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Enhancing Undergraduate Students Entrepreneurial Skills Through the Provision of Book Club Services

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Abstract
Entrepreneurship is central to the economic growth and development of any nation. Entrepreneurship education is the process that provides trainees with knowledge, skills and attitudes to create wealth for poverty reduction and self-employment. Human factor comprises the most important element of any balanced and sustainable development. As a result, educational institutions play a very crucial role in supplying today's societies with much needed, adequately skilled and reasonably competent human resources. This study on enhancing Undergraduate Students Entrepreneurial Skills through the Provision of Book Club Services aimed at exploring or investigating how universities could be repositioned towards polishing entrepreneurial skills of their undergraduate students. Using critical review of related literature, the paper provides a conceptual description of entrepreneurship, its historical antecedence and its significance to modern day societies with particular reference to the Nigerian environment. It describes the concept of book club and the specific book services that when provided could enhance undergraduate students' entrepreneurship skills. Furthermore, the paper offers an in-depth analysis of the specific entrepreneurial skills required by undergraduate students in order to survive the economic realities of Nigerian society and the world at large. The paper concludes with some recommendations that if implemented by stakeholders will lead to an effective mechanism for alleviating poverty among the undergraduate students in Nigeria.

Keywords: Book Club, Library Services, Entrepreneur skills, Poverty Alleviation, Undergraduate

Introduction

Small business growth has for long been recognized as engines of economic growth and industrialization. Accordingly, evidence is replete from developed countries and developing countries that entrepreneurship contributes to the development of small and medium scale enterprises. Besides, in developing countries of Africa where the rate of population growth oversteps employment growth, the promotion of entrepreneurship is both a desirable tool for employment creation and as a strategy for poverty alleviation. Consequently, given the widespread acceptance of the role of entrepreneurship and new firm formation as engines of

growth and innovation, several developing country public policies pay increasing attention to private sector development.

However, graduates of traditional management education systems who reside in countries characterized by high population growth and low level of industrialization are inherently disadvantaged in terms of work prospects, hence their susceptibility to poverty. The defective nature of traditional management education, which has a colonial heritage, necessitates the introduction of entrepreneurship education. The inclusion of entrepreneurship into the education curriculum is perceived as an essential step towards intimating enrollees on the benefits of entrepreneurship and preparing them for economic opportunities. Entrepreneurship education has been viewed as a specialized system of knowledge that inculcates traits of risk-taking, innovation, arbitrage and ability to coordinate factor inputs in order to create new products or services for new and existing users within human

communities. Moreover, entrepreneurship education entails the transfer of information and skills germane to investment opportunity identification, entrepreneurial strategies and enterprise management tools to an audience. Thus, entrepreneurship education contributes immensely to the development of an entrepreneurial spirit (rising entrepreneurial self-efficacy, self-employment and risk-taking tendencies) which is central to economic development.

Book club services can be an effective way to enhance undergraduate entrepreneurial skills.

A book club service can provide a regular opportunity for students to engage with literature related to entrepreneurship. By reading and discussing books on entrepreneurship, students can gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and strategies involved in starting and running a business. They can also develop critical thinking skills by analyzing the ideas presented in these books and applying them to real-world situations.

Moreover, reading books on entrepreneurship can be a great way to broaden students' knowledge beyond the skills taught in the classroom. Books can provide access to the experiences and insights of successful business people, which can help to inspire and motivate students to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.

Book club services can also offer a supportive and collaborative environment that encourages students to share their own ideas and experiences. In this way, students can learn from their peers and develop new perspectives on entrepreneurship.

Book club services can be an effective way to enhance undergraduate entrepreneurial skills by providing access to literature, promoting critical thinking and broadening knowledge beyond the classroom, in a supportive and collaborative environment.

In this paper, we conceptualize entrepreneurship education as a process that provides trainees with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to create wealth for poverty reduction and self-employment. The training process is designed to train individuals with innovative and creative enterprise skills required to identify business opportunities and initiate new ventures which can contribute to economic development and poverty reduction.

