

## **EFFECT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON THE CAREER INTENTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS OF STUDENTS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN ENUGU STATE, SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined effect of entrepreneurship education on the career intentions and aspirations of students of tertiary education institutions in Enugu State, South-East Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to find out the effect of curriculum contents on the number of business ideas generated and to ascertain the effect of curriculum content on the number of business opportunities identified. Other objectives were to investigate the effect of academic qualification on the number of business plans developed; and to explore the effect of teaching methods on the number of business startups established by students. The study was anchored on the Experiential Learning Theory. The population for the study was 4,313, which comprised academic staff and undergraduate and post-graduate students of the Department of Business Education and Faculties of Business Administration of the five institutions. Out of this population, a sample of 353 was drawn using Cochran's finite population correction factor (fpcf) technique. A set of questionnaire that consisted of close-ended items set on 5-point Likert-type scale was used to collect data from the respondents. Descriptive statistics comprising frequencies and percentages was used to analyze the data collected. Inferential statistics known as Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses of the study. It was the findings of the study that of curriculum contents had significant impact on the number of business ideas generated and teaching pedagogy had significant impact on the number of business opportunities identified. Other findings educator's competence level had significant impact on the number of business plans developed; and that teaching methods had significant impact on the number of business startups established by students.*

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship, education, university, business, tertiary institutions, curriculum, educator, experiential, teaching.

## **1.0 Introduction**

Since the time of Plato, education is important for two basic purposes, i.e. to produce new knowledge and to transfer knowledge. In the effort to keep pace with the ever-changing trend in the development arena, and as a response to the fast decreasing number of entrepreneurs and the rising incidence of unemployment among youths and graduates, government in 1982 turned to the education system for solution. Thus, in that year, series of reforms began in the nation's education system to the extent that by 2004, about three far-reaching reforms had been effected in that system. As part of the latest in the said series of reform, the Federal Government in 2006 introduced compulsory Entrepreneurship Education in the nation's various tertiary institutions of learning.

In the new economy, which is also a knowledge-based economy, education institutions, particularly higher education institutions, are entrusted with a new additional task, which is to contribute to the development of entrepreneurial talent among young graduates. The burgeoning of the entrepreneurship education since mid-1990s could be a result of the growing of the newly emerging knowledge-based economy. The new economy is experiencing a fundamental transformation. There rapid changes like "globally inter-linked, dearth of distance, life-long learning, constant innovation, creativity, flexibility, responsiveness, small enterprises and competition, are some of the prevailing characteristics of the current economy" (Cheng & Chan, 2019:1). The dynamism of the new economy creates enormous business opportunities that necessitate people to engage in innovative enterprising activity to grasp the opportunities at the right time and using the right way.

### **Effects of Entrepreneurship Education in a democratic governance**

As a consequence of the global economic meltdown and financial crises of the mid 2010s which almost brought her economy to its knees, Nigeria was compelled to adopt a policy that aimed at using Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) as a tool for economic recovery and national transformation as was the case with the Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs) or the Asian Tigers (Nwekeaku, 2010, 2013). No sooner than that policy was adopted by the defunct Yar'Adua administration, government discovered that the country lacked persons with the right entrepreneurship skills and capabilities with which to realize the very objective of the new SME policy despite the existence of a large army of unemployed youths most of whom were graduates of higher institutions of learning. Regrettably, the said large army of unemployed youth graduates do not possess the requisite vocational skill, technical know-how, capabilities and experience needed for any successful entrepreneurship, (Olokundun, 2017; Okojie, 2009). What actually led to this faux pas?

The foregoing, savory and unsettling as it was, compelled the said Yar' Adua administration which, of course, had wealth creation as a cardinal item in its Seven-Point Agenda to adopt entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education (EE) as a potent panacea. Pursuant to the above directive, the Federal Government in 2006 set up a Presidential committee on the implementation of entrepreneurship education with a broad based membership drawn from National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Education Trust Fund (ETF), ILO, UNESCO and the Hamitle Consult, a consulting firm on entrepreneurship education in the country with the NUC as a coordinating agency (FGN, 2006).

Related to the above is the directive of the Federal Government to all tertiary institutions in the country to run entrepreneurship studies programme as a compulsory course for all students irrespective of their disciplines with effect from 2007/2008 academic session and the NUC to coordinate and ensure compliance (Okojie, 2009). The second was that a centre for entrepreneurial development be established in each of the tertiary institutions where different skills would be taught. At the end of their programme of study, graduates of the tertiary institutions would be able to set up their own business with a view to contributing to the economy.

By and large, the expectation is that after receiving higher education, students should be masters in their different areas or fields of study with enough technical knowledge and vocational skill acquired while in the school. This is one reason the Federal Government in 2006 had to introduce Entrepreneurship Education into the curriculum of tertiary educational institutions to equip students and to make them self-relevant on graduation. As a means of controlling and reducing unemployment rate, self-employment was envisaged through the entrepreneurship education. (Wordu and Ekaete, 2019). This is also in line with the objectives of technical education according to National Policy on Education.

The survival of tertiary education institutions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will heavily depend on the extent they integrate electronic mobile technology and life skills into their academic programmes (Jegede, 2016). In fact, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has gone ahead to highlight the top Four trends in higher education worldwide as follows:

1. Increase in blended learning programmes (best practices of traditional classroom-based learning with online and digital learning).
2. Integrating life skills into higher education (imparting training in life skills in learners to be competent in the dynamic world of work).
3. Rapid rise in micro-credentials (mini-degrees or certifications in a specific topic area that are geared towards providing hands-on training to supplement their learners' education for better employment prospects).
4. Growth and potential of mobile technology (the integration of mobile technology in higher education to increase access to education. and offering learners high levels of interactivity, flexibility and personalization" (COL, 2017).

