
Entrepreneurship Education; A Mitigate to Disconnect Between Educational System and Industries in Rivers State.

Okiridu, O.S.F. (Ph.D)

Department of Business Education

Rivers State University

Port Harcourt

obulord.okiridu@ust.edu.ng

Abstract

Entrepreneurship education; a mitigate to disconnect between educational system and industries in Rivers state was studied. The study is to ascertain the extent entrepreneurship education can serve as a tool to bridge the gap between the institutions and the industries, majorly the study focused on the inculcation and acquisition of practical skills and creative thinking ideas that can transform the graduates to be employable, be self-reliant, and become entrepreneurs and employers of labour. The study was guided by two research questions and hypotheses. The researcher adopted a descriptive survey design. The population and sample size of the study consist of 87 postgraduate entrepreneurship education students of Rivers state university (RSU), Port Harcourt. A researcher structured questionnaire captioned 'Entrepreneurship education; a mitigate to disconnect between educational system and industries in Rivers state' (EEAMDBESIRS), containing 22 items was used to elicit information for the study. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while z-test statistical tool was used to analyze the hypotheses with the use of excel computation tool. The findings revealed that graduates with practical skills and creative thinking ideas are bound to be employed become entrepreneurs and employers of labour than their counterparts without the skills. The researcher therefore recommends that the collaboration effort between the institutions and the industries should be concretize and entrepreneurship education should be made a compulsory course in the institutions and emphasis should be laid on practical skills acquisition cum creative thinking.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship education, disconnect, educational system*

Introduction

Educational system is a system having an established structure and conscious planning in which people work and deal with one another in a coordinated and cooperative manner for the accomplishment of set goals. It is a system with a well organized and systematic content of instruction designed to inculcate the right values, norms, knowledge and skills to the learner. Education is seen as a sector probably a company, organization or industry with the highest number of participants. The concept of education is that there must be a change in behavior on the part of the learner hence it is seen as an investment. This aspect of human capital yield economic returns in terms of productivity which contributes greatly to the wealth of individual translated to the wealth of a nation (Ordu: 2013). In the study of economics, all resources own by man, tailored in paid employment for the production of goods and services are generally referred to as 'labour'. Beyond this level, there is a human input or effort with its unique, significant, characteristics and important nature is superior to labour, this effort is referred to as 'entrepreneurial ability'. UNDP (1991) defined entrepreneurship as the process of using private initiative to transform a business concept into a new venture or to grow and diversify an existing venture or enterprise

with high growth potential. Entrepreneurs identify and innovation to seize an opportunity, mobilize money and management skills, and take calculated risks to open markets for new products, process and services. Entrepreneurship is been derived from the word entrepreneur. Notably entrepreneurial ability found in an entrepreneur usually conforms to the following characteristics:

- i. The entrepreneur takes the initiative in combining the resources of land, capital and labour in the production of goods and services
- ii. The entrepreneur has the responsibility of making basic business policy decisions, which set the course of a business enterprise
- iii. The entrepreneur is an innovator, the person who attempts to introduce on a commercial basis new products, new productive techniques, or even new form of business organization
- iv. The entrepreneur is obviously a risk taker. The reward for his time, efforts and abilities may be attractive profits or losses and eventually bankruptcy.

Entrepreneurship education

The concept as opine by (Akintola; 2001 in Aginah, Oguguo & Nwokocha; 2013) see entrepreneurship education as a programme or part of programme that prepares individual to undertake the formation and or operation of small business enterprise which also include franchise operations for the purpose of performing all business functions relating to a product or services with emphasis given to the social responsibilities, legal requirements and risks for the sake of profit involved in the conduct of a private enterprise. At the same vein (Osuala :2008) define entrepreneurship education as a specialized training giving to students of vocation and technical education to acquire the skills, ideas and the managerial abilities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay. Based on the above definitions entrepreneurship education is seen as that aspect of education that prepares the learner, student to lay a solid or concrete foundation and fortifying oneself with the creative ideas, acquire knowledge and skills to survive in the competitive play ground to be employed, self employed or an employer of labour.

