



Building a Skilled and Inclusive Society for Sustainable Development Through Entrepreneurship Education in Public Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

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Abstract

This study investigated building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development through entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions. Three research questions and three hypotheses served as guide in this study, which adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of 6,712 lecturers in the eight public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A sample of 670 (370 male and 300 female) lecturers representing 10% of the population was drawn through stratified random sampling technique. A questionnaire titled “ Building A skilled and Inclusive Society for Sustainable Development through Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument, which has 21 items was adequately validated and a reliability index of 0.88 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha Method. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while, z-test at 0.05 level of significance was used to test the hypotheses. The results showed that entrepreneurship Education impacts in building a skilled society through the inculcation of technical skills, business skills, leadership and creativity skills. Entrepreneurship education impacts in building an inclusive society by providing opportunities for students from diverse disciplines and social backgrounds. The study revealed that the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled and inclusive society include among others: poor funding, inadequate entrepreneurship education lecturers, and poorly designed and implemented entrepreneurship education curriculum. Based on the findings, conclusion was drawn and the following recommendations among others were made: government should increase the funding of entrepreneurship education and ensure that funds released are adequately utilized; and entrepreneurial centres should be established in tertiary institutions in Rivers State to equip students with lifelong learning processes.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Inclusive Society, Skilled Society, Sustainable Development, Tertiary Institution.

Introduction

Every country across the globe strives to achieve economic growth and sustainable development. Sustainable development involves meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Education is the most valuable tool for the pursuit of all kinds of development, be it economic, social, technological, infrastructural, leadership or human capital development (Wike and Egwurugwu 2025). Economic growth, on the other hand, refers to the increase in the production of goods and

services over a specified period, typically measured by the percentage change in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Economic growth shows an expansion in the economy's capacity to produce goods and services, leading to increased prosperity and improved standard of living. Attainment of economic growth and sustainable development requires a holistic approach. It requires building a skilled and inclusive society through education.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with over 200 million people, and it is the largest economy on the continent. The country is currently facing numerous challenges despite its vast natural resources. The developmental challenges facing the country include a high rate of unemployment, poverty, insecurity, infrastructural deficit, corruption, gender inequality, and environmental pollution, among others. One of the reforms in education aimed at addressing most of these challenges is the introduction of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions plays a very crucial role in building a skilled and inclusive society. Entrepreneurship education equips students with entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and mindset that empower individuals to create their own jobs, drive economic growth, and contribute to societal development.

An inclusive society is a type of society where diversity is valued. It is a society that promotes equal opportunities, rights and dignity for all individuals, regardless of race, ethnic or economic backgrounds, sex, physical disability, religion or other factors. It enhances a sense of belonging, participation, and contribution among all the members of the society. Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria can promote social inclusion by providing opportunities for marginalized groups to participate in the economy. Tertiary institutions are post-secondary or higher institutions such as universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnic, etc that provide tertiary or higher education to individuals. The goals of tertiary education, among others, include contributing to national development through high-level or relevant manpower training; and to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society (FRN, 2014 P. 24).

Tertiary education is mainly enjoyed by people in their youthful age. In Nigeria from 16 years and above. The youth population bears a disproportionate burden of most of the development challenges in Nigeria. According to the National BUREAU OF Statistics (2022), over 40% of people aged 15-35 years are unemployed. The problem of youth unemployment and poverty could be reduced through an effective entrepreneurship education program in tertiary institutions. Building a skilled and inclusive society will be beneficial to everyone; it will promote economic growth and sustainable development, and it will also foster a culture of

respect, empathy and understanding. It is against this backdrop that the researcher was motivated to examine the role of entrepreneurship education programs in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in promoting sustainable development, inclusivity and skills development.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled society for sustainable development.
2. Examine the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building an inclusive society for sustainable development.
3. Identify the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled society for sustainable development?
2. What are the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building an inclusive society for sustainable development?
3. What are the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled society for sustainable development.

HO₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building an inclusive society for sustainable development.

HO₃: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development.

