

FIELDTRIPS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL ACQUISITION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Field trips in the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in Nigerian universities help to bring about effective and efficient learning among undergraduates. Field trip is a group excursion away from the normal education environment for first-hand experience but rarely adopted by some universities in Nigerian. This paper therefore examined the regularity of field trips by undergraduates and the entrepreneurial skills acquired in Oyo State, Nigeria. The population of the study was undergraduates of federal, state and private universities in Oyo state. Eight hundred and thirteen respondents were randomly selected from one federal, state and private university in Oyo State, Nigeria. The questionnaire was used to gather information while data was analysed by using percentage method. The findings revealed that less than 50% of the undergraduates indicated that embarking on field trips on entrepreneurial skill acquisition were below expectations especially in the federal university in Oyo state. Regular educational field trips should be undertaken on by universities because it can help to give a practical approach for the entrepreneurial curriculum and the development of more interest in learning and acquiring skills of interest among undergraduates in Oyo State. Nigeria

Keywords: Fieldtrips, Undergraduates, Universities, Entrepreneurial Education. Skill Acquired

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education was introduced into universities curriculum with the objective to train and develop business skills of undergraduates in Nigeria. The philosophy of entrepreneurship education is a building block for a well-rounded education which promises to make school rigorous, relevant, and engaging, and creates the possibility for unleashing and cultivating creative energies and talents among university students. National Universities Commission (NUC) was directed to design the curricula and course specifications for entrepreneurship education for the undergraduate programmes regardless of their disciplines. In order to achieve these stated objectives by universities, Institutional

frameworks, approaches and strategies were stated to enhance learning and skill development among undergraduates. Common teaching methods for entrepreneurial education in Nigerian universities include; lectures, individual presentation, group assignments and projects, seminars presentations, career talks, practical skills development by facilitators or vendors, group discussion (Fayolle et al., 2008; Lonappan et al., 2011; Solomon, 2008) with little emphasis on field trips to businesses of various skill.

Entrepreneurial field trips for undergraduates can provide them with the opportunity to under study the processes of small, medium and larger scale business which includes: factories, organisations. Students gain first hand experiences which allow teachers to expand the topic which is not possible during the normal lecturers. This learning and teaching method can enable the undergraduates to integrate new perspectives with informal environments that will enhance learning initiatives and innovations. Among the many, educational tours benefits, skill development has been found to be the most important. In order to meet several educational tour objectives, students need to apply skills, values and general knowledge in new settings. Learning through field trips is more effective when it comes through experiences because it is the process of acquiring new knowledge or modifying the existing knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, or preferences, embarking on field trips for Entrepreneurial awareness and skill acquisition within a perfect informal setup for discussion, dialogues and experiences. It will help in developing various life-skills, such as team building, time management etc, to enhance one's reach and impact in society. The need to adopt the learning method of entrepreneurial field trips will enable the reinforcement, engagement, socialisation, exposure, curiosity and retention of undergraduates in Nigerian universities.

Venturing into any business requires a vast knowledge of skills by the entrepreneur. Starting off a new business has been found to be affected by lots of hitches because business decisions are most times made under conditions of uncertainty especially with reference to the functional areas (Timmons et al., 2013). Therefore, undergraduates for entrepreneurship require exposure to businesses and organisations in order to develop conceptual and practical skills if they are to confront the challenges involved in the entrepreneurial activities (Gibb, 2002). In the light of this, the studies in the field of entrepreneurship education have placed emphasis on the development of innovative ideas in undergraduates to be able to tackle challenges in circumstances they find themselves (Kailer, 2009). Premised on this is the need to have teaching methods that can better allow students to address the complications involved in new business generation (Biggs, 2003). The entrepreneurship course content reviews have shown that the teaching methods by various universities are of various categories with little or no emphasis on field trips to businesses of various skills. Embarking on regular fieldtrips can enhance the transfer of the form of entrepreneurship know how and motivation for learning in

the future by seeing the practicability. Thus, this study investigated the rate of embarking on fieldtrips for entrepreneurial skill development of undergraduates as well as the skills acquired in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study include:

1. Determine the frequency at which undergraduates embark on field trips to businesses of various entrepreneurial skills in Universities in Oyo State, Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the vocational skills acquired by undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria
3. Proffer recommendations on field trips and entrepreneurial skills acquisition in universities in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Conceptual Issues

Entrepreneurship Education and Innovation

According to the European Commission (2008), entrepreneurship can be defined as an individual's ability to turn ideas to actions and includes creativity, innovation and risk taking as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This view is further corroborated by Ekpenyong (2010), when he stated that the objectives of entrepreneurship include establishment of entrepreneurship mind set; production of responsible and enterprising individuals who will become entrepreneurs, and/or entrepreneurial thinkers who could contribute to the economic development and poverty alleviation in Nigeria.