Disconnect between institution and the industry

The disconnect between the industry and the institution arises as a result of the graduates having low levels of competencies in the work environment, the graduates not being able to be absorbed by the industries due to lack of required, employable and needed skills. Secondly the curriculum content of the institutions are shallow minded and unable to address the needs of the society. The industries do lose finance in this venture by organizing training and retraining of recruited staff, which is the product of the institutions before they could fit into the various departments. Due to the dynamic nature of the society, changes are bound to occur, therefore the industries on their part need to collaborate with the institutions to address the need of the society; these changes should be imbedded and incorporated into the school curriculum for adequate pedagogy and learning to take place and eventually bring a change in the behavior of the learner to better himself and the society. The technical “know how” of imparting the needed skills and knowledge are also lacking on the part of the instructors, therefore the instructors requires training and retraining on a yearly basis, attend workshops, seminars, conferences to get abreast with the issues and trends in the society in order to update. According to (Majo; 2000) the curriculum is centrally determined. It is based on the NPE guidelines of 1981 and tends to be outdated in outlook. There is need for curriculum transformation in order to take into consideration the changes that are taking place in the nation as well as in the world. The transformed curriculum will have to be responsive to new needs in society and be updated to include new knowledge, social issues, and to the

introduction of new technologies. This issue needs to be addressed in appropriate ways as part of curriculum change. Curriculum transformation will have to take into consideration the availability of teaching and learning resources as well as the support facilities such as libraries, laboratories and computer facilities.

Relevance of Entrepreneurship Education

Nigeria as a reconstituted democracy has to address issues of a dual transformation. The country needs to re-examine its past and focus on development plans that will meet the challenges of the future. The need to work out a new developmental plan puts pressure on the political, social and economic sectors of the country. The new government has declared education as one of its priorities. The goal is to have a reformed system of education that will provide access at all levels of education and to improve the quality and efficiency of the entire education system (Moja: 2000). Entrepreneurship education is vital and important to students because it is responsible for the industrial growth and development of the developed economy. It is a well designed programme of instruction capable of shifting the attention of the students from white collar jobs to creative thinking and ideas of starting a business of their own. The students can be trained to venture in the production of a any product of their choice such as solid soap, liquid soap, tie & die cloths, note books, jotters, files, perfumes, canned palm oil, chewable, eatables, shoes, sandals etc. Through the production of these products, the act will directly discourage laziness, idleness, create employment and encourage equal redistribution of wealth, income among the citizenry without boundary which will curb the problem of political power being concentrated at a place. Making entrepreneurship education relevant to the requirements of the new global economy is critical to support a national economy.

According to (Druker; 1993) in the practice of entrepreneurship, companies that are managed by entrepreneurship have two meetings on operating results: one to focus on the problems and one to focus on the opportunities. This means that attention need to be paid to problems, taken seriously and tackled, while the other concentrates on the areas in which performance is better than expected, budgeted, or planned for. Entrepreneurship education helps to incites and instigate students to acquire employable skills, it also help in the training to meet the need of the industry, training to meet the need of the society, able to handle and resolve, employees related issues, provide adequate knowledge in risk management, identify products / services needed in a chosen market areas, aids in the ideas concerning improvement of national, development, increases carrying capacity. There is no society that can do without entrepreneurship education because it encourages innovation, adapt to changes, able to handle modern technology in business transactions, helps is drawing business plan and feasibility study, guides on how to invest capital judiciously and encourages social mobility.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship programme is aimed at increasing the supply of adequately trained personnel who are motivated to make successes out of the business ventures. The role of the educational system in this setting is a total transformation of the individual to a state of usefulness. Some graduates have learnt and acquired the skills of producing various kinds of products such as solid soap, liquid soap, tie & die cloths, note books, jotters, files, perfumes, canned palm oil, chewable, eatables, shoes, sandals etc. Today the production of these products in our environment has increased but these local producers on a small scale basis are unable to compete favourably with the large scale producers whose brand names has already dominated the market and known by the consumers; some of the products produced by the