Review of Related Literature

This study was anchored on two theories. The human capital theory and the sustainable livelihood theory. The human capital theory was championed by Scholars like Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz. The theory postulates that individuals invest in education, skills and knowledge to increase their productivity and earning abilities. Investment in human capital can lead to increased economic growth and improved social outcomes.

The sustainable livelihood theory is a conceptual framework for understanding and addressing poverty and vulnerability. The theory pays attention to the resources, capabilities, and activities that individuals and households use to generate income, food, and other essential resources. This theory was propounded by several scholars such as Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway. These two theories are relevant in this study because entrepreneurship education advances entrepreneurial skills and knowledge among its recipients. This knowledge and these skills can be used to create jobs, reduce poverty and enhance livelihood strategies that will promote sustainable development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Literature Review

The introduction of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is a multi-dimensional developmental learning strategy aimed at providing students with entrepreneurial skills, promoting awareness of entrepreneurship, developing appropriate mindsets and behaviours favourable to enterprise development. To Wike (2024), Entrepreneurship education is a form of education that is designed to provide knowledge, skills, attitude and motivation to students for entrepreneurial success in any setting. It equips the students with the ability to seek investment opportunities. Entrepreneurship education, according to Santos, Costa, Neumeyer and Caetano (2016) involves all the activities that are aimed at fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes and skills which encompass things like idea generation, start-up, growth and innovation. Entrepreneurship education, according to Akpomi and Ikpesu (2020) refers to the development and application of an enterprise mindsets and skills in specific contexts of setting up a new venture, developing and growing an existing business or designing an entrepreneurial organization. The major objectives of entrepreneurship education, according to Kofarmata (2014) include but not limited to:

- The inculcation of the spirit of entrepreneurship mindsets among the students in tertiary institutions.

- Promotion of research and development, product development, technology innovation and inventions in our tertiary institutions, commercializing, patenting and acquisition of technology.
- Establishment of entrepreneurship development centers in all tertiary institutions with the view of spinning-out micro and medium enterprises.
- Reduce drastically youth and graduate unemployment, raising a new generation of entrepreneurs who are job creators for achieving a sustainable economy.

Okebukola (2011) supporting the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, outlined its importance to include the following: high potency of contributing to national economic development; reduction of global poverty index among comity of nation states; creation of employment, increasing standard of living and enhanced quality of lives; and improvement of public perception, respectability and relevance of Nigerian tertiary institutions. On the other hand, Edokpolor and Somorin (2017) opine that entrepreneurship education cut across all academic disciplines, aiming to equip its recipients with skills to create something new or include something new into an existing product to solve problems and discover business opportunities. This implies that entrepreneurship education is all inclusive in terms of academic disciplines and gender. Entrepreneurship education develops the skills that enable individuals to participate meaningfully in all aspects of life, create something valuable, and gain financial independence, or personal satisfaction, or both (Steenekamp, 2013).

The major assumption of entrepreneurship education is that entrepreneurial skills can be developed among individuals through a practical learning environment. Supporting this assumption, a study carried out by Omelogo (2016) revealed that students who participated in entrepreneurship education are more likely to start a business upon graduation due to a high level of entrepreneurial skills possessed by such students. Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2008) sees entrepreneurial skills as core skills; life and career skills; learning and innovation skills, and information, media and technology skills. According to Edokpolor (2020) entrepreneurial skills can be measured through items such as communication, creativity and innovation, teamwork and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, desirability and feasibility, ICT literacy, social and cross-cultural, learning and self-direction, management and leadership, and flexibility and adaptability. OECD in Martin (2015) identified three sets of skills: technical skills, business skills and personal entrepreneurial skills, which are affected by

entrepreneurship education. Graduates of tertiary institutions can leverage these skills to create jobs, generate income and become independent.

It is expected that entrepreneurship education will transform tertiary education graduates from employees to employers. This will enable them to key into government programs aimed at diversifying the economy for sustainable development. According to Osoba and Tella (2017) there is a significant interplay between entrepreneurial skills and sustainable development. Advancing human well-being, self-esteem and freedom contribute to the sustainable development of nations (UN, 2016). They are equally relevant for social, economic, and environmental change; hence, entrepreneurship education is inevitable. Entrepreneurship education therefore plays key roles in sustainable development.