Philosophy of Teaching and Learning Entrepreneurship Education

A teaching philosophy statement is a systematic and critical rationale that focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and their effect on student learning in the post-secondary setting and is sensitive to contextual factors, Debra and Michel (2012). Learning and development philosophy is built upon how individuals internalize and apply what they learn based on how they acquire the knowledge. An instructor's teaching style is directly related to his philosophy of what it means to know and learn. The rationale for making particular teaching choices becomes more apparent when new faculty members reflect on what they believe about teaching and learning. Much of what faculty believe comes from their own experiences as students, the images of teaching they hold, and their experiences as teachers. There is, however, a body of research on teaching and learning that may serve faculty well as they hone their teaching craft (Robin, 2007).

According to Robin (2007) numerous philosophers have studied what it means to teach and learn, and have provided various explanations of the process of becoming educated. The faculty begin to refine their own beliefs and

understandings of what it means to know through examining numerous theories of knowledge and make sense of the processes of teaching and learning in their own minds. The philosophy of education and training is to improve the quality of the life of the educated to be useful to the self and the society especially by contributing positively to its overall development and advancement (Mohammed, 2015).

The European Commission (2016) argued that Course content, teaching and learning methods need to be appropriate if entrepreneurship education is to be delivered effectively. Practical dimensions, student participation, interdisciplinary and international elements in teaching are all important. Moreover, they argue that 'formal teaching is not the only activity that affects students' ability to become great entrepreneurs (European Commission, 2016).

Teaching Methods of Entrepreneurship

Various perspectives on the teaching of entrepreneurship have been noted in literature. Quite a number of researchers have suggested that entrepreneurship education should vividly outline the theories and principles of entrepreneurship because they are important in the development of cognitive skills of students (Fiet, 2001). Other commentators have however argued that practically focused and action-based techniques are more valid (Hostager & Decker, 1999 17 & Johannisson, Landstrom & Rosenberg 1998). In a holistic summation, Anderson and Jack (2008) posited that the teaching of entrepreneurship should stress both the theoretical and practical parts of entrepreneurship. Many ways to deliver the entrepreneurship courses/programmes have been detected over time. In his work, Ronstadt (1990), reasoned that students should be trained to make critical decisions in the —random and uncertain nature of entrepreneurial environments and hence the entrepreneurship education should be jeered towards the practical training on how to establish and run a new business. To counter that position, Collin, Smith & Hannon, (2006) encouraged active teaching and learning techniques. Co and Mitchell (2006), based on myriads of teaching approaches, observed that it is necessary to probe whether current teaching methods achieve the course objectives. They advised employing more interactive methods such as role playing and simulation for students to practice analytical and decision making skills. In a research carried out by Solomon, Duffy, & Tarabashy, (2002), it was noted that traditional lecturing methods are popular in entrepreneurship education. Some commentators however criticized the use of traditional methods and argued that entrepreneurship training should be action-based and practically oriented (Davies & Gibb, 1991 & Mwasalwiba, 2010). The researchers reasoned that traditional methods which are jeered towards theory and concepts are not suitable for teaching entrepreneurship, and instead entrepreneurship learning should be more proactive, with teachers playing the roles of guides or facilitators. This position is further corroborated by Young (1997) who argued that entrepreneurship education needs

experienced-based and practical learning set-ups and these are not easy to obtain through traditional teaching attempts. On the other hand, some scholars think that problem-based learning for entrepreneurship education is more appropriate, where learning is student-oriented (Hanke, Kisenwether & Warren 2005). The traditional method of pedagogy in educational institutions has been through face-to-face, where the students depend on their teachers throughout the course of pursuing their education goals. According to Mohammed (2015), this teacher-centred technique of education encourages students' over-dependence on their teachers, hence it has negative effect on students' independent capacity and ability to explore, create and innovate.

Importance of Field Trips and Entrepreneurial Skill Development

- Identify, define, and characterize problems
- Spot opportunities for innovation
- Segment and analyse opportunities
- Evaluate and choose innovation diffusion pathways
- Evaluate and choose models of new ventures
- Conduct customer and market research both qualitatively and quantitatively
- Design customer journey
- Establish foundation of product development
- Evaluate and choose market strategy
- Develop an in depth understanding of your customer
- Identify and quantify sources of value
- Map and influence customer decision making process

Methodology

Research Designs:

In carrying out this study, the survey approach was quantitative and qualitative techniques, primary was used to gather information from undergraduates on entrepreneur education. The population of the study comprised all 300 hundred level undergraduates in the federal, state and private universities in Oyo State. Questionnaire with a four point scale of “not at all true”, “moderately not true”, “moderately true” and “very true” was used to collect information from the undergraduates on the regularity of field trips embarked on, the skills which undergraduates have acquired since the commencement of entrepreneurship education and the willingness of acquiring a job in a skill among undergraduates in the universities in Oyo State.

