

Undergraduates Participation in Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions: A case study of Federal Institutions in Akoka Lagos

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Abstract

The paper is an expository of the current practices on implementation of Education Reform Policy on acquisition of entrepreneurship skills in Federal Institutions in Akoka Lagos, Nigeria. It investigates the current participation in entrepreneurship ventures among undergraduate. Using both qualitative and quantitative descriptive survey designs. The study involved one hundred and twenty-four (124) respondents from various disciplines in Sciences and Technology Education degree programmes run in the two Federal Institutions at Akoka Campus. Simple percentages were used to process the data collected by hand. The result of the study reveals levels of participation of undergraduate students in various entrepreneurial skills while schooling. It also reveals benefits accrued from engagement in entrepreneurial skill acquisition by students as well as levels of desire to continue entrepreneurship ventures for livelihood after graduation. Results confirmed that all concerned undergraduates of the Institutions participated in one venture or the other. The paper recommended among others that the government should allocate in budget special fund for practical entrepreneurship education and training in tertiary Institutions.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Skills, Undergraduates, Family Survival.

Introduction

It is important to empower the youth with entrepreneurial skills while they are still in school. The youths are future leaders, at home, work places and play important part in any society. Youth at the tertiary institutions are able and healthy minds that could rationalize well on the present and future needs of the environment. Hence, they are ready for skill acquisition because of the

futuristic benefits accrued to entrepreneurship ventures.

Nigeria youths are promising, able bodies who are ready to learn if properly guided and trained in entrepreneurial venture that would fetch money to solve their immediate needs. It has been observed that undergraduates in some institutions exposed to entrepreneurship practicum classes have shown great interest and participation in acquiring one skill or

the other. These skills are such that do not require much capital for initial take-off cost. Entrepreneurship skills exposed to undergraduate students are such that could help in engaging them with minimal starting cost on small scale ventures before proceeding to medium scale enterprises (SME). Entrepreneurial studies derive its origin from the traditional stone Age where man had to learn the art of learning a vocation for self-empowerment. Robert et al (2009) ascertain that this traditional stance in skill acquisition has gone through phases of modifications for realistic practice from generation to generation involving both adults and youth in modern societies. In essence the skills acquired through practical training is for life and remains a source of livelihood for the traditional and modern man. In a study carried out on preferences of undergraduates in entrepreneurship ventures, in Photography, Cake-making and decoration / Event-planning, Bag, Shoe making and Garment Construction, Fashion designing have high scores compared to production of confectionaries and cosmetics production probably because of the cost implications (Osifeso and Chigbu, 2015). However, more study on undergraduate students participation in acquiring entrepreneurial skills while at school still reflect positive and high attendance during entrepreneurship practical classes.

Over 95 percent of both Science and Industrial Technical Education students were always present in classes for two consecutive academic sessions in these

institutions in Lagos. Release of fund for practicum classes was not a challenge, for the leadership of the institutions, placed high premium on acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students before graduation. This practice is in conformity with the expectations of Education reforms. It has also been observed that some of the students from such Institutions claim to be self-employed, even while in school. The acquired entrepreneurial skills have made recipients self employed after graduation, able to make and has solved problems of depending and unemployment among Nigerian youths.

However, the Nigerian educational system has created a good platform for the acquisition of practical skills while in school through Technical and Vocational Education (TVE). UNESCO & ILO 2002, FRN 2004). That is the inherent characteristics of TVE synonymous to the purpose of entrepreneurship education include:

- ❖ a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work.
- ❖ aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship
- ❖ instrument for producing environmentally sound sustainable development; and
- ❖ method of facilitating poverty alleviation in Daniel. & Hultin (2002; FRN 2004) in Akinyemi (2009).

The involvement of undergraduates students in Nigeria TVE has made the participation in SIWES mandatory while at school; hence boosting the

opportunities for acquiring practical skills which are deep seated in entrepreneurship ventures.