It is equally important to develop effective programs tailored to various populations and their unique challenges. Developing an inclusive entrepreneurship education framework is critical in unlocking everyone's potential. According to University World News (2024), we must cultivate educational ecosystems that are accessible and responsive to diverse needs. Entrepreneurship education provides the roadmap to economic and social inclusion for marginalized and vulnerable people who are often excluded from the formal economy. Drenkat and Gotip (2018), in their study, concluded that, a well-organized entrepreneurship education in schools can present an absolute opportunity for curbing unemployment and poverty alleviation in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education plays a key role in nation building via its capability to provide private individuals with important self-reliance skills; self-sufficiency of individuals in the economy will lead to national development and reduction of unemployment, marginalization and uneven distribution of resources. Entrepreneurship Education in tertiary institutions should be able to develop the inclination for innovation and entrepreneurship in all her students irrespective of their age, gender, whether living with disability or not, living in urban or rural areas. Supporting this view, Onyido and Duru (2019) stated the need for all-inclusive orientation of innovative entrepreneurship education and fully furnished empowerment development centres in the institutions in order to achieve sustainable development through the instrument of quality and lifelong education.

In a study carried out by Araba (2023), it was observed that entrepreneurship education impacts positively on job creation, economic growth, development and survival of micro, small, and medium-scale enterprises. Entrepreneurship Education promotes social entrepreneurship, which is vital in tackling social problems and simultaneously earning a living, improving the quality of life and well-being of people (Bento, Jacquinet and Albuquerque, 2019). The effort

to build a skilled and inclusive society through entrepreneurship education has not been easy. It is confronted by numerous challenges. The challenges of entrepreneurship education according to Drenkat and Gotip (2018), include:

- Insufficient funding
- Poor design and implementation of entrepreneurship education course of action
- Poor business enterprising culture
- Few numbers of teachers, facilities and equipment for teaching/learning entrepreneurship education
- Poor technical know-how-based economy with no healthy competition.

Ezeanyej, Imoagwu and Ejefobihi (2019) identified frequent harassment from government officials who extort money from entrepreneurs, paucity of infrastructure such as bad roads, water shortage, erratic power supply, and poor telecommunication system as some of the challenges of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. Chukwudi and Nwosu (2018) and Agbonlahor (2018) outlined the challenges of entrepreneurship education in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria to include: dearth of lecturers/instructors with practical training in entrepreneurship education. Poor entrepreneurship education curriculum; lack of infrastructural support; lack of favourable policy environment and lack of government support; overemphasis on theory delivery; and absence of research support and linkages.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study with a population of 6,712 lecturers in the eight public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A sample of 670 (370 male and 300 female) lecturers representing 10% of the population was drawn from the tertiary institutions through a stratified random sampling technique. A researcher-developed instrument entitled “Building a Skilled and Inclusive Society for Sustainable Development Through Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire (BSISSDTEEQ)” was used for data collection. The questionnaire, which had 21 items, was adequately validated by three colleagues (2 from Educational Management and 1 from Measurement and Evaluation). A reliability test, which yielded 0.88 ‘r’ index, was carried out using the Cronbach's alpha method. The items in the questionnaire were designed using the 4-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). A criterion mean of 2.50 was used for decision-making on either to reject or accept an item. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions, while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled society for sustainable development?

Table 1: Mean responses and standard deviation of male and female lecturers on the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled society for sustainable development.

S/N	Impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled society for sustainable development.	Male Lect. N = 350		Female Lect. N = 290		Mean set	Remarks
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD ₁	$\bar{X}_2$	SD ₂		
1	Entrepreneurship education helps individuals to acquire some technical skills.	3.06	0.80	3.24	0.81	3.15	Agree
2	Entrepreneurship education inculcates into its recipient's business skills.	3.48	0.69	3.30	0.79	3.39	Agree
3	Entrepreneurship education helps individuals to develop personal entrepreneurial skills.	3.40	0.72	3.32	0.78	3.36	Agree
4	Entrepreneurship education impacts creativity/innovation skills to its recipients	3.36	0.75	3.28	0.80	3.32	Agree
5.	Entrepreneurship education helps to develop leadership skills in individuals	3.32	0.77	3.34	0.76	3.33	Agree
6.	Entrepreneurship education positively impacts critical thinking/problem solving skills.	3.38	0.73	3.20	0.83	3.29	Agree
7.	Entrepreneurship education helps individuals to enhance their ICT literacy and social/cross-cultural skills.	3.40	0.72	3.36	0.75	3.38	Agree
Aggregate mean and standard deviation		3.34	0.74	3.29	0.79		