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Effective from 2007/2008, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education instituted entrepreneurship education as a compulsory component of tertiary education in Nigeria. Accordingly, Nigerian higher institutions have begun to develop entrepreneurship training systems, and it becomes important to examine the effectiveness of the entrepreneurship education programs vis-a-vas graduate entrepreneurial activities. While there are several studies that have examined the role of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of secondary and university students, there are fewer studies that embark on tracer studies to check the entrepreneurial activities of graduates. Moreover, it is more common for graduate business schools to carry out tracer studies on their alumni than other tertiary institutions; hence fewer tracer studies which examine the impact of entrepreneurship education on graduate's entrepreneurial activities. This study focuses on analyzing the impact of entrepreneurship education on poverty alleviation of Covenant University graduates from 2006- 2013. Covenant University was chosen because Covenant University from its inception has played a tremendous role in promoting entrepreneurship education in the Nigerian educational system. This institution runs entrepreneurship programs for all students from their first year to their final year. This study is carried out within a conceptual model which perceives entrepreneurship education as a poverty alleviation strategy, this study examines the impact of entrepreneurship education received on graduates' entrepreneurial key competence (ideas, knowledge, skills and motivation) and on poverty alleviation. The study assesses the contribution of entrepreneurship education of graduates' entrepreneurial activities and on poverty alleviation.

Problem Statement/Justification

Advancement in the employment sector has impelled entrepreneurs to suggest many skills for becoming fully entrepreneur and how it should be taught is a matter for debate (Lazear, 2004; Matlay, 2008). This has formed two debate sides among entrepreneurial scholars and writers, the activist of learning-by-doing approach (Business role model) and the supporter of conventional classroom-based discussions approach of hypothetical questions (Politis, 2005; Politis & Gabrielsson, 2009).

However, the supporter of the first debating side were of the opinion that since entrepreneurship education is about new venture creation, students supposed to be taught while undergoing real-life experiences (learning-by-doing) (Cruz, Escudero, Barahona, & Leitao, 2009; Hampden-Turner & Tan, 2002). In the same vein, opponents of the classroom based approach observed that though it places emphasis on the three Kolb's categories: observation, forming abstract concepts and active experimentation, it is weak in the provision of concrete experiences (Politis & Gabrielsson, 2009). Furthermore, it was asserted that hybrid approaches of learning-by-doing combine conventional instruction with collaboration with real business people may perhaps produce students' entrepreneurial behaviors, mindsets, capabilities and skills to create visionary entrepreneurs particularly in this 21st century (Heinonen & Poikkijoki, 2006). These claims have made some reasonable number of entrepreneurship educators in many parts of the world to support this approach of instruction. Hence, this innovation remains out of place specifically, in entrepreneurship education practice in Nigeria.

Alternatively, the proponents of classroom-based-approach, for example, have observed that "Learning-by-doing, for its part, is weak in theoretical underpinning" (Richardson & Hynes, 2008). Also adherents of Classroom-based-approach often raised the predicament of cost,

physical enabling environment and involvements of experts during entrepreneurial processes as a devastated factor (Gabadeen & Raimi, 2012; Sofoluwe, Shokunbi, Raimi, & Ajewole, 2013). Another concord view reveals that the Classroom-based-approach transforms the worldview of students from work seekers to wealth creators (Garba, 2012; Garba, Mansor, & Djafar, 2013). In another related view, classroom-based-approach involves reading articles and literature supported by group and peer discussion to offer learners' theoretical understandings and introduction to the entrepreneurial phenomenon that gives them the opportunity to broaden their perspectives during peer reflection (Heinonen & Hytti, 2010).

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In addition, under the dominance of the learning by doing paradigm, schools teach what and how rather than why on content which is equally important (Kirby, 2006). Other researchers also perceive that the key to entrepreneurship success lies in the acquisition of "knowledge" through accurate representation of teachers. This instructional approach remained the popular practicing entrepreneurship instructional method among teachers in many African Nations including Nigeria. Hence, this study seeks to quantitatively identify the learning outcomes from the conventional teaching approach adopted by entrepreneurship education teachers in Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this paper is to explore on

1. To review literature on the study on Undergraduate Students Entrepreneurial Skills through the Provision of Book Club Services aimed at exploring or investigating
2. To offer an in-depth analysis of the specific entrepreneurial skills required by undergraduate students in order to survive the economic realities of Nigerian society and the world at large.
3. To make some recommendations for stakeholders to effectively address the issue of entrepreneur education among the undergraduate students in Nigeria.

