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Entrepreneurial Education Programme in Tertiary Education in Nigeria

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Annotation. This paper examined the problems militating against the development of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and suggests the way forward. The paper sourced for secondary data online and uses content analysis and elimination method as the methodology. Inadequate funding, shortage of lecturers, lack of adequate infrastructure facilities, corruption, overemphasize on theory delivery, absence of research support and linkages and lack of support from private institutions and international organizations were among some of the factors identified as problems militating against the development of entrepreneurial education programme in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper suggested some measures to improve entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Some of these measures include; adequate funding of the programme by the federal and state government; direction of various institution managers to employ more lecturers in the entrepreneurial education programme; provision of adequate modern infrastructure facilities in all the institutions across the country by the government; deployment of both human and Al resources to monitor financial resources released for the implementation of entrepreneurial education programme in the various institutions; entrepreneurship education programme should be directed to be more practical inclined than theoretical and all human and materials resources needed should be provided by the managers of the various institutions and private institutions and international organization like Worldbank and other financial institutions should support the programme by providing a business grant for students in various institutions across the country.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial education, Tertiary education



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INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education or Higher education covers a wider range of higher learning institutions including the university. These higher learning institutions could be organized in different ways, commonly within a university and in a separate institution as university and other tertiary learning institutions. Tertiary institutions are an organized fraction of the whole society curved out for teaching programmes, research and provision of community service (Alemu 2018). The tertiary institutions can also be seen as a subset of the general society that is made of the collection of different people, different cultures, different lifestyles and different values (Ogunode & Odo, 2023). Tertiary education is a planned and organized educational system designed for the total development of man/woman and the total transformation of society through the utilization of teaching, research and provision of community service. Tertiary education is post-basic and secondary school education that embraces advanced teaching, research and community service (Ogunode, Edinoh & Okolie 2023).

The goals of Tertiary Education shall be to: Contribute to national development through high-level manpower training; provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians; provide high-quality career counselling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service; forge and cement national unity; and promote national and international understanding and interaction (FRN, 2013). The other goals or objectives of tertiary education include; aiding the production of manpower; ensuring national unity; ensuring technological development; fostering national unity and international peace; increasing production through research; providing post-secondary school education; preparing students with quality knowledge and reliable skills for independent living and the world of work (Ogunode, et al 2023).

Tertiary institutions are purposely established to solve problems. Tertiary institutions are problem-solving institutions via teaching and research including community service (Ogunode, & Ayeni, 2024; Ogunode, Ayeni, and Olorundare, 2024). Musa (2016); Ogunode (2020) and Abu (2022) concluded that tertiary institutions and research institutions are the last hope of the humanities when it comes to issues of finding solutions to problems that befall the entire society. Tertiary institutions are established to solve international and national pressing social and economic problems (Agbonlahor, 2016).

Nigeria is full of youths who are faced with a high unemployment rate. The National Bureau of Statistics in its Nigeria Labour Force Survey report for Q2 2023 said, "The rate of unemployment among persons with post-secondary education was 8 per cent in Q2 2023. The unemployment rate among youth aged (15-24 years) in Q2 2023 was 7.2 per cent having been at 6.9 per cent in Q1 2023." Also, Agbonlahor observed that citizen's economic empowerment is a major goal of most developing countries such as Nigeria. The high population growth rate in Nigeria in the last decades (estimated at 4.3% annually) has been associated with a youth bulge and a high level of unemployment; especially among school leavers. These have resulted in associated social problems such as high rural-urban migration, underemployment and illegal immigration across national and continental boundaries (Agbonlahor 2016).

To reverse this trend, especially as it affects graduates' unemployment, the government of Nigeria in 2006 introduced entrepreneurial education (EEd) as a compulsory curriculum in Universities to prepare graduates for entrepreneurial success through private sector initiatives. This was based on the hard reality that universities should change their orientation as mills for job seekers rather than job creators. This initiative was to serve as the flagship to drive economic and social reconstruction against the backdrop of youth unemployment and the thousands of school leavers every year (Agbonlahor, 2016).

