and 9 degrees of freedom indicating that the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference in the need for developing business management skills in Benue State University students and their exposure in

the course of entrepreneurial education programmes is accepted.

- **Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the need for developing personal skills in Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurship education programmes

Table VI shows the responses of 73% difference against 27% difference in the need for developing personal skills in students in the course of entrepreneurship education programmes. The chi-square calculated value of 164.515 is greater than chi-square tabulated value of 16.919 at $\alpha=0.05$ level of significance and 9 degrees of freedom indicating that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference in the need for developing personal skills in Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurship education programmes is accepted

- **Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference in the need for development of technical skills in Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurship education programmes

Table III shows the positive responses of 78% difference, counter to the negative responses of 22% no difference. The chi-square calculate value of 169.265 is greater than chi-square tabulated value of 16.919 at $\alpha=0.05$ level of significance and 9 degrees of freedom indicating that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference in the need for the development of technical skills in Benue State University students in the course of entrepreneurial education programmes accepted

VII. DISCUSSION

One of the obvious ways that education influences productivity is by upgrading the skills of the labour force [9]. The findings justified that there is a need for the development of business management skills and that marketing is an important skill vital to job creation, this is line with [10], who sees marketing as a business activity, a trade phenomenon function in policy making, a sense of business purpose and an economic process.

Again the findings show that personal skills which involve innovativeness risk taking, risk management and public relations are important potential for fresh entrepreneurs. In agreement, [11] observes that the above skills are capable to introduce management innovations, move toward goals and manage risks. Reference [5] also says "we need to be deliberate in promoting innovation and innovative entrepreneurship".

Finally, the findings indicate that the need to develop technical skills in students is of great importance. To support this [12] maintains that communication skill is another important skill that equips students with the ability to speak the language of business and improve their personal effectiveness. They further stressed that it helps students to develop a proactive attitude, share, sell ideas and products, prepares one for a job interview.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The objective to promote entrepreneurship should be to make enterprise development a first option for young Nigerian graduates.

The findings of the study revealed positive responses to the need for the development of entrepreneurial skills as a strategy for the survival of unemployment challenges in Nigeria. Although the integration of these programmes is faced with numerous challenges, there is still need for a comprehensive entrepreneurial mechanism which has physical infrastructure, human and fiscal resources for effective and efficient achievement of the objectives of these programmes.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1 The government in collaboration with the institutions management team should show more interest and involvement with the development of these entrepreneurial skills.
- 2 Experts in a specific area of specialization should be employed to handle the instructional process.
- 3 Government, NGOs and all stakeholders in the business of education should in unity make funds available for these entrepreneurial programmes to be functional.
- 4 The government should make efforts to establish business for the recipients of these skills to serve as a motivator.
- 5 Recipients of these skills should showcase their products to the younger generation to act as inspiration.

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