A critical look at the foregoing current trends in education worldwide points to the fact that they relate to what education should be at this day and age. Any education that does not strive to attain all the four trends listed by the COL is not offering the right modern higher education. According to Jegede (2017), the foregoing should, therefore, serve as a food for thought to any tertiary institution of learning, particularly in Nigeria and other developing countries seeking to attain national development and greatness.

### **Challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institution**

In view of the positive social and economic effects of entrepreneurship education, many educational institutions in Nigeria especially at the tertiary level should have by now gone far in the implementation of entrepreneurship education to develop students' awareness of the relevance of entrepreneurship training (Wordu and Ekaete, 2019). Investigations also reveal that the implementation has been dogged by several challenges. One major challenge faced in the institutions today is that the extent of entrepreneurial activities available in tertiary

institutions is not what to write home about. Entrepreneurial activities are treated with levity probably because it is offered in the institutions as electives or one of General Study (GS) courses. In some tertiary institutions, entrepreneurship education is seen as an addendum amongst catalogue of courses offered in the school and as such it is not given the required time and program activity. Students see it as not much important in their lives and lecturers don't give it the required attention. Even the method of teaching the learner is also a big problem. Ezenagu (2014) maintains that the methodology used in teaching technical education in Nigeria is largely non-experiential and expository, thus encouraging rote memory which does not necessarily aid understanding, resulting in learners perceiving study in this area as boring, too academic and demanding.

Latest investigations reveal that since twelve years tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria commenced implementation of the directive on entrepreneurship education curriculum, their efforts have been dogged by a number of daunting challenges. Prominent among such bottlenecks include lack of the required infrastructural facilities, equipment and quality teachers. Others are inappropriate or deficient teaching methodologies, lack of serious attention on the part of teachers of EE and the authorities of tertiary institutions of learning themselves, and lack of commitment on the part of students as well. One of these challenges, the issue of lack of commitment on the part of students, is worth highlighting to buttress this expose further.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study, therefore, is to examine the effects of entrepreneurship education in a democratic government on the career intentions and aspirations of students of tertiary institutions in Enugu State, South-East Nigeria.

The study pursued the following specific objectives: to find out the effect of the curriculum contents of entrepreneurship education programme on the number of business idea generated by students of tertiary education institutions: to assess the effect of the level of competence of educators/lecturers of entrepreneurship education programme on the number of business plans developed by students of tertiary education institutions: and to investigate the effect of teaching methods adopted in entrepreneurship education programme on the number of business start-ups established by students of tertiary education institutions.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Since the 1980s, the entire world has been grappling with very fast-paced development trends such that any nation for one reason or the other that fails to maintain the pace is left behind along the super-highway of development. Coincidentally, within the same period, Nigeria along with the rest of the world had come under the severe burden of the global financial crisis and associated economic meltdown of that period.

When Nigeria under the then Yar'Adua presidency made attempt to emulate these countries by embracing the SME strategy as a tool for turning its dwindling economy around, it discovered to its chagrin that she lacked adequate number of entrepreneurs to implement such strategy. When the government eventually turned to the country's large army of young graduates of universities and other tertiary institutions of learning for solution, it was again discovered that a frightening number of them did not possess the requisite entrepreneurial,

vocational or technical skills to either work or manage a typical SME to any successful end. Investigations also reveal that it is as a consequence of the foregoing that majority of these young graduates have remained unemployed and unemployable since. This is one part of the problem of this study.

Several expert opinions and results of successive studies also attribute the persistently rising rate of unemployment among youths, particularly graduates of universities and other higher educational institutions in Nigeria to lack of entrepreneurial skills. As investigations have also revealed, the rising incidence of youth and graduate unemployment in Nigeria is undoubtedly a logical by-product of the type of educational systems that were operated during the colonial and post-independence eras in the country which placed emphasis on liberal education rather than acquisition of vocational skills which prepares school leavers and graduates with vocational skills for better employment opportunities. Suffice it to say that the system focused on and produced school leavers and graduates whose number are always on the rise year after year without commensurate provision of employment opportunities. The foregoing is another part of the problem.

Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions of learning is aimed at inculcating entrepreneurial skills and attitudes in students to motivate entrepreneurial intentions or considerations of entrepreneurship as a career by undergraduates of Nigerian higher educational institutions. Despite the introduction of entrepreneurship education as a compulsory course in Nigerian tertiary institutions of learning, however, aspirations and demand for white collar jobs and graduate unemployment have persistently been on the increase. The foregoing challenges also constitute part of the problem of this study.

### **3.0 Conceptualising Entrepreneurship**

There is no generally acceptable definition of entrepreneurship that is considered as accurate enough and the absence of a universal definition results in the lack of consensus on the meaning of this concept (Katz & Green, 2009; Mokaya, Namusonge & Sikalieh, 2012). Different researchers such as Drucker (1985) and Shane and Venkataraman (2000) conceptualise entrepreneurship from various perspectives and viewpoints; however, the different conceptualisations are generally reflections of the analysts' respective fields of specialisation. Reitan (2014) depicted entrepreneurship as the dynamic procedure of making incremental wealth. As indicated by Ronstadt (1984), this wealth is made by people who take considerable risk in terms of value, time, and career commitment to bring new products, services and processes into being.

However, the definition of entrepreneurship as presented by Hisrich et al (2007) appears to have set the stage rolling regarding definition of entrepreneurship in the contemporary world. Hisrich et al (2007) conceived entrepreneurship as the way toward creating something new with value by allocating the vital time, energy and getting the benefits of monetary and personal fulfillments. The dominant perspectives in entrepreneurship research are the functional resource, the psychological and the behavioural views.

