

PERCEPTION OF NCE BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS OF THEIR TRAINING FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ONDO AND EKITI STATES

Cosmas Ifeanyi Onuegbu

Abstract

This study sought to find out how NCE Business Education Students perceive their skills acquisition training in preparation for participation in entrepreneurship. A 35-items questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The study population consisted of 200 final year NCE Business Education Students in the two tertiary institutions of Ondo and Ekiti State. Z-test statistics and the mean statistics were used for data analysis. Findings include that majority of students do not have correct perception of their skills acquisition training and significant differences do not exist between male and female students in their perception of their training for participation in entrepreneurship.

The need to stem the tide of unemployment in Nigeria most especially among the graduates and in particular the NCE Business Education graduates; necessitated the introduction of entrepreneurship education in the Colleges of Education Curriculum. Report from Asia, Europe and India have indicated how medium and small scale enterprise speedily fostered employment generation and poverty reduction among the school graduates and the populace (Bankole and Olayiwola, 2001).such reports have become a propelling force for Nigeria government to begin initiatives and policies aim at promoting self-employment among graduates.

Entrepreneurship for self-reliance of graduates is one of the ways of reducing dependency on government for job creation. The new Webster Dictionary of English Language (2004), defines an entrepreneurs as someone who runs a business at his own financial risk. It also defines self-reliance as confidence in one's own ability and power of judgement. By the foregoing therefore, the acquisition of skills serve as a lubricant for venturing into entrepreneurship for self-reliance of graduates, especially the Business Education NCE graduates.

Business Education world over, is the bedrock of nation building and technological advancement. It provides well trained workforce without which a nation finds it difficult to compete for the demanding opportunities that lie ahead. It must be recognized that Business Education is the backbone of the nation's economy. It serves as a lubricant in a nations' drive towards economic prosperity. It prepares students to handle their own business affairs while they also function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy.

The central tenet of Business Education is often expressed by the phrase "to fit for useful employment". In the opinion of Ige (2001), the concept of "Do it yourself" introduced in advanced countries is a concept that has the focus on vocational training, because it introduces man to the realm

of self-reliance and dynamic being. Business Education is concerned with the primary purpose of equipping the learner with skills, knowledge and attitude for employment in specific recognized occupations. There are many career jobs/vocations for which skills could be acquired through business education. These include but not limited to the followings:

- Business Education and Computer (Typing and word processing, printing and publishing, computer services, business management).
- Business Education is a vocation which exposes the recipient to skill, knowledge and attitude to manage an enterprise effectively and efficiently. It is an educational process which prepares the individual for enterprise as an employer/entrepreneur.
- The acquisition of competent business education skills will enable the recipient to be able to establish his own business enterprise.
- The possession of accounting and bookkeeping skills through Business Education is a pre-requisite in knowing how accounting and financial records are kept. The recipient of this business can be employed to manage an enterprise as an administrator or manager.
- A graduate of business education can also have an option to engage in the teaching profession, to teach business subjects in schools. He/she could teach entrepreneurs' who lack business knowledge.
- The possession of office practice and management skills and administration enables Business Education graduates to be skillful employed in offices as clerical officers to keep records in the office.
- Business Education can also serve as a springboard for graduates who aspire to pursue career as chartered accountants, economists and other professional careers.

The above mentioned skills acquisition will give NCE students of Business Education the opportunities to be self-reliant. Consequently, the quality of instructions received while in school must be geared towards inculcating the following values.

1. Competent Business Education skills
2. Entrepreneurship skills

Business Education Students, who upon graduation, therefore, should possess the relevant and requisite skills necessary for self-employment. However, the attainment of these goals which is of necessity for entrepreneurship can only be actualized, firstly, by x-raying of obstacles that can lead to attainment of goals. These obstacles often relate to the factors which determine the quality of learning, which include but not restricted to the following:

- i. The curriculum content of Business Education
- ii. The instructional process
- iii. The competence of teachers
- iv. Availability of instructional materials

Other obstacles, Anyakoha (2001), identified, include lack of awareness by policy makers and administrators, and the heavy emphasis on passing examination. In addressing the issue of Business Curriculum, contents, Yoloye (2001) emphasized on the need to distinguished between the following:

Perception Of Nce Business Education Students Of Their Training For Entrepreneurship In Ondo And Ekiti States

- a) The planned curriculum, which is the intended content of the curriculum
- b) The implemented curriculum, which is actually taught in the classroom, and
- c) The achieved curriculum which is what the pupils actually learn.