World population today, shows that there has been increase the population from 7 billion of 2011 and 2012 to 7.5 billion in April 2017. Among these population are about 1.8 million young people between the ages of 10 and 24. This has been the largest youth population ever. Many of these youths are concentrated in the world's 48 least developed countries, as at April 2015 according to (Steven, 2015). There is urgent need to develop entrepreneurial talents inherent in these youths, in production of goods and services in order to reduce the level of unemployment, poverty and economy depression.

However, this study focuses on determining the level of undergraduate students participation in various entrepreneurship ventures made available in practicum classes. It also addresses the avenue through which students acquire entrepreneurship skills, as well as value accrued from acquired skills and desired entrepreneurship ventures of interest after graduation.

Purpose of the Study

The study explored participation of undergraduates in acquisition of entrepreneurship skills in tertiary institutions, specifically the study determine:

- i) Students level of participation in selected entrepreneurship opportunities like Screen Printing, Hat Making, Sachet water

production, Photography, Fashion designing / tailoring, Bag and Shoes making, Catering Craft and Cosmetic production.

- ii) the avenues through which the undergraduate students can acquire entrepreneurship skills while schooling.
- iii) the values accrued to the students from the acquired entrepreneurship skills, and
- iv) those entrepreneurship ventures the students desire to continue with after graduation from school.

Research Question

The following research questions were posed:

- i. What is the level of students' participation in selected entrepreneurship opportunities like screen printing, hat making, sachet water production, photography, fashion designing / tailoring, bag / shoe making, catering craft and cosmetic production?
- ii. What are the avenues through which the undergraduate students can acquire entrepreneurship skills while schooling?
- iii. What values are accrued to the students from acquiring entrepreneurship skills?
- iv. What are the entrepreneurship ventures students desire to continue after graduation from school?

Methodology

Area of Study: The study was carried out at Akoka in Lagos State using the undergraduates of two tertiary Institutions, namely University of

Benin, Benin City (UniBen), and Federal University Technology, Minna (FUTMinna) whose Bachelor of Degree programme in Education are offered at Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka Campus (the affiliate Institution) in Lagos State.

Design of the Study: A descriptive, survey research design was used in order to give a vivid information of the current practices and engagement of the undergraduates students in entrepreneurship practical education.

Population of the Study: The target population comprised of all 500 Level students of Federal University of Technology Minna and 300 level Students of University of Benin, Benin City all running degree programmes B.Tech. (Ed) and B.Sc(Ed) at Akoka Campus.

Sample for the Study: A purposive random sampling was utilized in selecting all students offering the Entrepreneurship education practicum courses in the Science and Technical / Technology Education departments. The total sample of 124 students were selected.

Instrument for Data Collection: The research instrument used for this study was a questionnaire captioned, Participation in Entrepreneurial Skill Questionnaire (PESQ). The Questionnaire consisted of sections A, B, C, D and E: Section A of the questionnaire sought information on demographic bio-data. These include sex, academic programme (by Department) and Institution (UniBen or FUTMinna). Section B was designed to identify different entrepreneurship

ventures students chose during their practicum classes. Section C also sought information on avenues for acquisition of entrepreneurial skills among the undergraduates. There were five questions in Section C, Section D sought information on the profits accrued from participation in entrepreneurial skills. Section E, with eight questions solicited information on entrepreneurial skills students desired to engage in for livelihood after graduation. Face validity was done by the research expert for the questionnaire.

Data Collection Method: Hand to hand delivery method was used for administering and collection of data. The representatives for UniBen Degree Programme was given forty-four (44) questionnaires to distribute to only 300 level UniBen Students, while eighty questionnaire were administered by the class representative of FUTMinna. The representatives serve as research assistants who administer the questionnaire to the students in Biology, Mathematics, Educational Technology, Fine and Applied Art and Chemistry and Technology Education Departments. 95% questionnaire of about 130 administered were retrieved by hand.

Data Analysis: Data were analysed using frequency and percentages.

Results

The result of this study shows that demographic data indicates that 56% of participating undergraduates are University of Benin students while 44% are Federal University of Technology,

Minna. While 51% of the students are Science education undergraduates and 49% are from Technical / Technology Education departments.