Entrepreneurship is more than simply starting a business. It is a process through which individuals identify opportunities, allocate resources, and create value. This creation of value is often through the identification of unmet needs or through the identification of

opportunities for change. Entrepreneurship is known as the capacity and attitude of a person or group of persons to undertake ventures with the probability of success or failures. It demands that the individual should be prepared to assume a reasonable degree of risks, be a good leader in addition to being highly innovative. In business management, Entrepreneurship is regarded as a "prime mover" of a successful enterprise just as a leader in any organization must be the environmental change agents.

UNDP (2009) defines 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. To Shane (2016), entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur, which can be defined as "one who undertakes innovations, finances and displays business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods". This may result in new organizations or may be part of revitalizing mature organizations in response to a perceived opportunity. The most obvious form of entrepreneurship is that of starting new businesses (referred to as a new venture), however, in recent years, the term has been extended to include social and political forms of entrepreneurial activity. When entrepreneurship is describing activities within a firm or large organizations, it is referred to as intrapreneurship and may include corporate venturing, when large entities spin-off organizations. Garba (2017) asserts that the term 'entrepreneurship' means different things to different people and with varying conceptual perspectives. He states that in spite of these differences, there are some common aspects such as risk taking, creativity, independence and rewards. The concept of entrepreneurship has indeed a wide range of meanings.

It was first used in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century by an Irish man by name Richard Cantillion who was then living in France. On the extreme, it is a term used broadly in connection with the innovation of modern industrial business (Akanni, 2018). According to Joseph Schumpeter (1934), an Australian economist, the single function which constitutes entrepreneurship concept is innovation, and such innovation results in new demand. Entrepreneurship is, therefore, a process which involves the creation of an innovative economic organization for the purpose of gain or growth under condition of risk and uncertainty (Dollinger, (2010) quoted in Akanni, 2018). Vanderwerf and Brush (2009) quoted in Akanni, 2018) after reviewing twenty-five definitions, concluded that entrepreneurship is a business activity consisting of some intersections of the following behaviours: creativity, innovation, general management, risk bearing and intention to realize high levels of growth. Hisrich and Peters (2016) state that entrepreneurship is a continuous process of creating something different that has value to the users.

### **3.1 Entrepreneurship Education (EE)**

In the preceding section on 'entrepreneurship development', it was alluded that the term comprises training, other forms of human capacity building and, of course, formal structured education, which obviously means Entrepreneurship Education (EE). How then do we conceptualize the term 'Entrepreneurship Education (EE)'.

Within the study of entrepreneurship, the debate continues as to whether or not entrepreneurship can be taught. Some people are undoubtedly 'born' or 'natural' entrepreneurs and will display entrepreneurial skills and behaviour without any enterprise education or training. But there is also a school of thought that argues that entrepreneurship

is a skill and can be learned. Drucker (1994) is quoted as saying that "most of what you hear about entrepreneurship is all wrong. It's not magic; it's not mysterious; and it has nothing to do with genes. It's a discipline and, like any other discipline, it can be learned" (Hill et al., 2003). Put differently, it was believed that entrepreneurs are individuals with peculiar genes who emerge as a consequence of genetic inheritance. However, this myth has been demystified based on the premise that every individual has the potential to become an entrepreneur through the process of education.

If one considers Drucker's version of entrepreneurship, it implies that if entrepreneurship can be learned, it is something that can be taught. While many authors have debated the arguments for and against intervention in entrepreneurship development, the benefits of interventions such as entrepreneurship education and training are widely acknowledged and accepted (Henry et al., 2003). Over the past decade, there has been significant growth in the provision of structured education and training programmes across the world (Henry et al., 2003a). But entrepreneurship education is a broad subject area and it covers a wide variety of education and training interventions, delivered by an extensive number of providers, ranging from universities, polytechnics and colleges to state agencies and private training companies. It can be applied at a number of different levels, ranging from primary school level all the way up to and including adult education and training, and lifelong learning. However, some authors make a clear distinction between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship training. Henry *et al.* (2003) identified three categories of intervention based primarily on the stage at which the intervention is provided. These interventions were categorized as follows:

1. "Education about enterprise,
2. Education for enterprise, and
3. Training in enterprise" (Henry et al., 2003).

The first of these is focused on awareness creation and is academic in nature and the second is aimed at the preparation of aspiring entrepreneurs who want to set up and run their own businesses. The third category, training in enterprise, is an extension of the second category and provides further entrepreneurial development to growing or established entrepreneurs. These distinctions in categorization are critical when determining the purpose of an enterprise education programme.

Fayette and Gailly (2004) defined entrepreneurship education as any pedagogical programme associated with inculcating entrepreneurial skills and qualities in learners. Similarly, Oduwaiye (2009) and Ooi, Selvarajah, and Meyer (2011) separately describe entrepreneurship education as the scope of lectures, curricular and programmes that attempt to provide students with the necessary entrepreneurial competencies, knowledge and skills, geared towards the pursuit of a career in entrepreneurship. This was supported by Ejere and Tende (2012) who posit that the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skill, and expertise, as regards the process of entrepreneurship is imperative for successful business startup.

Most definitions of entrepreneurship education agree that one of the main goals is inculcating entrepreneurial skills in learners which should culminate in entrepreneurial behaviour and action (Kjeldsen, 2008; Akpomi, 2009). Three key words closely associated with education as a concept are information, skill, and competencies. Hence a comprehensive definition of entrepreneurship education should incorporate information and skill as outcomes of the

process (Gibb, 2015). Therefore, this study will adopt the definition of entrepreneurship education presented by Alberti, Sciascia and Poli (2014), which describes entrepreneurship education as the structured formal communication of entrepreneurial competencies, which consist of skills and mental awareness employed by individuals towards the expression of entrepreneurial behaviour and action.