Sample and sampling technique

Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to determine participants for the study. At the first stage, purposive sampling was used to select one federal university (University of Ibadan) and one state university (Technical University) in Oyo State because they are both the only federal and state owned universities in the

state. Also, a private university (Lead City University) was randomly selected from the private universities in Oyo state. Two out of the total number of faculties was randomly selected from each university. A total of six faculties was selected for the study which include: Education and Arts, Education, Social Sciences, Sciences and Technology. A total of 813 undergraduate students were selected purposively from the departments in the selected areas of event planning, tie, and dye, piggery, hair making, robotics, cyber security, fashion design, makeup and Agro-farming.

Results

Objective One: Determine the rate at which undergraduates embark on field trips to businesses of various entrepreneurial skills in University in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Table One: My Institution Takes Us On Field Trips Which Include Observing Workers And Conditions Under Which They Work**Table 1:**

University	My Institution Takes Us On Field Trips Which Includes Observing Workers And Conditions Under Which They Work									
	Not At All True	%	Moderately Not True	%	Moderately True	%	Very True	%	Total	%
Federal (Uni. Of Ibadan)	94	34.94	80	29.70	76	28.30	19	7.10	269	
State (The Technical University)	56	26.92	60	28.84	65	31.25	27	12.9	208	
Private University (Leads City University)	60	17.94	87	26.04	90	26.94	97	29.04	334	
SUM TOTAL	210	25.89	227	27.99	231	28.48	143	17.63	811	

Fieldwork 2019

Table one reveals the frequency at which undergraduates embark on fieldtrips to businesses of different skills in order to expose and train them on entrepreneurial skills by their institutions of learning. The table shows that 34.94% and 29.70% of undergraduates in the federal university in Oyo State indicated “not at all true” and “moderately not true”. The table also reveals that undergraduates in the state university indicated mostly “moderately true” with 31.25% statements. There was also a high response on “moderately not true” with 28.84% by some of the undergraduates in the state university. While most of the private university undergraduates indicated “very true statement” with a percentage of 29.04%, 26.04% of the learners also indicated moderately not true. In sum total, 25.89% of all undergraduates in all universities indicate “not at all true”, 27.99% indicated “moderately not true”, 28.48% indicated moderately true and 17.63% indicated “very true”

This finding on the table shows that no institution has up to 50% score. Exposure to regular fieldtrips to businesses of various skills for exposure and the development of entrepreneurial skills of university undergraduates in Oyo State is not embarked on regularly. While responses from the state university indicate some of the undergraduates feel the frequency at which they embark on field trips are moderately satisfactory, others feel the frequency at which they embark on field trips on entrepreneurial skill development is not regular enough. Only the private university undergraduates embark more on regular field trips to businesses of various skills to under study workers for entrepreneurial skill development more than other institutions in the state. This implies that the use of fieldtrips as a type of teaching method for learning of skill acquisition is yet to be fully adopted or used by institutions in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Objective Two: Ascertain vocational skill acquired by undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Table 2.1: I have Acquired a Skill Since I Commenced Courses on Education

University	I have Acquired a Skill Since I Commenced Courses on Education									
	Not At All True	%	Moderately Not True	%	Moderately True	%	Very True	%	Total	%
Federal (Uni. Of Ibadan)	81	30.11	66	24.53	81	30.11	41	15.24	269	
State (The Technical University)	4	1.92	13	6.25	92	44.23	99	47.60	208	
Private University (Leads City University)	44	13.29	69	20.84	106	32.02	112	33.83	331	
SUM TOTAL	129	15.96	148	18.31	279	34.52	252	31.18	808	

Source: Fieldwork 2019

To ascertain if undergraduates have acquired a vocational skill since the commencement of entrepreneurship education in their institution the table shows the following information. In the federal university in Oyo State, 30.11% and 15.24% of undergraduates moderately and truly agrees to have acquired a vocational skill, while 30.11% and 24.53% also indicated not to have acquired a skill since they commenced courses and training on entrepreneurship education. In the state university, 47.60% indicated to have acquired a skill since the commencement of entrepreneurship education and only 1.92% of undergraduates indicated not to have acquired a skill, while in the private university, 32.02% and 33.83% of undergraduates indicated to have acquired a vocational skill since they commenced training on entrepreneurial skills. Only 13.29% of undergraduates indicated not to have acquired a skill in the private university. The findings imply that undergraduates have acquired vocational skills but at different levels in all the institutions. The state and private universities have acquired vocational skills more than their counterparts in the federal universities.

