

CONTENT QUALITY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF TECHNICAL STUDENTS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL ECONOMY IN NORTHEAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to improve the content quality of entrepreneurship education and training of technical students in Colleges of Education for Sustainable Global Economy in Northeast Nigeria. The study which adopted a survey research design was conducted in northeast Nigeria and had three research questions and three null hypotheses. The population of the study was 221 lecturers in Technical Education from 8 Colleges of Education in Northeast and 6348 Business Managers whose firms are registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission as well as Ministry of Commerce and Industries in the various States of the Northeast. The study adopted simple random sampling technique and 364 respondents were selected. A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled: "Improving Content Quality of Entrepreneurship Education and Training Questionnaire, (ICQEETQ)" was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts and a reliability index of 0.89 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha. Mean statistic was used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that the content areas for entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy should cover: Entrepreneurship education, Small Business Management, New Venture Creation, Small Business Finance, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Technology & Innovation. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the College administrators train more entrepreneurship teachers for effective delivery of entrepreneurship education and training.

Keywords: Content Quality, Entrepreneurship Education and Training, Technical Students, Colleges of Education, Sustainable Global Economy

Introduction

The economic policies prevalent in the nation determines to an extent the levels of self-employment and entrepreneurial engagement of individuals in the society and as a result impact on the economic growth of the nation (Babajide, *et al.*, 2021). Normally, increases in entrepreneurship also lead to increase in total employment levels. In order to increase the levels of entrepreneurship, there must be deliberate efforts to educate or train people in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education should aim to equip students with additional knowledge, attributes and capabilities required to apply idea generation abilities in the context of setting up a new venture or business (Akingbade, 2021). The lack of entrepreneurship education and training should, therefore, manifest in increased small businesses' failure and increased levels of unemployment in an economy. Eze, *et al.* (2021) and Nwibe *et al.* (2022) noted that, educational institutions should provide more relevant forms of education designed to promote self-reliance and responsible entrepreneurial capacity for self-employment and community development to reduce unemployment and to revitalize national development.

Baba, *et al.* (2021) argued that entrepreneurship education and training is critical to the economic growth of developed and developing countries across the globe. In order to contribute to the economic growth of the country, the entrepreneurs require a diverse set of skills to enable

them to tap their knowledge base to identify, evaluate and exploit opportunities. In this regard, Amjad, *et al.* (2020) has emphasized that educational institutions should provide more relevant forms of education which is designed to promote self-reliance and responsible entrepreneurial capacity for self-employment and community development in order to reduce unemployment and to revitalize national development. Barau (2015) and Ogbuanya, *et al.* (2018) also pointed out that in recent times, entrepreneurship education and training has flourished in the domain of higher education. However, serious questions are being asked as to the societal value of entrepreneurship education and training and what should be the focus of this form of education.

Entrepreneurship education plays a role in the cultivation of an entrepreneurship spirit and has the effect of altering and contributing to the formation of entrepreneurship. Eze, *et al.* (2021) states that entrepreneurship education is a process which is aimed at influencing the individuals' attitudes, behaviours, values or intentions towards entrepreneurship either as a possible career or to enhance their appreciation of its role in the community. It involves the acquisition of personal skills in entrepreneurship, new business formation, opportunity recognition and managing existing small firms.

Gómez, *et al.* (2021) and Ogwa (2019) has observed the proliferation of entrepreneurship education in the domains of higher institutions of learning without consideration of the value of such education to society and its focus. Jones' notion of the qualification in entrepreneurship is that the curriculum should be framed around the development of the 'person' and 'enterprise knowledge' and that the learner-centred approach be used in delivering the curriculum, with students being required to be fully responsible for their learning outcomes. Eze, *et al.* (2018) and Ohagwu, *et al.* (2021) who also agreed with the suggestion of Jones, noted that academic education merely teaches people about risk aversion rather than helping them to look at their potential for the future. This in turn could explain the need for entrepreneurship education and training if small businesses performance is to improve and sustained toward global relevance.