There are also other important distinctions that need be made when considering the field of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship is often considered to be a skill applied in the development of a new business, but this is only one aspect of the role and importance of entrepreneurial skills and attitude. Increasingly, it is being recognized that entrepreneurship is not only a means for creating a new business, but it is also an attitude that can be developed and applied by everyone in day-to-day life and working activities (Iredale, 2016). Indeed, many large corporations now seek to instill entrepreneurial attitudes and skills in their workforce, more usually associated with smaller companies. This is known as *intrapreneurship* and can bring about many benefits for large companies which need to be creative and innovative to stay ahead of their competitors.

Educational systems have not traditionally been geared towards the development of entrepreneurship, but have tended to have as their final goal, the creation of employees who would work in large companies or public administration. However, this situation is changing and there is a growing awareness in the world that initiatives should be developed to promote an enterprise culture and encourage risk-taking, creativity, and innovation. The field of enterprise education has an important role to play in enhancing and developing entrepreneurial skills and capabilities. Enterprise education from an early age should underpin the process of developing a culture of enterprise within society as opposed to one of dependency (Iredale, 2016), and in doing so, recognized that not everyone can be an entrepreneur, but everyone has the potential to be enterprising.

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education can, therefore, be considered from a variety of perspectives, including the traditional education system from primary up to tertiary level and the vocational education system. What is to be taught will depend largely on the target population. Throughout the world, entrepreneurship education is being provided through a range of avenues and through a wide variety of initiatives and programmes designed to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour and creativity. However, the question remains: how successful are these programmes? According to Kirby (2012), entrepreneurship education is different from 'traditional' management studies as the traditional management education may impede the development of the necessary entrepreneurial quality and skills. Entrepreneurship education needs a different teaching pedagogy, hence, there are studies trying to relate entrepreneurship education to "work-related learning" (Dwerryhouse, 2011), "experiential learning" (Kolb, 2014) "action-learning" (Smith, 2010) and "entrepreneurial training" (Gibb, 1999).

Entrepreneurship education is more than business management, it is about "learning", i.e. learning to integrate experience, skills and knowledge, to get prepared to start with a new venture. Hence, for the purpose of this study, entrepreneurship education refers to the formalized programme to equip students with the needed skills and knowledge to:



1. recognizing business opportunities 2. searching customers' insights, 3. understanding the needs of the market, 4. creating an idea, 5. developing the business plan, 6. running the business, 7. evaluating environmental, and 8. institutional and political issues

### **3.2 Entrepreneurship Implementation Intentions and Aspirations**

This simply refers to the concrete evidences of translation of entrepreneurship implementation intentions into a process that may lead to a new business venture which consists of five major steps: generation of a business idea, identification of market opportunity, development of a business plan, business start-up, and innovation.

Extrapolating from the foregoing definition, researchers like Edelman, Brush and Menolova (2013) conclude that such entrepreneurship actions like generating a business idea, identification of marketing opportunity and other follow-up actions associated with the entrepreneurship process obviously stand out as concrete evidences of one's intentions or aspirations to embark on entrepreneurship behaviours or activities sooner or later. The logic, therefore, follows that entrepreneurship actions and implementation intentions are closely related. The foregoing is also corroborated by such previous studies like Gollwitzer & Dettingen (2011), Gollwitzer (2004), and Gollwitzer & Sheeran (2016), who found that any person who embarks on any of these actions shows more likelihood for engaging in entrepreneurship behavior or activities. Finally and as Kourilisky (2015) argues, it is noteworthy to conclude that for any entrepreneurship programme to achieve its intended objectives, it must meaningfully equip its students with the requisite knowledge, skills, and competencies that are capable of motivating them to initiate actions in service of their respective entrepreneurship goals, intentions and aspirations while in school.

### **3.3 Entrepreneurship Implementation Actions**

This simply refers to the concrete evidences of translation of entrepreneurship implementation intentions into a process that may lead to a new business venture which consists of five major steps: generation of a business idea, identification of market opportunity, development of a business plan, business start-up, and innovation (Shulman and Shulman, 2004). We briefly discuss below the five major actions that are involved in the implementation of the entrepreneurship process.

#### **3.3.1 Generating Business Idea**

This is defined as a new feasible and viable proposition which with appropriate investment of human, material and financial resources can be translated into a profitable venture (Pinchot, 2017). Flowing from the above definition, Littunen (2000), therefore, argues that in the context of entrepreneurship, generation of business idea as an intention-informed action entails either discovery of a brand new business idea or development of a business concept over a period. In the view of Anene and Imam (2011), the chances of one generating any viable business idea is undoubtedly a function of the quantity and quality of information in one's possession. With regards to entrepreneurship education, Morais (2013) argues that the fact that students can generate business ideas creative enough to be translated into viable business ventures following years of exposure to entrepreneurship education programme is proof enough that business idea generation is teachable and learnable at school.

Research has shown that the commonest approach to business idea generation as a step in the entrepreneurship process is referred to as “brainstorming” (Osborn, 1957), which he describes as a process of developing as many ideas as possible by many critical minds working together in a group. Within the context of entrepreneurship education, brainstorming is a very important action capable of motivating students to generate viable business ideas, which is a tangible evidence of their very intentions and aspirations to engage in entrepreneurship ventures (Morais, 2013).

### **3.3.2 Identifying Marketing Opportunity**

This is defined as an existing but undiscovered gap in the marketplace waiting to be filled at an affordable price for profit (Dragan, 2012). Identification of a business opportunity is described by Dragan (2012) as an intelligent combination of field observations, customers’ opinion, invention and adaptation targeted at pinpointing a gap in the market for a product, service or processes to fill at an affordable price. Sadeghi et al. (2013) opine that opportunities are the expression of an entrepreneur’s intention to create value that will yield future profits if resources are deployed effectively within the control of the entrepreneur.