Literature Review

It has been generally said that the development of any economic system is dependent on the development of entrepreneurship within that economy. As such, the role of entrepreneurs in the economic development and wellbeing of the society and the nation have been acknowledged by Policy-makers, industry practitioners, educators and researchers. This has led to the study and assessment of entrepreneurship programs across different economies, regions, nations and economic development of the world. Studies in the literature have revealed that Entrepreneurship education has the capacity to impact positively on the entrepreneurial mindset of young people by stimulating their creativity/innovative abilities, their intentions towards entrepreneurship, their role in poverty alleviation, employability and finally on their role in the society and the economy. Studies in the literature have emphasized that the aim of entrepreneurship education is to provide graduates with the diverse range of skills required to pursue their career as an entrepreneur, help in the identification of innovative

ideas/opportunities and transference of such ideas into practical entrepreneurial ventures for the benefit of the individual, society and the economy.

The relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship intentions is commonly studied among undergraduates' students in the literature. Alluded to the importance of students' work experience with established entrepreneurs and their participation in activities - business plan writing, entrepreneurship clubs - availability of incubation centers, financial support as crucial drivers of students' entrepreneurial intention.

Literature also indicates that entrepreneurship education affects students' intention and propensity to entrepreneurship. Using data on undergraduate students of a tertiary institution in South West Nigeria, found a positive relationship between students' exposure to entrepreneurship education and their entrepreneurial intentions. The authors posited that for intentions to be turned to entrepreneurial activities, other exogenous factors are contributive - in addition to entrepreneurship knowledge and skill acquisition, access to finance, infrastructure, favorable business environments. This shows that entrepreneurship education is intended to impact on key competencies of an individual leading to the creation of an enterprise culture within the society thereby impacting on the socioeconomic life of a nation. The entrepreneurship key competence is a composition of an entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of entrepreneurship.

Studies from African literature demonstrated that socioeconomic developments of African countries are essentially dependent on creating, promoting entrepreneurial awareness and the establishment of micro/cottage small and medium scale enterprises [MSMEs] through the teaching of entrepreneurship education. Meanwhile noted that the eradication of poverty can be determined by the ability of the economist and industrial practitioners to create job opportunities, business opportunities in a better market competition and also investment opportunities. Based on differing country contexts, some studies also examine the role of entrepreneurship education as a poverty alleviation strategy amongst tertiary graduates There are several studies on South Western Nigeria on the role of entrepreneurship education and training as tools for poverty alleviation. In an impact evaluation of entrepreneurship education on social welfare of some graduates in a Nigerian University, found that the acquisition and practice of entrepreneurship skills contributed to providing a standard of living and alleviating poverty. Also, the findings of the study indicate formal or informal entrepreneurship training and education were significantly related to youth empowerment and social welfare improvements. Respondents with technical skills felt economically empowered or had such prospects as escape routes from poverty.

Book clubs have long been a programming staple of public libraries. On college and university campuses, book clubs are less widespread and when in place are not always offered by or in conjunction with the academic library. Current literature on book clubs in academic libraries is focused on clubs with synchronous, in-person meetings. In these cases, meetings take place infrequently on a monthly (Jansen, 2019) or once-a-semester basis (Fajado, 2010). Book clubs are sometimes used as a tool to fill up space in the absence of other programming, such as during summer breaks or periods of lower enrollment (Jansen, 2018). Book clubs may get their start as off-shoots of required courses geared toward supporting specific enrollments such as international students, honors college cohorts, or summer bridge students (Jansen, 2018;

Jansen, 2019). Ad hoc books clubs and reading groups may also be tied to other institutional programming, such as a campus speaker series, a singular campus activity or event, or an important celebration of an affinity group (Goldberg & Trott, 2012). Student participation in co-curricular programs, such as book clubs, has been long identified as one of the strongest contributors to college student success and development (Astin, 1999; Foubert & Urbanski, 2006; Kuh, 1995). Astin's research and theory of student involvement shows that a student's success is most influenced by their level of involvement; the more involved they are in their college experience, the more likely they are to persist and succeed (1984, 1993, 1999). Astin (1999) defines the involved student as "one who...devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members, staff, and other students" (p. 518). Students who participate in something like a co-curricular book club are more likely to develop strong interpersonal relationships with their peers and build a connection to their institution resulting in perceived feelings of social connectedness, higher emotional and physical well-being, and less feelings of loneliness (Farrell, Jorgenson, Fudge, & Pritchard, 2018). Students who seek involvement opportunities that include informal, positive interactions with not just their peers but also staff and faculty, are more likely to build strong relationships with staff and faculty, resulting in higher feelings of self-confidence and self-worth (Kuh, 1995), as well as the perception that they are more than just an ID number, but a valued member of the campus community (Hoffman, Richmond, Morrow & Salomone, 2002). Research has shown that the involved student demonstrates elevated levels of development in their ability to establish and clarify purpose, career exploration and planning, as well as autonomy and life management (Foubert & Urbanski, 2006). Students who have not directed their energy into involvement experiences may have a perceived lack of social connectedness during their time at college and are more likely to share experiences of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation (Freeman, Anderman & Jensen, 2007).