The major findings of the study are divided into four parts, the first part established the different entrepreneurial skills chosen by undergraduates while in school. The second part, the avenues for entrepreneurial skill acquisition of undergraduates, the third part reveals the values accrued from participation in

entrepreneurial skills acquisition and the fourth part is on the entrepreneurial venture desired by students for future livelihood after graduation. Below are the Tables 1 to 4 on each table.

Research Question 1

A: Level of Participation in Different Entrepreneurship Ventures among the Undergraduates in Tertiary Institutions

Table 1: Percentage Distribution on Undergraduates Participation in different Entrepreneurship Ventures

S/n	Entrepreneurship Ventures	Present Participation	
		Yes	No
1.	Screen Printing	36 (29%)	88 (71%)
2.	Hat Making	14 (11%)	110 (89%)
3.	Sachet Water Production	6 (5%)	118 (95%)
4.	Photography	19 (15%)	105 (85%)
5.	Fashion Designing	33 (27%)	91 (73%)
6.	Bag / Shoe Making	11 (9%)	113 (91%)
7.	Duvet Production	6 (5%)	118 (95%)
8.	Catering Craf	4 (3%)	120 (97%)
9.	Cosmetic Production (e.g. Soap, Dettol, Air Freshener etc)	19 (15%)	105(85%)
10.	Others (Please specify)	4(3%)	120(97%)

Table 1 indicates that 29% showed interest in Screen Printing, followed by 27% for Fashion Design / Tailoring, Photography and Cosmetic Production pulled a respondents of 15% each while 11% of the undergraduates students showed interest in acquiring the skill

Hat Making, only 5% each showed interest in Sachet Water and Duvet Production.

B: Avenues for Acquisition of Entrepreneurial skills by undergraduates?

Table 2: Percentage Distribution on Undergraduate Students' Avenues for Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition

s/n	Avenues for Acquisition of Skills	Yes	No
	Acquired Entrepreneurial Skill through:		
1	Practical Classes	103(83%)	21 (17%)
2.	Self effort and practices	72 (58%)	52 (42%)
3.	Encouragement by parents	68 (55%)	56 (45%)
4.	Influence of friends	43 (35%)	81 (65%)
5.	Scholarship / Voluntary agency (SIWES)	33 (27%)	91 (73%)

Table 2 shows that there are five avenues for acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students. Up to 83% of the undergraduates acquire entrepreneurial skills in through exposure to entrepreneurship practical classes at school. About 58% of the students acquire entrepreneurial skill through self efforts and practices probably by apprenticeship and attending refresher programmes. Up to

55% of undergraduates are encouraged by their parents who identify the entrepreneurial talent in their words to attend entrepreneurship centre. While 35% are influenced by their friend to engage in acquiring entrepreneurial skills.

C: Values of Engaging in Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition by the Undergraduates Students

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Responses on Values Acquired by undergraduates Students' from Entrepreneurial Skills

S/n	Avenues for Acquisition of Skills	Yes	No
1.	Acquired Entrepreneurial Skills helped in payment of Values from School fees	56 (45%)	68 (55%)
2.	Bills in my phone	54 (43%)	70 (57%)
3.	Family Food	52 (42%)	72 (58%)
4.	Family Clothing	47 (38%)	77 (62%)
5.	House Rent	42 (34%)	82 (66%)
6.	Helped in paying and transportation etc	39 (32%)	85 (68%)

Table 3, shows that 45% of the students confirmed that their participation in entrepreneurship skill acquisition have helped in payment of schools, while 43% students confirm ability for purchase of credit airtime for their phones, 42% for feeding 38% for

clothing resources, 34% for payment of house-rent and 32% for other utilities including transpiration.

D: Undergraduates Desire to Continue Entrepreneurial Ventures for livelihood after graduation

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Responses on Students desire to continue various Entrepreneurial Venture for Livelihood after Graduation.