It must be noted that the achieved curriculum is of paramount importance, hence, there is the need for a serious reflection, since in most cases, the prescribed curriculum may look very impressive and contain all the important skills necessary for self-reliance, but the implementation and achievement there for. In the opinion of Anyakoha (2001) there is the need for the curriculum of Business Education subject to reflect most appropriately, the skills students should acquire in order to be most gainfully employed in the specific vocations and or occupation for which training is provided. The instructional process is very vital to the implementation of the curriculum in the sense that the most relevant curricula can be rendered ineffective by inappropriate instructional processes. There is also the need for practical exercises in Business Education subjects because of their skills acquisition oriented nature.

Consequently, the teacher needs to cover with both theoretical knowledge and also the practical aspect. The competency of Business Education teachers is also of paramount importance and should involve the ability to plan, implement and evaluate lessons and be able to carry out necessary classroom managerial activities utilize instructional facilities and improvise the non-available ones.

The improvisation of instructional materials, Olaitan (1996) in Anyakoha (2001) contended, has to do with developing individuals to be masters of equipment (technology), if they are to affectively use technology in producing goods and services. It is necessary to point out that students of Business Education programmes can only be effective in entrepreneurship to the extent that they are able to utilize and demonstrate mastery of the skills so acquired. This will reduce the problem plaguing the Business Education graduates who have no recourse upon graduating from school, but to rely on the government for teaching appointment, which is not readily available, given the gloomy and bleak economic situation in the country. The success of graduates of Business Education in achieving the desired results of entrepreneurship, without incorporating entrepreneurship education as doubtful.

UNESCO (1999) summed it all when it states that “Business Education graduates often remain jobless despite the immense possibilities for employment in the sector”. The situation gave the need to promote the entrepreneurship spirit and incorporate training for participation in entrepreneurship. It is against this background of unachieved unemployment reduction and enhanced economic growth that Nwaokolo (1999) reappraised the situation and made a case for entrepreneurship education alongside technology education to be incorporated into the Business Education syllabus, a concept he referred to as “New Vocationalism”.

In the words of Nwaokolo (1999), entrepreneurship means “making a living by working for yourself”. It therefore involves the ability to set up a business as different from being employed. Entrepreneurship is the process of discovery, evaluating and exploiting opportunities which will

eventually transform into reality in the form of new business venture. Entrepreneurship is the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and to be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunities (Bygrave & Hoifer, 1991). It is, the practice of starting new organization or revitalizing one generally in response to identified opportunities. Entrepreneurship, according to Igbo (2004), is a clear manifestation of effective manipulation of human intelligence as demonstrated in creative performance. It seeks to find out how Business Education NCE graduates can convert their acquired skills into intellectually productive ventures to bring out the best in them.

The opinion of Davies (1983), is that entrepreneurship involves creating and running one's own business. This implies that a Business Education NCE graduate who runs a small business of his or her own is an entrepreneur.

The entrepreneur Davies (1983) stated perform the function of building a business entity and is also a factor in fostering economic growth.

Statement of the Problem

The high rate of graduates unemployment at all level of the educational system in general, and the Business Education in particular, appears to be increasing. It means that Business Education students after graduating from school, depend on government for teaching appointment, which is not readily available. Students who successfully complete Business Education programmes, are upon graduation, expected to have options of setting up their own business and thereby be self-employed and also be able to employ others. What is not clear is whether Business Education skills acquired by students will enhance their participation in entrepreneurship. This is the problem of this study.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

1. Is the NCE Business Education programme curriculum relevant to the students' skills acquisition training for participation in entrepreneurship?
2. Are there appropriate business equipment and facilities made available for skills acquisition training for participation in entrepreneurship?
3. Are Business Education teachers' effective in their method of teaching business subjects for skills acquisition and training?
4. What is the mean perception of the NCE Business Education students of their training in preparation for entrepreneurship?

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis were tested 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: A measure of the overall perception of NCE Business Education students' of their skills training for entrepreneurship will not be significantly less than the acceptable level.

Perception Of Nce Business Education Students Of Their Training For Entrepreneurship In Ondo And Ekiti States

Ho₂: There will be no significant difference between the male and female students' perception of their skills acquisition training.

Method

The study is a descriptive survey designed to find out the perception of NCE Business Education students of their training for participation in entrepreneurship after graduating from school. The descriptive survey design is adopted because it is centered on the opinion of individuals. The final year NCE Business Education students of the two Colleges of Education in Ondo and Ekiti states constituted the population from which the sample used for the study were drawn. A total of 575 final year students were selected, 160 are from the College of Education, Ondo, Ondo State while 415 are from the College of Education, Ikere, Ekiti State. The sample size for the study consisted of 200 (80 males and 120 females) students selected using the stratified random sampling techniques. NCE Business Education of the two colleges represented each stratum. A simple random sampling was used to select 56 subjects from the students in Ondo, being representing 28% of the sample size 144 subjects representing 72% of the sample size were drawn from among students of Ikere, Ekiti.