Table 1 shows that all the items had mean scores that are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. They were accepted by the respondents as the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled society for sustainable development. The aggregate mean of 3.34 and 3.29 for male and female lecturers, which are very close, indicated that the

respondents did not differ so much in their opinion on the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled society for sustainable development.

Therefore, the impacts of entrepreneurship education in building a skilled society include: helping individuals to acquire technical skills; inculcation of business skills; helping individuals to acquire personal entrepreneurial skills; impacting creativity/innovation skills; development of leadership skills; development of critical thinking/problem-solving skills; and enhancement of ICT literacy, social/cross cultural skills.

Research Question 2: What are the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building an inclusive society for sustainable development?

Table 2: Mean responses and standard deviation of male and female lecturers on the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building an inclusive society for sustainable development.

S/N	Impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building an inclusive society for sustainable development.	Male Lect. N = 350		Female Lect. N = 290		Mean set	Remarks
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD ₁	$\bar{X}_2$	SD ₂		
8	Entrepreneurship education provides opportunities for students from diverse disciplines to develop entrepreneurial skills.	3.46	0.62	3.40	0.65	3.43	Agree
9	Entrepreneurship education allows diverse kinds of students in terms of gender, ability, race etc to acquire entrepreneurial skills for sustainable development.	3.42	0.64	3.44	0.63	3.43	Agree
10	Entrepreneurship education empowers marginalized people such as women, youth, people living with disabilities, etc with entrepreneurial skills to start and grow businesses.	3.38	0.66	3.32	0.69	3.35	Agree
11	Entrepreneurship education promotes the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises that address community needs to enhance sustainable development	3.50	0.61	3.42	0.66	3.46	Agree
12	Entrepreneurship education promotes even distribution of resources/income.	3.34	0.67	3.36	0.68	3.35	Agree
13	Entrepreneurship education allows only able-bodied individuals to acquire	2.36	0.71	2.28	0.73	2.32	Disagree

	entrepreneurial skills necessary for establishing a business.						
14	Entrepreneurship education. Promotes social inclusion, equity, respect and support for everyone.	3.28	0.68	3.30	0.70	3.29	Agree
	Aggregate mean and standard deviation	3.25	0.66	3.22	0.68		

Data in Table 2 revealed that all the items had mean scores that were greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 except item number 6. All the items were accepted as the impacts of education Entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building an inclusive society for sustainable development except item number 6. The aggregate mean of 3.25 and 3.22 for male and female lecturers show that the respondents unanimously shared the same opinion on the subject matter.

Therefore, the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institution in Rivers State in building an inclusive society for sustainable development include: providing opportunities for students from diverse disciplines irrespective of social status, gender, race etc to acquire entrepreneurial skills; empowering marginalized group with entrepreneurial skills; promoting the growth of MSME for sustainable development; promotion of even distribution of resources/ income; and promotion of social inclusion, equity, respect and support for everyone.

Research Question 3: What are the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development?

Table 3: Mean responses and standard deviation of male and female lecturers on the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development.