serious minded graduates stay for weeks without being sold, the anticipated patronizers still prefer the old and known names in the market due to their perception, lack of awareness, packaging of the products and sometimes the prices, but to some extent the products are making waves in the markets. Some graduates while in schools have strived to acquire the needed and employable skills while others see the venture as dirty jobs and refuse to acquire the skills rather resolve to quick money making ventures of engaging in ponzi schemes, gambling, and other social vices such as stealing, kidnapping etc. The extravagant spending of the graduates with creative ideas and skills is a thing of concern, as their counterparts are unable to acquire the skills. This group of graduates are languishing in abject penury and poverty, begging for alms from their classmates due to none acquisition of the needed skills and they have nothing to offer. If the gap between the institutions and the industries must be bridged, there is the need for the stakeholders to design the entrepreneurship education curriculum to meet the need of the society and acquaint the students on the need to embrace entrepreneurship education as the only sure way to be self-reliant and become an employer of labour.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the extent entrepreneurship education can be used as a tool to bridge the gap between the institutions and the industries by training the students to acquire the needed knowledge and skills to be employable, be self employed and also to meet the need of the society; specifically to:

1. Ascertain the extent inculcation of practical skills and knowledge make graduates gain employment
2. Ascertain the extent inculcation of creative thinking ideas can make graduates become entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. To what extent do graduates with knowledgeable and practical skills differ from practical phobia graduates in gaining employment?
2. To what extent do graduates with creative thinking ideas differ from graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour?

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference between knowledgeable/ practical skills acquired graduates and practical phobia graduates in gaining employment.

H02: There is no significant difference between creative thinking idea graduates and graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of 87 entrepreneurship scholars, of post graduate school, Rivers state university, Port Harcourt. Due to the limited number of the population, the researcher adopted a purposive sampling technique hence the entire population of 87 graduates served as the sample size of the study. The instrument used to elicit information for the study is a researcher structured questionnaire captioned "Entrepreneurship education; A mitigate to disconnect between educational system and industries in Rivers state (EEAMDBESIRS), containing 22 items.

The instrument used for the study was rated thus: High extent 4 point, Moderate extent 3, Low extent 2, and Very low extent 1. The researcher applied excel calculation tool to analyze the data gotten from the field with the use of mean and standard deviation to answer the research question, while the hypotheses was analyzed with the use of z-test statistical tool at 0.05 percent level of significance. In a 4 point rating scale, scores of 2.5 and above was accepted while scores below 2.5 was rejected.

Results

Research One

To what extent do graduates with knowledgeable and practical skills differ from practical phobia graduates in gaining employments?

The results are presented in table 1 below:

Table 1. Mean rating on the extent knowledgeable and practical skills graduates differ from practical phobia graduates in gaining employments.
(N=87)

Items	HE	ME	LE	VLE	X	SD	Decision
1. Institutions provision of avenue and opportunity for acquisition of skills and knowledge	10	29	31	17	2.32	0.92	Moderate extent
2. Pedagogy and inculcating skills and knowledge for employability	13	25	25	23	2.34	1.04	Moderate extent
3. Adoption of work-based learning for absorption after graduation	16	22	34	15	2.45	0.98	Moderate extent
4. Entrepreneurship education has a positive impact/relevance	11	23	27	26	2.22	1.01	Moderate extent
5. Incites and instigate students to acquire employable skills	17	36	22	12	2.67	0.94	Moderate extent
6. Its effectiveness helps in the reduction of unemployment	22	28	19	18	2.62	1.07	Moderate extent
7. Its effectiveness helps in the reduction of crime rate	15	21	25	26	2.29	1.07	Moderate extent
8. Collaboration learning/training of institution and industry	14	26	31	16	2.44	0.97	Moderate extent
9. Training to meet the need of the industry	25	33	21	8	2.86	0.94	Moderate extent
10. Training to meet the need of the society	18	39	15	7	2.80	1.07	Moderate extent
11. Procurement of educational and training equipment through collaboration effort	9	11	45	22	2.08	0.89	Moderate extent
Grand Mean/SD					2.50	0.99	

Table 1 shows the responses to research question 1, which had a grand mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of 0.99 that is a moderate extent. This indicates that graduate with practical skills are prone to be employed than their counterparts without the skills.