Instrumentation

Four research questions were used for data collection. A 35-item questionnaire derived from literature and titled "Business Education NCE students participation in Entrepreneurship (BENCESPIE)" was used in the study.

Respondents were asked to rate each of the items on a five point Likert type scale as follows: Strongly Agree (SD) – 5, Agree (a) – 4, Undecided (U) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1.

The instrument was validated by three experienced research scholars in the field of entrepreneurship from the University of Benin, Benin City. Their suggestions and corrections were reflected in the final draft used for this study. A pilot group of 20 students that was not part of the main study was arranged for estimating the reliability of the instrument. A split-half method was used to correlate the data generated. The reliability index of 0.77 was obtained. The instrument was self-administered by the researcher. On the whole, the questionnaire that formed 98.8 percent return rate was obtained and used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data gathered were analysed using the z-test, the mean and standard deviation. The midpoint of the five point scale was taken as the criterion mean score which was derived by adding the exact upper limit of the scale (4.5) to the exact lower limit (0.5) and dividing by 2, and this is considered to be the hypothetical acceptable level. The mean of 2.5 was taken as the critical value for decision such that a mean response that falls below 2.5 was regarded as "Disagree" while a mean response on or above 2.5 was regarded as "Agree".

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the Perception of NCE Business Education Students of their Skills Acquisition Training in Preparation for Entrepreneurship?

Table: Mean Perception of Students' of their Skill Acquisition Training for Participation in Entrepreneurship

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remark
	Students skill acquisition training characteristic NCE Business Education Curriculum for competency			
1.	Curriculum are structured in foundation modules	2.00	1.00	Disagree
2.	Entrepreneurship is the main feature in the curriculum	1.77	0.97	Disagree
3.	Industrial training/workshop practices form part of NCE Business Education Curriculum	2.00	1.00	Disagree
4.	Private industries are involved in curriculum development	2.10	1.14	Disagree
5.	NCE Business Education students acquire the ability to do something	1.90	1.14	Disagree
6.	NCE Business Education students were exposed to industries on-the-job experience during S.I.W.E.S	2.02	1.02	Disagree
7.	Curriculum encourage entrepreneurship	2.04	1.00	Disagree
8.	Enhance curricula activities equip students to participate in entrepreneurship after school	1.25	0.59	disagree
9.	Competent Business Education will encourage participation in entrepreneurship after graduating from school	2.58	1.12	Agree
10.	Non competency based Business Education is responsible for lack of students participation in entrepreneurship after graduating from school	2.12	1.21	Agree
11.	Tools, equipment and up-to-date facilities will enhance skills acquisition training	2.58	1.14	Agree
12.	Students were exposed to equipment relevant to area of study	1.97	0.92	Disagree
13.	Training in enhanced laboratory facilities and workshop studio provided encouragement in entrepreneurship	2.07	1.17	Disagree
14.	Equipments used in training enhanced students' hands-on-experience	1.98	1.07	Disagree
15.	Facilities in use was suitable for enhancing preparedness for entrepreneurship	1.60	0.75	Disagree
16.	Up-to-date workshop facilities is available for use during skills training	2.00	1.00	Disagree
17.	The available facilities are properly managed for good instruction during training	2.03	1.02	Disagree
18.	Available workshop facilities is devoid of obsolete and unserviceable equipment	1.98	0.10	Disagree

Perception Of Nce Business Education Students Of Their Training For Entrepreneurship In Ondo And Ekiti States

19.	Improper management of workshop facilities is responsible for the dearth of tools for skills acquisition	2.78	1.05	Agree
20.	Good equipments and appropriate facilities for learning are indispensable towards acquisition of skills	3.03	0.97	Agree
21.	Lack of tools and equipments cripples effective teaching	2.64	1.88	Agree
22.	Teachers employ variety of teaching method	1.60	0.88	Disagree
23.	Instructional quality to the students are geared towards acquiring entrepreneurship skills	2.01	1.02	Disagree
24.	Teachers introduce new ideas so as to inculcate entrepreneurship spirit to students	1.66	1.04	Disagree
25.	Teachers are caring to the students	2.05	1.02	Disagree
26.	Teachers are enthusiastic in their method of teaching	2.04	1.00	Disagree
27.	Teachers are flexible in the classroom instead of being rigid	2.01	1.02	Disagree
28.	Teachers are involved in their method of teaching	2.00	1.00	Disagree
29.	Teachers are helpful to students	2.03	1.02	Disagree
30.	Teachers are source of encouragement to the students	2.04	1.00	Disagree
31.	Grand mean	2.06	1.03	Disagree

In response to research question 1, data in table 1 indicate that the perception of students of their skills acquisition in preparedness for participation in entrepreneurship was low with mean perception of 2.06, the standard deviations for all the items was low indicating that there is high concentration of the responses on the mean. The mean score of students' perception of their skill training for entrepreneurship is significantly less than the criterion mean of 2.5. What this means is that students are not confident in their skill training for participation in entrepreneurship.