With regard to entrepreneurship education, Wouter (2015) argues that identifying business opportunity can also be regarded as another very important step of the entrepreneurship process which undergraduate students can take while in school. This was also the opinion of Klein (2014) whose study found that Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) students at all levels can identify marketing opportunities before or after graduation. In summary, identifying business opportunities by TEI students is a desired behavioural outcome because such originates from the meeting point between intentions and actions of students.

### **3.4.3 Developing a Business Plan**

This has been defined as a comprehensive written report of the goals of a particular new or existing business which includes discussion of the business concept, operational plan, marketing plan, financial issues, organizational structure and legal requirements (Meloy, 1998; Zuckerman, 2004). From the foregoing definition, a business plan serves as a guidepost that marks the take-off point, points to the way forward, and the destination of any business (Savtko, 2013). In a related viewpoint, Baker, Adams & Davis (2015) contend that business plans are employed not by start-ups and new ventures, but also by going concerns. In lending credence to the importance of a business plan in the entrepreneurship process, Perry (2016) and Hormozi et al., (2012) emphasize that the use of business plans not only enhances the chances of survival and success of any businesses, but also reduces the likelihood of any failure on the part of such businesses. Again, as Schamp & Deschovolmeester (2008) and Armstrong (2011) point out, one of the cardinal objectives of a business plan is to enable entrepreneurs imbibe the requisite attitudes, values and motivations towards the growth of the business; and to constantly highlight the very intentions and aspirations envisioned by them and the action taken in order to ensure survival and success of the business. In the view of Delman & Shane (2014), in a situation whereby a business requires investment funds from financial institutions, or individual lenders, investors or venture capitalists, it is by way of a well crafted business plan that the intention of the entrepreneur is vividly and convincingly communicated to the former for possible release of the loan being sought with respect to entrepreneurship education. White, Hertz & D’Souza (2017) are the advice that students can undertake a business process that entails informal review of certain key aspects of the

performance indices of an already existing businesses for a start; adding that developing a formal business plan represents a tangible evidence of the commitment of the students to the very intentions and aspirations of engaging in entrepreneurship. In fact, by formalizing intentions with a creative business plan, students can be further motivated towards actualizing their intentions and aspirations for entrepreneurship on or after graduation.

#### **3.4.4 Business Start-ups**

Business start-ups are temporary or experimental organizations, not necessarily smaller versions of larger organizations per se, which are set up for purpose of searching for product/market fit and a scalable business model (Cole *et al*, 2014; Cassar, 2004). Cassar (2004) also pointed out that as opposed to a business start-up, a large organization is, on the other hand, a permanent company that has already accomplished a product or market fit that is designed to execute a repeatable and scalable business model.

With respect to EE, students always enjoy the rare opportunity of experiment and navigation round both the successes and failures horizons of starting an early-stage venture. The foregoing finds favour with the previous finding by Shirokova, Osiyevskyy & Bogatyreva (2015) who posit that the role of universities and other TEIs has increasingly been recognized, particularly their enviable contributions to a nation's business sector with new generations of young entrepreneurs. For instance, some of the biggest and amazing disruptions in the high-tech industry across the world were recently founded by university entrepreneurs like Mark Zuckerberg who founded Facebook while he was a student at Harvard University, Cambridge, Michael Dell who founded Dell Computers while at the University of Texas at Austin, and Bill Gates who founded Microft Computers soon after dropping off from university. Put in another way, the point is that the university and other TEIs with their entrepreneurship education serve as a veritable platform for students to meaningfully express their intentions and aspirations for a career in entrepreneurship by way of business start-ups.

### **3.5 Theoretical Framework**

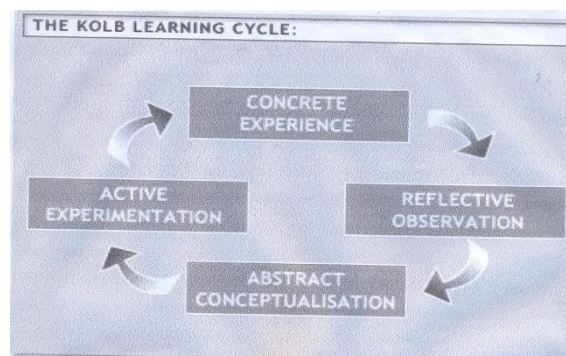
This study, of course, examines the effect of entrepreneurship education programme on the implementation intentions and aspirations of students of tertiary educational institutions. The theoretical underpinnings of this study are, therefore, derived from the Experiential Learning Theory and Implementation Intention Model.

#### **3.5.1 Experiential Learning Theory**

The Experiential Learning Theory was postulated by D.A. Kolb in 1984. According to Kolb, the major postulate of the theory involves the process of knowledge creation through transformation of experience. The theory is hinged on the assumption that learning takes place between the individual and his immediate environment, and that man, particularly adults learn effectively when new information or experience is presented in real-life situations. To this extent, experiential learning theory, therefore, views learning as a social process of adaptation which employs a dynamic and holistic perception of learning.

Experiential learning theory is classified as a constructivist learning theory particularly because individuals transform their experiences into new knowledge using cognitive and social prosperities. Consequently, knowledge is considered as subjective and created as a function of the interaction between content and experience. Kolb went ahead to illustrate his

experiential learning theory with a special learning cycle popularly referred to as the Kolb's Learning Cycle. Kolb Learning Cycle suggests that a subject can be taught through creating significant learning experiences that encourage learning through engagement in the activities associated with that subject. Fig. 2.1 illustrates the four stages in the Kolb's model of experiential learning. It suggests that individuals learn through the process of experience, reflection, thought and experimentation.