Research two

To what extent do graduates with creative thinking ideas differ from graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour? The results are presented in table 2 below:

Table 2. Mean rating on the extent creative thinking ideas graduates differ from graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour?

(N=87)							
Responses	HE	ME	LE	VLE	X	SD	Decision
1. Improves capacity thinking / exploration	27	31	23	6	2.91	0.92	Moderate extent
2. Able to handle and resolve employees related issues	14	28	16	29	2.31	1.10	Moderate extent
3. Provide adequate knowledge in risk management	19	32	12	24	2.53	1.11	Moderate extent
4. Able to identify products / services needed in a chosen market areas	25	34	16	12	2.83	1.00	Moderate extent
5. Aids in the ideas concerning improvement of national development	15	29	23	20	2.45	1.03	Moderate extent
6. Increases carrying capacity	21	23	17	26	2.45	1.15	Moderate extent
7. Encourages innovation and helps to adapt to changes	25	27	18	17	2.69	1.09	Moderate extent
8. Able to handle modern technology in business transactions	21	26	29	11	2.66	0.98	Moderate extent
9. Helps is drawing business plan and feasibility study	17	18	34	18	2.39	1.02	Moderate extent
10. Guides on how to invest capital Judiciously	26	22	20	19	2.63	1.13	Moderate extent
11. Encourages social mobility	31	33	16	7	2.78	1.11	Moderate extent
Grand Mean/SD					2.60	1.05	

Table 2 has a grand mean of 2.60 and standard deviation of 1.05 which is a moderate extent to which creative thinking graduates differ from their counterparts. This is an indication that the creative thinking graduates are bound to be entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference between knowledgeable/ practical skills acquired graduates and practical phobia graduates in gaining employment after graduation.

The data was analyzed and presented in table 3 below:

Table 3: Z-test result on the significant difference between knowledgeable/ practical skills acquired graduates and practical phobia graduates in gaining employment.

z-Test: Two Sample for Means

	<i>PRACTICAL SKILL ACQUIRED GRADUATES</i>	<i>PRACTICAL PHOBIA GRADUATES</i>
Mean	2.657142857	2.7573814
Known Variance	0.11	0.14
Observations	35	52
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Z-Computed	2.317973988	
P(Z<=z) one-tail	0.093756178	
z Critical one-tail	1.644853627	
P(Z<=z) two-tail	0.187512356	
z Critical two-tail	1.959963985	

Table 3 above shows a z-test analysis and result for hypotheses 1 tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data shows a 'z' value of 2.317 which is greater than z-critical two-tail of 1.959. The hypotheses which states that there is no significant difference between knowledgeable/ practical skills acquired graduates and practical phobia graduates in gaining employment was rejected. This rejection shows that there is a significant difference, meaning that knowledgeable and practical skills graduates has greater opportunities to be employed after graduation more than their counterparts without the required skills.

Hypotheses 2: There is no significant difference between creative thinking idea graduates and graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

The data was analyzed and the table shown in table 4 below:

Table 4: Z-test result on the significant difference between creative thinking ideas graduates and graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

z-Test: Two Sample for Means

	<i>CREATIVE THINKING IDEA GRADUATES</i>	<i>NON THINKING GRADUATES</i>	<i>CREATIVE IDEA</i>
Mean	2.757142857	2.57831576	
Known Variance	0.18	0.15	
Observations	35	52	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0		
Z-Calculated	2.002724433		
P(Z<=z) one-tail	0.022603437		
z Critical one-tail	1.644853627		
P(Z<=z) two-tail	0.045206875		
z Critical two-tail	1.959963985		

Table 4 above shows z-test results for hypotheses 2 tested at 0.05 level of significance. The z-calculated value is 2.002 while the z-critical value is 1.959. This result shows that the calculated value of 'z' is greater than the table value, meaning that there is a significant difference. Therefore the null hypotheses which states that there is no significant difference between creative thinking ideas graduates and graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour was rejected. This result indicates that creative thinking graduates have ample opportunities of becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