On the other hand, policy makers believe that increased levels of entrepreneurship can be attained through education (Fadairo, *et al.* 2021 & Ohanu, *et al.* 2021). They argue that education is vital for the development of attitudes, skills and behaviours in the mind sets of young and mature entrepreneurs and those entrepreneurs bring new ideas to life through innovation, creativity and the desire to build something of a lasting value. There is evidence that the academically educated entrepreneurs are more important in developing regional economies than the entrepreneurs with lower levels of education in the sense that entrepreneurs with good academic background are more often innovative, use modern business models, and base their ventures on the use of new technology. Academic education allows students to see the latest developments in their selected field, thus allowing them a clearer view on how to implement them in a business in the future (Gao, 2021).

Hoffman, *et al.* (2021) suggested that the current entrepreneurship education should be based on the concept of students achieving a learning outcome of entrepreneurial effectiveness, through experiencing enterprise awareness, the development of an entrepreneurial mind-set which is a way of thinking and a range of capabilities which are the skills and knowledge that are developed through experiential learning. The author highlights that entrepreneurial learning is a natural process of learning to work in entrepreneurial ways, through recognizing and acting on opportunities occurring through and being applied within everyday practice.

Gómez, *et al.* (2021) indicates that at the tertiary education level, higher order entrepreneurship education and enterprise development should be taught. The reason behind the need to widen the knowledge of entrepreneurship and enterprise development is to build up confidence to develop the required managerial skills that will give the participant the capacity to operate effectively and efficiently in the fast changing, competitive and entrepreneurial economy and labour markets of the twenty-first century without necessarily starting up a business.

The content of the entrepreneurship education at the tertiary level should include but not be limited to the following areas: awareness about enterprise and entrepreneurship, business skills such as start-up, accounting, writing a business plan, developing a marketing plan, source of capital, etc., and creativity, imagination and a mind-set that supports (personal) entrepreneurship activities in whatever form or shape (Ibidapo, 2021).

At the tertiary level, the entrepreneur-student interactions should be encouraged. Substantial hands-on experience working with community ventures should lead to the enhancement of the participants' entrepreneurial skills. Consideration should also be given to mentorship entrepreneurial programmes where successful entrepreneurs are invited to train young nascent and new entrepreneurs. Ideally, the students should create multiple venture plans, practice identification of opportunities and have extensive exposure to entrepreneur role models. Student interactions with these role models may occur in several important ways including having entrepreneurs serve as coaches and mentors.

Specific training programmes for students who wish to start their own enterprise should be promoted more extensively. The aim is to produce graduates who are capable of being innovative and who can recognise and create opportunities, take risks, make decisions, analyse and solve problems, and communicate clearly, effectively and to think and behave in an enterprising way.

Entrepreneurship education is related to becoming an entrepreneur and to entrepreneurial success (Eze, *et al.* 2018). However, attempts to promote and implement entrepreneurship education in College of Education in developing countries have been considerably delayed, in comparison to developed countries. Hoffman, *et al.* (2021) observe that students with a higher level of education tend to have higher entrepreneurial intentions, and that students' risk-taking propensity interacts with education, so that for higher risk-taking students, tertiary education tends to increase entrepreneurial intentions even more.

Askun, *et al.* in Ibidapo (2021) argue that Colleges of Education are important in the entrepreneurship education and training as they can increase the motivation and competence of their graduates to become key persons in the innovative and entrepreneurial activities. Askun and Yildirim introduce some basic required characteristics for creating an entrepreneurship education programme that can add value:

- a) **The Theory-Practice Balance:** The primary requisite for an entrepreneurship course or programme should be to combine the rigours of academia while maintaining a reality-based focus and entrepreneurial climate in the learning experience. The challenge, therefore, lies in balancing the general knowledge of academics with the specific knowledge and situational logic of practitioners. Since entrepreneurship combines the romance of new ideas with the reality of the business world, it is strongly recommended that the programme content be based on, and regularly modified by both competent academics and practitioners.
- b) **Content:** Content design has to take into account the fact that entrepreneurship education requires the integration of a variety of functional skills and knowledge instead of the functional specialist focus of the many standard management programmes. Moreover, entrepreneurship education stresses the importance of the stage of development which is an issue which is not dealt with exclusively in conventional management programmes. Therefore, courses and programmes in entrepreneurship education have to illustrate the early lifecycle challenges such as opportunity recognition; identifying and acquiring financial, human and technical resources; market entry; protecting intellectual property; legal requirements of new business, and strategic choices under resource constraints. The courses must also deal with subsequent development challenges including growth issues; new market development and expansion strategies; and institutionalising innovation.
- c) **Skills:** In terms of the skill inputs, entrepreneurship education must include courses in

negotiation, leadership, creative thinking and ambiguity tolerance. It is also essential that students have exposure to the forefront of environmental changes, including technological developments so that they are able to identify emerging opportunities.