Ojiefo (2012), discovered that rising graduate unemployment and the low entrepreneurial drive amongst school leavers in Nigeria led to the need to reposition higher institutions as centres for building self-sustaining graduates who will be future captains of industries. EEd was introduced in tertiary institutions to produce graduates with special professional and entrepreneurial skills needed to champion economic growth through investments (Agbonlahor, 2016). The implementation and development of entrepreneurial education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions appear to be facing a lot of problems.

This paper aims to examine the problems militating against the development of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education(EE) Programme

Entrepreneurial education according to Gautam and Singh (2015) is the process of application of knowledge, attitude, skills and competencies that involve creativity, innovation and risk-taking in business. Research has shown that entrepreneurial education prepares the youths for sustainable responsible and transformative living (Okon & Friday, 2015; Raposo & Paco, 2011). Ordv et al (2010) in Oswal (2002) defined entrepreneurial education as the type of education given to a set of people to be able to instil in them the principles, skills and practices required to see and evaluate business

opportunities, to gather the necessary resources and the desire to take advantage of them as well as initiating appropriate action to ensure success in any choice profession or occupation. It is the foundation for developing the flexible skills needed to participate in knowledge-intensive economic activity.

Esu (2011) described EE as a form of education which prepares individuals or youths for the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies needed for a specified work that could yield employability and higher job mobility. Entrepreneurship education is specialized training given to students of vocational and technical education to acquire the skills, ideas managerial abilities and capabilities to be self-employed rather than being employed for pay (Otamiri, 2007). Entrepreneurial education is a process of formalized teachings that informs, trains, and educates people to promote entrepreneurship and Job creation awareness. Entrepreneurship education is aimed at developing entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviour, and job creation that ensure entrepreneurial success (Adi, & Jonathan 2024). Entrepreneurial education is the process of fostering the entrepreneurial capacities and mindset of undergraduate students through learning and education, which is made up of various experiences that give students the ability and spirit to access and transform opportunities of different kinds (Ndem, & Egbai, 2016).

Entrepreneurial education is about developing students' ability to create social, cultural, and economic value and enabling experiences for thinking critically and creatively, undertaking difficult problem-solving, communicating and developing a student entrepreneurial mindset (Adi, & Jonathan, 2024). Entrepreneurship education" refers to the foundational knowledge and skills that individuals can gain from formal education or training programmes designed to help them understand the process of starting and running a successful business. It provides a comprehensive overview of the entrepreneurial landscape, including the challenges and opportunities that come with starting a business.

Similarly, Osakwe, (2015) identified some importance of entrepreneurial education generally as an innovative venture for job creation in small enterprises; provision of new ideas, ventures, quality products, technology, and market, to increase the Gross Domestic Products and standard of living of the people towards community development. EE is also believed to promote abundant retail facilities, a higher level of home ownership business, sanitation standards and higher expenditure on education, recreation, and religious activities. Thus, entrepreneurship leads to more stability and a higher quality of community life. Also, Mazumber and Ahmed (2015) outlined some importance of entrepreneurial skills peculiar to rural women:

- Creating the spirit of self-confidence to establish a business of their own to earn income;
- Engaging women in small-scale business programs with the help of self-help activities which empower them economically to participate in family and community economic affairs;
- Bringing about savings, education, health, family welfare, social life, cleanliness et cetera;
- Help women improve family income, and as such provide family members with better lifestyles including good nutrition and clothing to improve children's education and family health;
- That which helps in household decision-making;
- Acquisition of entrepreneurial skills to eradicate poverty in developing economies. Entrepreneurship-focused programmes teach students crucial life skills that will help them navigate this uncertain future. These skills include problem-solving, teamwork, empathy, as well as learning to accept failure as a part of the growth process. By participating in entrepreneurship education, students do not just become ready to create their futures but they become ready to change the world (Eton, Omorobi & Kajang, 2020). This type of education according to 0koroma (2019), can help individuals identify their strengths and weaknesses, as well as develop the skills and knowledge they need to turn their entrepreneurial ideas into successful jobs.

Problems facing Entrepreneurship Education Programme in Nigerian Tertiary Education There are many problems militating against the development of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Some of the problems include; inadequate funding, shortage of lecturers, lack of adequate infrastructure facilities, corruption, overemphasis on theory delivery, absence of research support and linkages and lack of support from private institutions and international organizations.