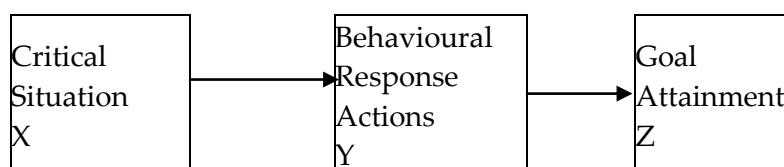
*Fig. 2: Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning*

**Source:** Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (Kolb, 1984).

### 3.5.2 Implementation Intention Model

Implementation intention model was postulated by Golwitzer (1993) and the model emphasises the mental act of relating a foreseen critical circumstance to an effective goal-directed response. This implies that an association is framed between mental representations of determined signals considered as critical situations, and the method for achieving goals which might be alluded to as behavioral responses. Golwitzer's theory posits that goal intentions stipulate what one wants to achieve, while implementation intention stipulates the behaviour/action that has to perform towards goal attainment, and the particular situational context in which one will perform. Hypothetically, it implies that if situation Y occurs, then an individual will initiate goal-directed response Z.

The formation of an implementation intention involves an individual identifying a response that is instrumental for goal attainment as well as anticipating a critical signal to initiate that response. The theory asserts that the mental linkage created by implementation intentions enhances goal attainment based on psychological processes associated with both the anticipated situation and the intended behavior. This owes to the fact that the formation of an implementation intention involves the selection of a critical future situation; hence the mental representation of this situation becomes actively heightened and activated.



*Fig. 1: A Schema showing Implementation Intention Model.*

**Source:** Golwitzer & Sheeran (2006).

Kolb's learning cycle involves two interrelated ends which are grasping and transforming experience. In Fig. 2 above, the vertical axis illustrates the grasping mode of experience beginning from concrete experience as the initial stage to conceptualization. Both stages refer to the various approaches adopted by individuals geared at acquisition of information from the real world through either apprehension or comprehension. Apprehension is achieved as a consequence of the tangibility and qualities of an immediate experience, while comprehension is reached as a consequence of the conceptual interpretation and symbolic representation of experience. The initial stage of Kolb's model, which is concrete experience, can be achieved through the use of simulations or subject related games, demonstrations, presentation with real world experiences and social problem.

The incorporation of real life practices into these activities is considered valuable and effective, at motivating students towards application of entrepreneurial skills in proffering solution to real life issues. In summary, the experimental learning theory motivates the employment of holistic teaching methods and pedagogies that attempt to inculcate curriculum content knowledge, entrepreneurial skills as well as motivate intentions to become entrepreneurs.

#### 4.0 Methodology

The methodology adopted by this study was survey research that used validated questionnaire to collect data from five sample units: National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) Enugu Centre, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus (UNEC), Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu and Godfery Okoye University Enugu. The population for the study was 4,313, which comprised academic staff and undergraduate and post-graduate students of the Department of Business Education and Faculties of Business Administration of the five institutions. Out of this population, a sample of 353 was drawn using Cochran's finite population correction factor (fpcf) technique as follows:

This special formula is given by:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

N = Population size for the study

To determine the sample size for this study, we assume the following:

z = 1.96 (i.e 95% confidence level)

p = Estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population (estimated at 50% or 0.5)

q = 1-p (the proportion of an attribute that is not present in the population (100% - 50% or 0.5)

e = desired level of precision (estimated at 5% or 0.05).

Therefore, the sample size for the study was 353.

Purposive sampling technique which favoured only target respondents in the sample units who were adjudged to possess good knowledge of the business education, management and entrepreneurship was used in selecting the 353 respondents that participated in the study. Results of the Cronbach's Alpha test showed a reliability index of 0.82. Descriptive statistics comprising frequency units, tables and percentages was used in analyzing the data, while the

four hypotheses of the study were tested using Multiple Regression Analysis, all with the aid of SPSS software.

## 5.0 Results

Out of the 353 copies of questionnaire administered on the respondents at the sample units for study, 301 (85.3%) were returned well completed, 31 (8.8%) were returned but badly completed and, therefore, rejected. While 21 (6.0%) were not returned at all. It was, therefore, the responses borne by these 301 questionnaires that were used for the analysis and tests whose results are presented below.

In this subsection, the results of the Multiple Regression Analysis based on the model earlier specified. As earlier stated, the hypotheses of the study were tested using Multiple Regression Analysis. The test was carried out using the primary data generated from the field survey. These data are displayed in Tables 1, and 2 below. As part of the test procedure, the said data were fed into the SPSS software according to each of the four hypotheses. The results of the test are displayed in tables 3 below.

**TABLE 1: Model Summary**

Model 1	R	R Square	Adjusted R Squared	Std of Error Estimate	Durbin Watsun stat.
1	0.547 <sup>a</sup>	0.229	0.698	0.91487	2.614732

- Dependent variables:** EE implementation intentions and actions (business ideas, business plans, business startups).
- Predictors (constants):** curriculum contents, teaching pedagogy, educator's competence.

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021; SPSS output.

**TABLE 2: ANOVA Model<sup>a</sup>**

Source of difference	Sum of squares	Df	mean square	f <sub>0</sub>	Sig
Between Groups	8.111	3	2.7923	10	.000
Within Groups	37.306	298	0.270		
Total	45.415	301			

- Dependent variables:** EE implementation intentions and actions (business ideas, business plans, business startups).
- Predictors (constants):** curriculum contents, teaching pedagogy, educator's competence,

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021; SPSS output.