Statement of the Problem

James, et al. (2015) has argued that the lack of entrepreneurship training and business development services have greatly impacted on the potential for growth of the small and medium enterprises in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has undertaken several measures to resolve the problem of unemployment especially among the youth through various interventions such as the Trade money, NAPEP, You-win, N-Power, etc. which aim at developing the small and medium enterprises as well as fostering entrepreneurship in the country without much success. Unfortunately, these interventions have failed to ensure the development of a vibrant SMEs industry in the country. Most of the small businesses that were created fail to survive the first two/three years of starting due to poor management by their owners/managers and those that survive can hardly grow their business. This is confirmed by Mohammed, *et al.* (2023) who state that 56 per cent of new businesses fail to survive beyond their first three years in existence and 69 per cent fail by the end of their sixth year. It is against this background that this study aims to improve the content quality of entrepreneurship education and training of technical students in Colleges of Education for Sustainable Global Economy in Northeast Nigeria

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to improve the content quality of entrepreneurship education and training of technical students in Colleges of Education for Sustainable Global Economy in Northeast Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the content areas covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy.
2. Determine the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy.
3. Determine the teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?

Research Questions

1. What are the content areas covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?
2. What are the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?
3. What are the teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the content areas covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy

3. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy

Methodology

The study used a survey research design and was carried out in the northern region of Nigeria. The Zone includes the states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, and is situated at latitude 6.260 East and longitude 4.920 North East of Nigeria. The population of the study was 6569 comprising of 221 lecturers in Technical Education from 8 Colleges of Education in Northeast and 6348 Business Managers whose business firms are registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission as well as Ministry of Commerce and Industries in the various states of the Northeast. The study adopted Simple random sampling and a sample size of 364 respondents was determined using Krejcie, *et al.* (1970) sample size table. The "Improving Content Quality of Entrepreneurship Education and Training Questionnaire, (ICQEETQ)" was a structured questionnaire that the researchers utilized to gather data for the study. The questionnaire responses were organized on a 5-point scale with Strongly Agreed (SA) = 5 point, Agreed = 4 points, Undecided (U) = 3 points, Disagreed (D) = 2 Point, and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1point. The questionnaire was subjected to face validation by three experts from the Department of Electrical Technology Education, Modibbo Adama University Yola, Adamawa State. A reliability index of 0.86 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha. The data for the study was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. All items with a mean score of 3.5 or higher were judged " Agreed" while those with a mean score of less than 3.50 were rated "Disagreed".

Results

Research Question 1: What are the content areas covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?

Table 1: Mean Response on the Content Areas Covered in Entrepreneurship Education

S/NO	ITEMS	N = 364		Remark
		$\bar{x}$	SD	
1.	Entrepreneurship education	3.88	0.56	Agreed
2.	Small Business Management	3.89	0.64	Agreed
3.	New Venture Creation	4.03	0.18	Agreed
4.	Small Business Finance	4.07	0.25	Agreed
5.	Entrepreneurial Marketing	4.10	0.30	Agreed
6.	Technology & Innovation	3.92	0.43	Agreed
7.	Venture Capital	3.85	0.64	Agreed
8.	Franchising	3.88	0.55	Agreed
9.	Creative Thinking	3.81	0.72	Agreed
10.	Family Business	3.76	0.81	Agreed
11.	Small Business Strategy	3.95	0.28	Agreed
12.	New Product Development	4.18	0.38	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.94	0.48	Agreed

$\bar{x}$ = Mean Response, SD = Standard Deviation, N = Number of Respondents

Table 1 showed that the respondents agreed with all the item as content areas to be covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy with the highest mean value being 4.18 and the lowest 3.76. The grand mean of 3.94 implies that the content areas for entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy should cover: Entrepreneurship education, Small Business Management, New Venture

Creation, Small Business Finance, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Technology & Innovation, Venture Capital, Franchising, Creative Thinking, Family Business, Small Business Strategy, and New Product Development.