Discussion of Findings

In response to research question 1, data in table 1 indicate that the overall perception of students of their skill acquisition training for participation in entrepreneurship is less than the criterion mean of 2.50. The implication of this is that majority of the students do not have correct perception of their skills training. This is to say that NCE Business Education students are not confident in themselves with respect to their skills acquisition in preparation for self-reliance and participation in entrepreneurship after graduating from school. The result agrees with the views of George (2009), who scored the Federal Government low on entrepreneurship development. He describes as discouraging the schedule of Business Education, which he said would be necessary for the development of the country and also for job creation. The findings also suggest that if Government National Policy on Education (2004) implements the goals and objectives of Business Education, the skills so acquired by the students will promote their participation in entrepreneurship after graduating from school, thereby reducing their dependence on Government for jobs that are not readily available. Thus if students are trained with competency based Business Education curriculum, and also in industry workshop facilities alongside relevant tools and equipment, there is the tendency for skills acquisition by students that will ensure adequacy of their preparedness for participation in

entrepreneurship. This apprehension has been expressed by Familoni (2009), when he declared that in an era where the policies of the government towards putting the raw skills of youths to work, that the disposition of the Federal Government towards entrepreneurship development had remained low. He lamented further that government had ignored the promotion of skills development but retained/encourage the country's over dependence on oil has continued while paying lip service to the diversification of the economy. The place of entrepreneurship towards unemployment reduction in the nation had been earlier referred to as a major force in determining the quality of skills acquisition by VTE students. Adetokunbo (2009), firmly supported this assertion when he urged Nigerian universities to place more emphasis on skills training and entrepreneurship development to make graduates well equipped for self-employment, innovation and creativeness.

Conclusion

Business Education has been identified as breeding ground for entrepreneurship activities towards national development. Putting this development potential into focus depends on a number of factors, foremost of which are competency based Business Education programmes. The finding of this study implies that the goal and objectives of Business Education to give training and impart the necessary skills to students who shall be self-reliant economically is not achieved. For Business Education/manpower development and entrepreneurship self-reliance, Nigeria requires essential skills for survival in the 21st century.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Students should be exposed to competent Business Education skills training.
2. Students should be exposed to organized seminars, workshops, conferences and short-term course on entrepreneurship.
3. Teachers should be flexible and organized in their teaching. Different teaching methods relevant to entrepreneurship should be adopted to introduce variety and increase interest.
4. Up-to-date industrial equipment is of paramount importance for students' hands-on-experience in the process of acquiring competent skills.
5. Government should encourage the goals and objectives of the National Policy on Education as it concerns Business Education, through proper funding of policies implementation.

References

- Adetokunbo, K. O. (2009). *Labour productivity in Nigeria*. Sunday Punch Newspaper, September 20, 2007, 26 – 27.
- Anyakoha, E. U. (2001). Manpower development in relevant vocations for sustainable poverty alleviation in Nigeria. *14th annual conference of the national association of teachers of technology*.
- Davies, C. H. (1983). *Education's Role in developing Instints for Entrepreneurship and Small Business management*. New York: John Riley and sons Inc.
- Familoni, C. A. (2009). *Education for Self-reliance in Nigeria*. Daily Punch Newspaper, August 15, 2009, 52 – 53.
- Igbo, C. A. (2004). Entrepreneurship initiatives in colleges of education programmes (2 – 4) *Proceedings of the 4th annual Conference of Home Economics Journal*, (2) 9 – 13.
- Ige, N. E. (2001). Manpower development in relevant vocations for sustainable poverty alleviation *14th annual conference of the national association of teachers of technology*.
- Nwaokolo, P. O. (1999), (August), Improved Vocationalism for the Next Millennium: A panacea for combating unemployment and poverty among youths in Africa. Paper Presented at the Special End-of-century International Conference of Nigerian Association of Educationists for National Development (NAEND) held at the Kaduna Polytechnic 3rd – 8th.
- Okorie, J. U. (1980). Technical Education: It Implication for Industrial Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Vocational Association* 29 – 30.
- Robert (1960). In Olusegun Fajimi: Technical education. A tool for sustainable poverty alleviation. National association of teachers of technology (NATT).