Inadequate funding

Inadequate funding is a major problem militating against the effective implementation of entrepreneurial education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The annual budgetary allocation for the programme in each of the institutions is meagre and cannot be implemented much. The entrepreneurship education programme is one of the most extensive programmes in the tertiary institutions. It requires a lot of human and material resources before it can be fully implemented. The entrepreneurial education programme also involved a lot of students because it is a general programme for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The poor funding of the entrepreneurship education programme in the tertiary institutions can be linked to the poor funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria because the entrepreneurial education programme drives its allocation from the various allocation of institutions. Ogunode, Ukozor, and Ayoko (2023) and Ogunode, Olowonefa & Suleiman (2023) noted that generally funding in the

tertiary institutions in Nigeria is poor. Udida, Bassey, Udofia, and Egbona, (2009) maintained that the major issue in educational development is shortage of funds. One of the most serious problems threatening the survival of the educational system is that of dwindling level of public funding in the face of rising demands and hence rising cost of higher education. This shortage of funds affects job performance and the growth of the institution. Higher educational institutions cannot perform optimally without funding. This situation calls for increased funding initiatives from both the government and educational stakeholders to sustain the tempo and growth of the education industry. The inability of the Nigerian government to objectively accept and implement the 15%-20% funding formula for education recommended by UNESCO impact negatively on the performance and sustainability of higher education. Thus, it has become obvious that Nigeria's neglect of the funding formula is detrimental to higher educational institution performance and development aspiration as quality performance is the veritable instrument for the sustenance of the education system. This neglect has further precipitated crises in the entire higher educational system as effective teaching, research and service are no longer taking place seriously. The problem of inadequate funding has affected the implementation of entrepreneurship education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Oluyemi, Ajayi, Abiola, & Ajibade 2018; Gambo, & Fasanmi, 2019; Ogunode, Attah & Ebute, 2023).

Shortage of Lecturers

Shortage of lecturers is another challenge affecting the development of entrepreneurial education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Many tertiary institutions cannot adopt the various entrepreneurship programmes and teach them due to a lack of lecturers in some fields such as Information Communication Technology, Artificial intelligence and other sciences. Generally, Ogunode, & Adamu (2021) acknowledged that there shortage of lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions. For example, National Universities Commission data as quoted by Punch (2019) indicated that federal universities in Nigeria suffer a shortage of full-time professors and academic staff. According to the data, no federal university scored up to 50 per cent in the ranking of full professors. This implies that no federal university has the required number of full professors. Some of the federal universities ranked in the top 10 are the Usmanu Dan-Fodiyo University, Sokoto, with 36.44 per cent; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, 35.80 per cent; Federal University of Technology, Akure, 27.28 per cent; Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, 27.25 per cent; the University of Abuja, 25.33 per cent; the University of Benin, 23.26 per cent; University of Port Harcourt, 21.26 per cent; the University of Calabar, 21.20 per cent; and the University of Ilorin, 21.12 per cent. This shortage is also experienced in the entrepreneurial education programme in many tertiary institutions across the country. This problem has led to a high lecturer ratio in

most tertiary institutions affecting the quality of teaching and learning. A shortage of lecturers has hindered the effective implementation of entrepreneurial education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Osakwe, 2015; Oseni, 2017, Tolu-Kolawole, 2023; Ogunode, Cletus,& Christiana 2024).

Lack of adequate infrastructure facilities

Another problem affecting the development of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is a shortage of infrastructure facilities. Infrastructure facilities according to Ogunode (2020) refer to facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. The above is validated by scholars who argued that the provision of infrastructure provides a suitable setting and support for the development of entrepreneurship skills and industrialisation (Ayeni, Abdullahi & Andeshi, 2021). Scholars like Ayeni have gone ahead to posited that infrastructure can empower people (Ayeni, 2017). The importance of infrastructure has been further highlighted by scholars who opined that infrastructural provision enriches human security (Ayeni, Andeshi, & Uzoigwe, 2022). Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet et cetera. The availability of infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent effective administration of educational institutions.