In sum total, the table also reveals that an average of 34.4% and 31.18% of all the undergraduates have moderately and truly acquired an entrepreneurial skill. Also, the table reveals that 15.09% and 18.31% are yet to acquire vocational skills since the commencement of entrepreneurial skill before graduation in the universities in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Table 2.2 Would Be Satisfied Just Doing a Job In A skill I am Interested In

University	I Would Be Satisfied Just Doing a Job In A skill I am Interested In									
	Not At All True	%	Moderately Not True	%	Moderately True	%	Very True	%	Total	%
Federal (Uni. Of Ibadan)	14	5.20	54	20.00	102	37.80	100	37.03	270	
State (The Technical University)	1	5.00	13	6.2	94	44.50	103	48.80	211	
Private University (Leads City University)	19	5.70	47	14.20	114	34.30	152	45.80	332	
SUM TOTAL	34	4.20	114	14.00	310	38.10	355	43.70	813	

Fieldwork 2019

Table 2.2. shows that only 5.20% and 20.00% of undergraduates in the federal universities indicated satisfaction in doing a job in a skill they are interested in, while 37.80% and 37.03% of the undergraduates respectively indicate being moderately satisfied and truly satisfied to embark on a job in which they have acquired a skill after graduation from the university. This indicates that interest is high among undergraduates to acquire a skill in the federal university in Oyo State, Nigeria. In the state university, the table reveals only 5.00% and 6.2% undergraduates indicated not being interested in doing a job in a skill of interest while 44.50% and 48.80% indicated interest in taking a job of a skill of interest. In the private university the table also reveals that 34.30% and 45.80% of undergraduates indicated interest in doing job they have acquired a skill. The table also shows that in the sum total, 38.10% and 43.70% of undergraduates indicated moderately true and very true to embark on a job in a skill of interest in the universities in Oyo State. This implies that most undergraduates are ready to acquire a skill for self-employment even before graduation.

Discussions

The adoption and the use of Fieldtrips as a method of learning and teaching strategy is observed to be of very minimal use in most universities in Nigeria since the introduction of entrepreneurial education into Nigerian universities curriculum in 2006 by the National Universities Commission. In Oyo State, the federal university was found to be the institution with the least number of respondents who indicated the use of field trips for learning and teaching of entrepreneurship education, while the undergraduates in the private and state universities indicated that field trips were embarked on more regularly to observe businesses for entrepreneurial skill development. However, less than 50% of the total number of undergraduates in the universities are taken on fieldtrips to businesses outside their learning environment to observe to enhance skill development. This findings agree with scholars like Anderson and Jack (2008) who state that more focus and attention have been placed mostly on the use of theoretical method more than the practical strategies.

The findings from the study also revealed that undergraduates who have acquired a skill or more were mostly in the state and private universities while the least number of respondents who acquired a skill(s) were in the federal university in Oyo State. This shortfall in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skill could be due to the limited number of fieldtrips the undergraduates are exposed to for skill development. Most of the undergraduates in all the universities were found to be interested in acquiring a job in a skill of interest. This indicates that there is strong willingness to learn and acquire entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates before graduating from the university. Involving undergraduates on regular Field trips can enhance the identification, definition and characterise problems, Spot opportunities

for innovation among undergraduates and Segment and analyse these opportunities. Therefore, the teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria should include the practical methods such as field trips alongside with the theoretical aspects of entrepreneurship education.

Conclusion

The introduction of entrepreneurial education has been found as a way of creating skills among undergraduates most especially before graduation from the university in order to create employment for graduates instead of waiting for a white collar job. This can eradicate poverty and enhance national development. Thus, the following recommendations were made:

Recommendations

- i. The use of appropriate and adequate teaching and learning methods such as field trips to businesses of different vocational skills should be adopted and used regularly by universities and other higher institutions. This will allow the easy dissemination of knowledge and skills on undergraduates in Nigeria. Field trips can improve learning and the performance of undergraduates, increase innovations hence, the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills can be enhanced and achieved easily.
- ii. Businesses owners and institutions can partner to enable undergraduates regular training and skill development.
- iii. Funding have been found to be a major constraint in the development of skills on entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates, sponsorship and scholarship from private and governmental organisations can be done to encourage undergraduates since interest and willingness among them is very strong.

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