Research Question 2: What are the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?

Table 2: Mean Response on the Entrepreneurship Activities Carried Out to Promote Student Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition

S/NO	ITEMS	N = 364		Remark
		$\bar{x}$	SD	
1.	Business Plan Competition	3.54	0.44	Agreed
2.	Business/networking functions	3.55	0.52	Agreed
3.	Campus based start-ups	3.69	0.06	Agreed
4.	Case study competition	3.73	0.13	Agreed
5.	Community engagement	3.76	0.18	Agreed
6.	Entrepreneurship clubs	3.58	0.31	Agreed
7.	Entrepreneurship days/weeks	3.51	0.52	Agreed
8.	Guest speakers	3.54	0.43	Agreed
9.	Start-up initiatives	3.52	0.6	Agreed
10.	Workplace exposures	3.62	0.69	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.60	0.39	Agreed

$\bar{x}$ = Mean Response, SD = Standard Deviation, N = Number of Respondents

Table 2 showed that the respondents agreed with all the item as entrepreneurship activities carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy with the highest mean value being 3.76 and the lowest 3.52. The grand mean of 3.58 implies that the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition include: Business Plan Competition, Business/networking functions, Campus based start-ups, Case study competition, Community engagement, Entrepreneurship clubs, Entrepreneurship days/weeks, Guest speakers, Start-up initiatives and Workplace exposures.

Research Question 3: What are the teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy?

Table 3: Mean Response on the Teaching Methods Adopted for Teaching Entrepreneurship

S/NO	ITEMS	N = 364		Remark
		$\bar{x}$	SD	
1.	Lectures	3.87	0.66	Agreed
2.	Seminars	3.88	0.74	Agreed
3.	Workshops	4.02	0.28	Agreed
4.	Study visits	4.06	0.35	Agreed
5.	Setting up a business	4.09	0.4	Agreed
6.	Counselling/mentoring	3.91	0.53	Agreed
7.	Business simulation	3.84	0.74	Agreed
8.	Guest speakers	3.87	0.65	Agreed
9.	Interviews with real entrepreneurs	3.80	0.82	Agreed
10.	Action-learning	3.75	0.91	Agreed
11.	Games	3.87	0.66	Agreed
12.	Case studies	3.88	0.74	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.90	0.62	Agreed

$\bar{x}$ = Mean Response, SD = Standard Deviation, N = Number of Respondents

Table 3 showed that the respondents agreed with all the item as teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy with the highest mean value being 4.09 and the lowest 3.84. The grand mean of 3.90 implies that the teaching methods for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy include: Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, Study visits, Setting up a business, Counselling/mentoring, Business simulation, Guest speakers, Interviews with real entrepreneurs, Action-learning, Games, and Case studies.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the content areas covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy.

Table 4: t-test Analysis between Lecturers and SMEs Owners on Content Areas Covered in Entrepreneurship Education

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P – value	Remark
Lecturers	121	4.09	0.31	362	0.83	0.46	Not Significant
SMEs Owners	243	3.65	0.55				

P > 0.05 N= Number of respondents, SD= Standard Deviation

Table 4 is the result obtained when hypothesis one was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The p-value stood at 0.46. Since the p-value is greater than the α -value of 0.05, the null hypothesis one, is therefore upheld.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy.

Table 5: t-test Analysis between Lecturers and SMEs Owners on Entrepreneurship Activities are Carried Out to Promote Student Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P – value	Remark
Lecturers	121	4.17	0.52	362	0.59	0.39	Not Significant
SMEs Owners	243	3.81	0.50				

P > 0.05 N= Number of respondents, SD= Standard Deviation

Table 5 is the result obtained when hypothesis two was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The p-value stood at 0.39. Since the p-value is greater than the α -value of 0.05, the null hypothesis two, is therefore upheld.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy.