However, many public universities in Nigeria do not have adequate lecture halls, laboratories and offices for both students and academic staff. Many tertiary institutions do not have modern facilities such as workshops, factories, laboratories and machines to support the training and implementation of the programme. Ayeni, Jaiyeoba, and Atanda (2008); Ebehikhalu and Dawam, (2017); Ayeni, Sani, and Uzoigwe, (2019) and Ogunode, Ngezack and Usi (2024) maintained that the shortage of facilities in most tertiary institutions across the country has affected the implementation of entrepreneurship education programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Also, Agbonlahor, (2016), noted that inadequate funding is indicated in the poor infrastructural support needed to drive quality delivery of EEd. Both hard and soft infrastructure is needed as a problem solver for the system. This limitation subsequently frustrates the integration of entrepreneurship in academic programmes in Nigerian universities. The lack of support for infrastructure and infrastructural failures result in high transaction costs which makes delivery very expensive and inefficient. The lack of adequate facilities hampered the development of entrepreneurship education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Corruption

Corruption is a common phenomenon in Nigeria. scholars have noted that corruption has virtually been acknowledged by individuals as a way of life (Ayeni, Tusayi, Joseph &

Obatayo, 2018). The effect of this has resulted in corruption posing a challenge to the welfare and workable peace of Nigerians (Ayeni & Sani, 2021). Going forward, corruption is when the ruling elites employ laws and politics to rule Nigeria to their advantage to the detriment of the citizens (Godwin, Ayeni, & Peter, 2021). Corruption is no doubt a common occurrence in Nigeria. Corruption in the management of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions across the country has contributed to the poor development of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions. Godwin (2017) noted that tertiary institutions which include Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics, Schools of Nursing and Health Technologies, Nigerian Defence Academy, and Colleges of Education appear not to be functioning effectively. There are cases of students being exploited by staff; and recruitment and promotion of staff being based on political patronage instead of merit. There are cases of abuse of office by those in authority. Other vices include admission racketeering, hostel profiteering, sorting, examination malpractice, sexual harassment, etc. All these social vices are signs of a big rot in our tertiary institutions and portend danger for the entire Nigerian nation. Funds provided for the implementation of programmes in the various institutions are been stolen, looted and mismanaged. This development hurts access to formal education that ought to empower people to provide for their human needs (Ayeni, Sani, Idris, & Uzoigwe, 2019).

Corruption has affected the development and implementation of programmes in the universities (Nwaokugha, & Ezeugwu, 2017); Priye n.d; Ogunode & Stephen, 2021; Ogunode & Josiah, Ajape, 2021). In 2020, Transparency International maintained in their annual report that 66 per cent of the money the Nigerian governments allocate to education is stolen by corrupt officials. According to the report, corruption is commonplace in education systems across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, (Premium Times 2020). Corruption in Nigeria prompted scholars to submit that corruption is a source of concern as it affects the home economy (Amaechi, Ayeni, & Madu, 2019). UNESCO (2014) reports on Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All shows that Nigeria is among the 37 countries that are losing money spent on education because children are not learning. UNESCO disclosed that the menace is already costing governments USD 129 billion a year. It stressed further that despite the money being spent, the rejuvenation of primary education is not so soon because of poor-quality education that cannot ensure that children learn (NEEDS, 2014). This poor quality of education might have informed the observation by scholars who argued that a university without a standard library for students lacks university integrity (Ayeni, 2018). The tertiary institution has integrity when there are needed infrastructure facilities.