**TABLE 3: CO-EFFICIENT<sup>b</sup>**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig
	B	STD Error	Beta		
<b>Constant)</b>	1.659	0.242		6.85	0

Curriculum contents	0.83	0.071	0.097	1.189	0.002
Teaching pedagogy	0.22	0.065	0.279	3.41	0.001
Educator's competence	0.41	0.194	0.215	2.72	0.041

- a. **Dependent variables:** EE implementation intentions and actions (business ideas, business plans, business startups).
- b. **Predictors (constants):** curriculum contents, teaching pedagogy, educator's competence,

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021; SPSS output.

The results of the Multiple Regression Analysis as displayed in tables 3 are interpreted below. Table 1 shows that the Adjusted R Squared has the value of  $r^2 = 0.698$  which indicates that when all the variables are combined, the multiple linear regression model could explain for approximately 70% of the variation in EE implementation intentions and actions. In Table 2, it is shown that the calculated F-value is 10.0, which shows that the recession model is very significant and well specified at the probability of 0.000. Table 3 shows that the two independent (predictors) variables have the following beta and probability values: curriculum contents ( $B = 0.097$ ;  $P = 0.002$ ); teaching pedagogy ( $B=0.279$ ;  $P=0.001$ ). EE implementation intentions and actions =  $1.659+0.097$  (curriculum contents) +  $0.279$  (teaching pedagogy) +  $0.215$  (educator's competence) +  $0.329$  (teaching methods).

When interpreted, the equation tells us that when curriculum contents increases by 1, business ideas goes up by 0.097 or 10%; when teaching pedagogy increase by 1, the dependent variable (business opportunities) goes up by 0.279 or 28%; when educator's competence increases by 1, business plans goes up by 0.215 or 22%.

The four hypotheses are tested by using the primary data generated from the field survey as displayed in tables 1 and 2. The test of the hypotheses is based on the results of the Multiple Regression Analysis as contained in Table 3.

#### **Hypothesis No. 1:**

- i: **The curriculum contents of entrepreneurship education programme had no significant effect on the number of business idea generated by students of tertiary education institutions.**

Table 3 shows that the beta value is 0.097, while the probability is 0.002, which is less than the critical probability of 0.05. This means that there is very low probability that the statement overall model was insignificant was true.

#### **Decision**

The probability of the model (0.002) is less than the critical probability of 0.05 and the model found to be significant with a calculated F-value of 10.0. Based on the decision rule for this study as specified in chapter three above, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected, and the alternate hypothesis accepted. We therefore, conclude that the curriculum contents of entrepreneurship education programme had significant effect on the number of business idea generated by students of tertiary education institutions in Enugu State.

**Hypothesis No.2:**

- ii: The teaching pedagogy of entrepreneurship education programme had no significant effect on the number of business/market opportunities identified by students of tertiary education institutions.**

Table 3 also shows that the beta value of the model is 0.279 as it pertains to teaching pedagogy at a probability of 0.001, which is less than the critical probability of 0.05.

**Decision**

Since the probability of the regression model as it pertains to psychosocial workplace factors is 0.001, which is less the 0.05 critical probability threshold and the model significant at a calculated F-Value of 10.0, we reject the null hypothesis and accept its alternate one going by the decision rule of the study. We, therefore, conclude that the teaching pedagogy of entrepreneurship education programme had no significant effect on the number of business/market opportunities identified by students of tertiary education institutions in Enugu State.

**Hypothesis No.3:**

- iii: The level of competence of educators/lecturers of entrepreneurship education programme had no significant effect on the number of business plans developed by students of tertiary education institutions.**

Table 3 also shows that the beta value of the model is 0.215 as it pertains to educator's competence at a probability of 0.041, which is less than the critical probability of 0.05.

**Decision**

Since the probability of the regression model as it pertains to psychosocial workplace factors is 0.041, which is less the 0.05 critical probability threshold and the model significant at a calculated F-Value of 10.0, we reject the null hypothesis and accept its alternate one going by the decision rule of the study. We, therefore, conclude that the level of competence of educators/lecturers of entrepreneurship education programme had significant effect on the number of business plans developed by students of tertiary education institutions in Enugu State.

**5.0 Implications of the Findings of this study**

Generally, the findings of this study, no-doubt, have profound implications with regards to the success of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship drives as strategies for national economic development in a democratic developing economy like Nigeria. By and large, government, employers of labour, and authorities of tertiary education institutions in Nigeria and elsewhere across the world will need to pay special attention to all the factors that provide incentives for provision of abundant and quality entrepreneurship education to students in the country's educational institutions and schools. Such factors should include provision of adequate and functional infrastructural facilities such as electricity and potable water, among others, enthronement and sustenance of cordial relationship between staff union and university authorities. Others are strengthening of university funding mechanisms, strengthening of the country's national system of innovation (NSI), and strengthening of



University-industry linkage system that promotes both incubation and commercialization of business innovations.

Again, the results of this study not only point up the importance of entrepreneurship education in the nation's education system, but also the fact that the recent policy by the Federal Government of Nigeria which is aimed at making entrepreneurship education a compulsory course to every student in any of the nations tertiary education institutions in spite of such student's major is a step in the right direction. In fact, the findings of this study serve as a huge motivation to government in its determination to ensure that the policy is implemented to the letter in all higher educational institutions in the country as an effective strategy for addressing the steadily rising rate of youth and graduate unemployment and poverty in the country. The results of this study also point to the fact that entrepreneurship education can also serve as a potent strategy for addressing the lack of the right number of young entrepreneurs badly needed to drive the SME strategy that is aimed at turning the nation's comatose economy around.