S/n	Items	Present Participation	
		Yes	No
1.	Photography	34 (44%)	70 (56%)
2.	Duvet	7 (6%)	117 (94%)
3.	Wiring	10 (8%)	114 (92%)
4.	Catering	18 (15%)	106 (85%)
5.	Fashion Designing	37 (30%)	87 (70%)
6.	Cosmetic (Soap, Air Freshner Production)	15 (12%)	109(88%)
7.	Bag / Shoe	15 (12%)	109 (88%)
8.	Hat Making	17 (14%)	107 (86%)
9.	Others (Please specify)	14(11%)	110(89%)

Table 4 shows that 44% of the students desire photography while 30% desire Fashion Designing / Tailoring, 14% desire Hat Making venture while, 12% desire to produce bag and cosmetics respectively and only 15% of the students desire catering ventures. Very minimal percent of 8% and 6% will prefer wiring of house and making of duvet respectively for livelihood after graduation.

Discussion of Findings

Data analysis shown on Table 1 indicates that 29% of students participating in Screen Printing and others in Photography, Cosmetic Production, Hat Making and Sachet Water and Duvet Production. This is inline with the philosophies of the Empiricists an Pragmaticists who say that one learns to grow and one grows by practicing what has been learnt (Ethics of Aristole) 384 – 322 BC) as quoted in Abiogu (2008) and Abiogu (2004). However, this differs from the view of Abdul and Muthaiyan (2009)

who say that acquired skills in any venture are tools used to manipulate knowledge in order to meet goals desired by attitudes and interest of the individuals.

Table 2 which shows that 58% of the undergraduates acquiring entrepreneurial skills through self-efforts and practices probably by apprenticeship and attending refreshers programmes, confirms Ifebajo (2005) who states that refreshers programmes provide the relevant and appropriate skills for today's and tomorrow's world of work. While 55% of undergraduates encouraged by parents and 35% influenced by friends is in line with the submission of Etuk, et al (2009) who affirm that youths should be encouraged to start their own entrepreneurial ventures by wealthy parents and friends aside micro-credit loans schemes introduced by Federal Government.

27% of the undergraduate students are enjoying scholarship scheme of

companies and voluntary agency for acquiring entrepreneurship skills, probably through the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) programme of the Federal Government which provides opportunities for students to learn work and do work study within the tertiary and outside the institution in companies with related disciplines of the students in order to serve many purposes such as teaching students dignity of practical experience among other aims (Olateju, 2009) (ITF, 2004).

Table 3 shows 45% of the students participating in entrepreneurship skills, were able to pay schools fees and 43% students were able to purchase credit airtime for their phones and other benefits like feeding, clothing, payment for others utilities including transportation. This is in line with the Abiogu (2008) recommendations that acquiring entrepreneurship skills helps to build healthy and prosperous individuals in the nation as well as change the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and their social groups Todamo and Smith (2003).

Table 4 which shows 44% of students desiring to continue photography venture and 30% Fashion Design / Tailoring venture for livelihood after graudation is in consonant with the report of Ozougwu (2008) as quoted in Ajeyalemi (1987) who state that undergraduates desire to have skills will reduce the rate dependency and unemployment rate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, entrepreneurship education remaining one of those valuable tool to prepare aspiring entrepreneurs for economic challenges and opportunities for better livelihood. For this functional education to thrive in any developing nation like Nigeria, there is need to encourage education and training for the youths at all levels of education. This attempt would make the younger generation to be usefully engaged and productive in the society. That is engaging in entrepreneurial activities will reduce poverty, dependency and engagement in social - vices such as kidnapping robbery, assassination, just mention of a few plaguing our societies. It would be a gainful venture if the educational system in Nigeria could continue to implement policy on Reforms in Education especially in tertiary Institutions.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- ❖ Federal Government should always budget special Fund for practical - entrepreneurship education and training in tertiary Institution.
- ❖ Entrepreneurship centres where various skills could be learnt and acquire should be built and established at Local Government Areas of each State, so that young graduates could be encouraged to improve on skills acquired when schooling.

- ❖ Capital fund should be provided to young graduates for engaging in entrepreneurial activities for livelihoods.

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