Overemphasize theory delivery

Many tertiary institutions in Nigeria depend on theoretical teaching instead of practical to implement programmes that are practical inclined due to a lack of facilities and resources. This development hinders practical training that ought to improve productivity on their jobs by correcting any dearth in human effort (Ogunode & Ayeni, 2023). This is a common practice in many higher institutions across the country. Agbonlahor, (2016) ascertained that the present method of teaching and EEd has been described as a mechanistic delivery. The method leaves no room for the students to engage individually with the hard realities of the business environment. The high student/lecturer ratio in universities occasioned by expanded admission quotas; usually beyond the carrying capacities of the facilities available has been suggested as the reason for de-emphasizing the practical components. The absence of co-curricular activities such as entrepreneurship clubs, lectures and speakers, workshops and seminars, business plan competitions, internships, and venture incubators are key drawbacks of EEd in Nigeria (Agbonlahor, 2016). In USA institutions offering EEd, occasionally invited business executives to teach a full course, make a presentation, or share their experiences with students. Inadequate facilities and equipment for teaching and learning in practicalrelated courses was the reason why EEd has not been able to record a significant impact on Nigeria's industrialization drive and reduction of youth unemployment (Agbonlahor, 2016; Akpomi 2009 Brown 2012; Offorma, Egbe & Eze 2012).

Absence of research support and linkages

Poor development of research programmes in tertiary institutions appears to also affect the development of entrepreneurship education programmes. Entrepreneurial education programmes like other academic programmes need constant research to advance in the attainment of its goals in the various institutions. Agbonlahor, (2016) observed that at conception, it was envisaged that EEp would leverage on products of students' research in the Universities. As obtainable in China and other Asian countries, the EEp is based on harnessing the commercial aspect of research and development. This is a missing component in Nigeria education. There is a pronounced absence of research support and most of the research endeavours of the students are not targeted and are not applied to real-life adoption. The absence of adequate funding, research capacities and linkage opportunities are obvious reasons for this limitation. Developed countries, such as USA and China, that have utilized EEp as a key driver for economic growth, creativity and welfare enhancers have done so with sustainable research support and linkages with private sector firms with commercial goals.

Lack of support from private institutions and international organizations

The inability of the various stakeholders to invest in and support the entrepreneurial education programme in the institutions has also affected the growth and development

of the programme. No place in the world where tertiary institution management and funding are left solely to the government. The tertiary institutions are designed to be funded by different institutions of government and private institutions like international organizations and non-governmental organizations. These institutions have great roles to play in ensuring academic programmes like the entrepreneurial education programme are well funded and provided with every other support. The realization of tertiary institutions' goals depends on effective collaboration and partnership with other critical stakeholders in the tertiary institutions. The management of tertiary institutions requires the participation of all stakeholders in tertiary education. Oduwaiye and Famaye (2023); Ogunode, Ayoko, & Orifah (2023) and Mohammed, & Ogunode (2024) observed that the participation of stakeholders like alumna associations in the development and management of tertiary institutions is key and cannot be underestimated. The stakeholders have roles such as providing financial aid to support academic programmes, providing grants for students in areas of business and research, providing mentorship programmes and supporting infrastructure facilities development in the Unfortunately, this is not so in many Nigerian tertiary institutions. Programmes like the entrepreneurship education programme are left only for school funding and this has affected the development, Ogunode, Ayoko, and Orifah (2023) and Ogunode, Obioma, and Belloh (2023) observed that institutions in Nigeria lack the maximum support of private institutions and international institutions. Support from private institutions is meagre. Zhuo and Haixia (2012) reported that in China, most universities maintain an entrepreneurship fund to evaluate students' business plans and finance those that show special promise. This support (external or internal) is conspicuously missing in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper critically discussed problems militating against the development of entrepreneurial education programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper identified; inadequate funding, shortage of lecturers, lack of adequate infrastructure facilities, corruption, overemphasize on theory delivery, absence of research support and linkages and lack of support from private institutions and international organizations among other factors as problems militating against the development of entrepreneurial education programme in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Based on these points identified, the paper suggested the following measures;

- 1. There should be adequate funding of the entrepreneurship programme by the federal and state governments;
- 2. The various institutions managers should employ more lecturers in the entrepreneurial education programme;

- 3. There should be provision of adequate modern infrastructure facilities in all the institutions across the country by the government;
- 4. There should be deployment of both human and Al resources to monitor financial resources released for the implementation of entrepreneurial education programmes in the various institutions;
- 5. Entrepreneurial education programmes should be more practical inclined than theoretical and all human and materials resources needed should be provided by the managers of the various institutions;
- 6. Private institutions and international organizations like the World Bank and other financial institutions should support the entrepreneurship programme by providing business grants for students in various institutions across the country.

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