Table 6: t-test Analysis between Lecturers and SMEs Owners on Teaching Methods Adopted for Teaching Entrepreneurship

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P – value	Remark
Lecturers	121	2.27	0.50	250	0.87	0.93	Not Significant
SMEs Owners	243	2.19	0.52				

P > 0.05 N= Number of respondents, SD= Standard Deviation

Table 6 is the result obtained when hypothesis three was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The p-value stood at 0.93. Since the p-value is greater than the α -value of 0.05, the null hypothesis three, is therefore upheld.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that the content areas for entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy should cover: Entrepreneurship education, Small Business Management, New Venture Creation, Small Business Finance, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Technology & Innovation, Venture Capital, Franchising, Creative Thinking, Family Business, Small Business Strategy, and New Product Development. The supporting hypothesis also showed that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the content areas covered in entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy. The finding is in agreement with Akingbade (2021) and Baba, *et al.* (2021) reported that entrepreneurship education should not be limited to only few areas as the world is becoming a global village and the world is communicating daily and transacting one form business or the other. The knowledge on entrepreneurs should be very vast to cover areas in Business plan, Small Business Finance, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Technology & Innovation, Venture Capital, Franchising, Creative Thinking, etc. The findings also coincide with the report of Barau (2015) who noted that establishment of new ideas and venture are to be part of the entrepreneurial education and training to be given to all learners in tertiary education.

The findings of the study revealed that the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition include: Business Plan Competition, Business/networking functions, Campus based start-ups, Case study competition, Community engagement, Entrepreneurship clubs, Entrepreneurship days/weeks, Guest speakers, Start-up initiatives and Workplace exposures. The associated hypothesis revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the entrepreneurship activities are carried out to promote student entrepreneurship skill acquisition in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy. The finding is in line with the

recommendations of Babajide, *et al.* (2021), Eze, *et al.* (2021) and Fadairo, *et al.* (2021) who reported that students learn easily when they are engaged with activities that are challenging and inspiring. The authors suggested that students should be made to develop skills through Campus based start-ups, Case study competition, Community engagement, Entrepreneurship clubs, Entrepreneurship days/weeks, Guest speakers, Start-up initiatives and Workplace exposures.

The findings of the study revealed that teaching methods for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy include: Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, Study visits, Setting up a business, Counselling/mentoring, Business simulation, Guest speakers, Interviews with real entrepreneurs, Action-learning, Games, and Case studies. The complementing hypothesis revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and business managers on the teaching methods adopted for teaching entrepreneurship in Colleges of Education for sustainable global economy. The finding is in agreement with Eze, *et al.* (2018) who in their separate submission reported that teaching methods is very important in inculcating the required skills and attitude for the learner. So, the required teaching methods that will be effective is needed. Babajide, *et al.* (2021) buttress that effective teaching is desired in entrepreneurship education and training in order to make the inculcation of the entrepreneurial spirit.

Conclusion

The study concluded that for effective improvement of the content quality of entrepreneurship education and training of technical students in colleges of education for sustainable global economy, the consideration should be given to the content areas to be covered and the activities to be undertaken as well as the teaching methods to be employed. The content should vary and include areas such as Entrepreneurship education, Small Business Management, New Venture Creation, Small Business Finance, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Technology & Innovation, Venture Capital, Franchising, Creative Thinking, Family Business, Small Business Strategy, and New Product Development. On the teaching method, the use of the teaching methods found should be encouraged within the Colleges of Education for Sustainable Global Economy in Northeast Nigeria

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended:

1. The College administrators need to train more entrepreneurship teachers for effective delivery of entrepreneurship education and training.
2. There is need for increased investment in entrepreneurship education and training through infrastructure and human resources development as well as increased financing for entrepreneurship education and training programmes either by the government or respective tertiary education and training institutions.
3. The Colleges of Education in Northeast Nigeria need to coordinate and conduct annual entrepreneurship workshops, seminars, conferences and symposiums in order to share practices and increase awareness of the role of entrepreneurship education and training in the development of entrepreneurial mind-sets and attitudes for Sustainable Global Economy.

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