Discussion of findings

The findings of the study with respect of to research question 1 had a grand mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of 0.99 that is a moderate extent. This result shows that institutions have provided avenues, and opportunity for the acquisition of skills and knowledge. This result is in support of (Obanya 1997) view that the education needs of an emergent Nigeria are well articulated, suggests that Nigerian education should be marked by a continuous search for excellence supported by the political will for good governance and transparency. There exist adequate pedagogy and strategies for inculcation of skills, and knowledge for employability, also there is an adoption of work-based learning, for absorption of graduates. It is also observed that entrepreneurship education has a positive impact/relevance, incites and instigates students to acquire employable skills. The study also revealed that graduates with practical skills are prone to be employed after graduation than their counterparts without the skills. Table 2 has a grand mean of 2.60 and standard deviation of 1.05 which is a moderate extent to which creative thinking graduates differ from their

counterparts. The results shows that entrepreneurship education improves capacity thinking /exploration, able to handle and resolve employees related issues, provide adequate knowledge in risk management, able to identify products/services needed in a chosen market areas, aids in the ideas concerning improvement of national development, increases carrying capacity, encourages innovation and helps to adapt to changes. This is an indication that the creative thinking graduates are bound to be entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

The result of hypotheses 1 as seen in table 3 shows a 'z' value of 2.317 which is greater than z-critical two-tail of 1.959 tested at 0.05 level of significance. This data shows that the result is significant, therefore the hypotheses which states that there is no significant difference between knowledgeable/ practical skills acquired graduates and practical phobia graduates in gaining employment was rejected. This rejection shows that there is a significant difference, meaning that knowledgeable and practical skills graduates have greater opportunities to be employed than their counterparts without the required skills. This result is in consonance with the assertion of (Arzeni; 2015) as stated that the idea of infusing entrepreneurship into education has spurred much enthusiasm in the last few decades. A myriad of effects has been stated to result from this, such as economic growth, job creation and increased societal resilience, but also individual growth, increased school engagement and improved equality. Table 4 which the testing of hypotheses 2 had z-calculated value of 2.002 while the z-critical value is 1.959. This result shows that the calculated value of 'z' is greater than the table value, meaning that there is a significant difference. Therefore the null hypotheses which states that there is no significant difference between creative thinking ideas graduates and graduates without creative thinking ideas on becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour was also rejected. This result indicates that creative thinking graduates have ample opportunities of becoming entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

Conclusion

From the findings above, it was concluded that the society cannot grow, develop without entrepreneurship education, based on this understanding there is a collaboration between the institutions and the industries to bridge the gap that exist. The institutions have the avenues for the training and inculcation of the needed skills so that their graduates can be absorbed after graduation. The study also revealed that entrepreneurship education enables the graduates to handle modern technology in business transactions, helps in drawing business plans and feasibility study, guides on how to invest capital judiciously, encourages social mobility and through the acquisition of practical skill and creative thinking ideas the graduates gain employment faster and also become entrepreneurs and employers of labour.

Recommendations

1. The collaboration effort between the institutions and the industries should be concretize so that the needs of the industries and the society will be taught and learnt in the institutions, giving room for the graduates to be absorbed after graduation.
2. Entrepreneurship education should be made a compulsory course in the institutions and emphasis should be laid on practical skills acquisition cum creative thinking.

References

- Aginah, C; Oguguo, B.& Nwokocha, E.(2013). *Essentials of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria*: Great stars publishers, Owerri, Imo state.
- Arzeni, S. (2015) Director, centre for entrepreneurship, SMEs, tourism and local development. Center for entrepreneurship, OECD, 2 rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France.

- Drucker, P.F. (1993). *Innovation and entrepreneurship practice and principles*: Harper business edition publisher, Newyork, London, Toronto, Sydney.
- Moja, T (2000). *Nigeria education sector analysis: An analytical synthesis of performance and main issues*, *document produced for the world bank*.
- Ordu, P.(2013). *Entrepreneurship: Principles, methods, cases*; Jop publishers Feno books.
- Osuala, E.C. (2008). *Foundation of business education. A behavioural objective approach*; Calabar: Centaur
- Obanya, P. (1997). "*Higher education for an emergent Nigeria*," *World bank implementation completion report: Nigeria - Federal universities development sector adjustment credit*.
- UNDP (1991). *Human development report 1991*. New York, Oxford university press.