Entepreneurship For Undergraduate Students

It has been generally said that the development of any economic system is dependent on the development of entrepreneurship within that economy. As such, the role of entrepreneurs in the economic development and wellbeing of the society and the nation have been acknowledged by Policy-makers, industry practitioners, educators and researchers. This has led to the study and assessment of entrepreneurship programs across different economies, regions, nations and economic development of the world. Studies in the literature have revealed that Entrepreneurship education has the capacity to impact positively on the entrepreneurial mindset of young people by stimulating their creativity/innovative abilities, their intentions towards entrepreneurship, their role in poverty alleviation, employability and finally on their role in the society and the economy. Studies in the literature have emphasized that the aim of entrepreneurship education is to provide graduates with the diverse range of skills required to pursue their career as an entrepreneur, help in the identification of innovative ideas/opportunities and transference of such ideas into practical entrepreneurial ventures for the benefit of the individual, society and the economy.

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Books Club Services In Education

The Concept of Book Club/ Services and the specific book services that enhance undergraduate students' entrepreneurship skills.

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programming, such as a campus speaker series, a singular campus activity or event, or an important celebration of an affinity group. Additional programmes includes creating personalized profile for readers, voting and club selection for members, member management, virtual meeting, reading schedule, discussion guide, and book recommendations (Goldberg & Trott, 2012). Student participation in co-curricular programs, such as book clubs, has been long identified as one of the strongest contributors to college student success and development (Astin, 1999; Foubert & Urbanski, 2006; Kuh, 1995).

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Book clubs are information service providers and the power of information should not be under estimated. Ogar and Moses (2022) noted that the objectives of information are not only to arouse consciousness reawaken interest and participation in any endeavor, but also sharpens one's vision, articulation and focus: restores one's confidence to aspire and enables one to fully understand one's rights, duties and obligation and to assist in solving problems. Information is an essential ingredient for every activity. In addition, it keeps people emotionally and psychologically to your environment. They further quoted Opeke (1993) to say that, the major function of information is to increase the knowledge of the user; to reduce his level of uncertainty, arouse interest and participation or to reduce the variety of choices available to him. If everyone possesses the perfect knowledge of his (one's) information needs as basic to decision making, then perfect knowledge is guaranteed.

The analysis of Ogar and Moses (2022) on this issue is worth noting here. The Role of libraries/book clubs as information centers in promotion of entrepreneurship education to undergraduate students can be felt in the following areas: Information Literacy; instant messaging; collection development, e-resource management services; provision of research tools; provision of current materials; effective cataloguing and web present. They concluded

by emphasizing on the power of Information as a critical resource for development at all levels. Information is an essential ingredient for every activity including entrepreneurship education. One can readily infer that information has always played a central role in human life; it is central to development of people and a nation and paramount for an effective and fast development. Indeed, modern economics driven by entrepreneurs. Without entrepreneurial ability to recognize it countries abundant natural and endowments, such a country can hardly achieve her potential output/productivity.

Conclusion

In order to build an entrepreneurship culture among entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship education should be integrated into the education curriculum and be made effective at all levels of education. Entrepreneurship programs should not only focus on the use of entrepreneurial competences in the world of business, but also on the personal and social life of the entrepreneur.

The Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory agencies for tertiary institutions in Nigeria should ensure that practical vocations are incorporated side by side into the entrepreneurship education curriculum for institutions of higher learning. These vocations will expose students to the practical dimension of entrepreneurship thereby entrepreneurial traits and personality can be developed at an earlier stage making the start-up of entrepreneurial business smooth and feasible for graduates. Also, internship programs should be incorporated into the entrepreneurship education curriculum for tertiary institution students. This will help them relate with the real world of business and expose them to the integrities of small business operation which gives them an experiential opportunity for creative and innovative thinking and platform to start-up and launch their own business after graduation.

Recommendation

The study reveals the strength of entrepreneurship education courses toward enhancing the entrepreneurial skills of undergraduate science, technical and vocational education. Though, the entrepreneurial skills of technical education students differ significantly that their counterparts in science and vocational education. It can be concluded that technical education students have higher technical skills than those in science and vocational education prior to attending entrepreneurship education courses.

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