Consequent upon the foregoing, the findings of this study also have grave implications in terms of the challenge they pose to both the internal support systems of the higher educational institutions and non-governmental external support intervention systems from industries, corporate entities and international development partners. Otherwise stated, the results of this study pose a challenge to these two support systems, most particularly the institutions' internal support systems, to find a much more effective ways of providing seed funds, incubation parks, business development centres, staff training, workshops, seminars and conferences for staff and students of entrepreneurship.

## **Conclusion**

This study has shown that the curriculum contents for entrepreneurship programmes in tertiary education institutions in Nigeria significantly enhance generation of creative business ideas by stimulating critical thinking in students. However, there is still a challenge as regards what should constitute the practical activities in entrepreneurship education, as most practical demonstrations in the curriculum tend towards acquisition of mere vocational skills, rather than imparting of entrepreneurial skills, aptitudes values and other behavioural dispositions. There is also ample evidence to show that experiential pedagogical approach adopted in the teaching of EE in tertiary institutions motivate identification of business opportunities by way of creating a shared vision of the process of entrepreneurship. However, there are indications that the class sessions are mostly expository and monotonous and, therefore, may not stimulate students' interest and focus towards the practical knowledge of the curriculum.

This study also provides valid evidence to show that adoption of effective teaching methods in entrepreneurship facilitates business start-ups, by stimulating students' interest through action-oriented teaching practices. However, there are indications that inadequate funding may impede the business start-up potential of most students in the country. It is also the conclusion of this study that the experience arid skill of entrepreneurship educators in most Nigerian TEIs motivates students to write business plans. However, some of the educators lack sufficient training on modern approaches to effective delivery of entrepreneurship courses.

Finally, it was recommended that authorities of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should ensure that the curriculum of entrepreneurship education has enough contents on critical thinking and brainstorming practical sessions that can motivate business idea generation, that there should be paradigm shifts in the teaching pedagogy and teaching methods used in entrepreneurship education to emphasize experiential and practical approaches, invitation of guest speakers, simulations, and group projects, among others recommendations organisations should ensure that they provide the needed motivational incentives such as regular training, formal education, workshops, seminars and conferences, compensation and remuneration are regularly given to workers; and that organisations should strive to pay adequate fringe benefits as part of their reward systems.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion reached by this study, the following recommendations which are briefly discussed below are proffered for diligent implementation towards realising the lofty goals of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria. First and foremost, authorities of tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria, particularly course curriculum designers and academic planners, should always ensure that the curriculum of entrepreneurship education programme has adequate content of sessions on critical thinking and brain-storming that aim at motivating generation of business ideas. While the benefits of vocation education as an article of entrepreneurship education cannot be over-emphasized, vocational skill training alone as a practical activity cannot substitute for entrepreneurship, let alone motivate student towards generation of variable business ideas. Thus, idea generation presentation sessions should be made a graded component of entrepreneurship programme in Nigerian tertiary education institutions. This is very important considering that every business begins with an idea. Business idea generation activities should be tailored towards students' courses of study and interests in order to motivate active participation. There is also need to include aspects in the curriculum that are relevant to talent development, particularly because development of innate abilities may influence the type of business ideas generated.

There is a need for a paradigm shift in the pedagogical approaches adopted in Nigerian universities from being largely theoretical to experiential and practical approaches. As identified in the literature, problem Based Learning (PBL), Learning By Doing (LBD), or Do it Yourself (DIY) approaches are highly recommended for both theoretical and practical sessions of any entrepreneurship education programme. These approaches can influence students' understanding of the process of entrepreneurship and also motivate identification of business opportunities, because experiential learning models engage real life contexts and practical activities. This is important because a business idea can only be translated into a business enterprise, only if a target market (opportunity) is identified and exploited.

Effective teaching methods such as invitation of guest speakers, individual and group project and particularly business simulation activities should be adopted by Nigerian universities to stimulate students' interest and business start-ups. Student business startups should be a prerequisite activity of an entrepreneurship programme because it increases the likelihood of students engaging in entrepreneurial activities on graduation. Nigerian universities should also collaborate and partner with financial institutions and non- governmental organisations

to provide business start-up funding for student entrepreneurs. This is because funding is a major challenge for many student entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship educators should ensure to utilise their experience and skill to motivate students' commitment to entrepreneurship related learning with particular emphasis on business plan writing. Mastery of the art of business plan writing should be a prerequisite for graduation alongside undergraduate projects and dissertations. This is hinged upon the fact that angel investors, partnering financial institutions and other stakeholder support systems mostly favour business plan competitions as basis for supporting business start-ups. More emphasis should be laid on training and re-training of entrepreneurship educators on the peculiarity and modalities involved in delivery of entrepreneurship modules and courses. The experience possessed by entrepreneurship educators notwithstanding, effective teaching particularly as regards, ability of entrepreneurship course delivery or classroom communication may pose a challenge as a consequence of lack of training. Therefore, university authorities can partner with training organisations to provide 'train-the-trainer' programmes or certifications on entrepreneurship courses such as business plan writing.

University support systems in Nigerian universities should be characterised by initiatives such as technology patenting and commercialization, seed funding, business mentoring and business incubators to motivate knowledge sharing among students and innovations. It is also recommended that engagement of students with entrepreneurial development initiatives provided by institutions should involve students across all levels. Recent findings in entrepreneurship research have shown that early exposure to practical oriented entrepreneurship activities can increase the likelihood of expression of entrepreneurial behavior by undergraduate students. Student entrepreneurship refers to the expression of entrepreneurial behaviours such as business start-ups while in school. With the likes of enterprises such as Dell Computers, Facebook, Google and Jobberman that began as school projects, it is highly recommended that student entrepreneurship should be an embedded institutional policy that cuts across all levels of undergraduate studies.

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