S/N	Challenges of E.E. in tertiary institutions in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development.	Male Lect. N = 350		Female Lect. N = 290		Mean set	Remarks
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD ₁	$\bar{X}_2$	SD ₂		
15	Poor funding of entrepreneurship education	3.12	0.88	3.16	0.83	3.14	Agree
16	Poorly designed and implemented entrepreneurship education curriculum	3.18	0.83	3.08	0.87	3.13	Agree
17	Inadequate entrepreneurship education lecturers	3.16	0.84	3.14	0.85	3.15	Agree
18	Lack of adequate facilities/infrastructure for entrepreneurship education	3.20	0.82	3.22	0.82	3.21	Agree
19	Over emphasis on theory delivery	3.14	0.86	3.10	0.86	3.12	Agree

20	Lack of adequate policies/government support.	3.10	0.89	3.06	0.90	3.08	Agree
21	Unwillingness of E.E. students to accept loans/start-up packs upon their graduation for entrepreneurial practice.	2.28	0.90	2.24	0.93	2.26	Disagree
Aggregate mean and standard deviation		3.03	0.86	3.00	0.87		

Table 3 shows that items 15 to 20 had mean scores that are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. They were accepted as the challenges of entrepreneurship education in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development. Item 21 had mean scores that were less than the criterion mean, and it was rejected by the respondents as a challenge of entrepreneurship education in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development. The aggregate mean of 3.03 and 3.00 for male and female lecturers is very close and indicates that the respondents did not differ so much in their opinion.

Therefore, the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development include: poor funding, poorly designed and implemented curriculum, inadequate entrepreneurship education lecturers, lack of adequate facilities/ infrastructure, overemphasis on theory, and lack of adequate policies/government support.

Test of Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the impact of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled society for sustainable development.

Table 4: z-test of difference in the mean and standard deviation scores of male and female lecturers on the impact of entrepreneurship education in building a skilled society for sustainable development.

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	Z-Cal	Z-Crit	Level Of Sign	Decision
Male Lect.	350	3.34	0.74	638	0.861	± 1.960	0.05	HO ₁ Not significant
Female Lect.	290	3.29	0.79					

z- test analysis in Table 4 shows that the z-calculated value of 0.861 is by far less than the z-critical value of ± 1.960 at 638 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

HO₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the impact of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building an inclusive society for sustainable development.

Table 5: z- test of difference in the mean and standard deviation scores of male and female lecturers on the impact of entrepreneurship education. in tertiary institutions in building an inclusive society for sustainable development.

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	Z-Cal	Z-Crit	Level Of Sign	Decision
Male Lect.	350	3.25	0.66	638	0.588	± 1.960	0.05	HO ₂ Not significant
Female Lect.	290	3.22	0.68					

z-test analysis in Table 5 shows that the z-calculated value of 0.588 is by far less than the z-critical value of + 1.960 at 638 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

HO₃: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development.

Table 6: z-test of difference in the mean and standard deviation scores of male and female lecturers on the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in building a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development.

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	Z-Cal	Z-Crit	Level Of Sign	Decision
Male Lect.	350	3.03	0.86	638	0.460	± 1.960	0.05	HO ₃ Not significant
Female Lect.	290	3.00	0.87					

z-test analysis in Table 6 shows that the z-calculated value of 0.460 is by far less than the z-critical value of + 1.960 at 638 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that, the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building a skilled society include: helping individuals to acquire

technical skills; business skills; personal entrepreneurial skills; creativity/innovation skills critical thinking/problem solving skills; leadership skills; ICT skills; and social/cross-cultural skills. These skills are vital in the survival of individuals in every contemporary society. Graduates of tertiary institutions who have acquired these skills can leverage on them to become independent and employers of labour. Impacting these skills into students in tertiary institutions will, to a large extent enhance the building of a skilled society. These skills are relevant in the growth and development of business enterprises; local, national, global interactions; and proper management of our environments. The building of these skills promotes sustainable development through advancing human well-being, self esteem and freedom. These findings are supported by Osoba and Tella (2017), United Nations (2016); and Martins (2015).

The study revealed that the impacts of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building an inclusive society for sustainable development include: providing opportunities for diverse students in terms of discipline and socio-economic factors, empowerment of marginalized groups with entrepreneurial skills, promoting the growth of MSME's, promotion of even distribution of resources and support for everyone. i Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions is compulsory for every student irrespective of gender, race, ability or discipline. Entrepreneurship education aims at carrying every student along in the development of entrepreneurship skills. The program identifies the importance of every student and each of them is a potential entrepreneur that will contribute to economic growth and sustainable development of the country. Through this approach entrepreneurship education impacts positively in the building of an inclusive society by providing equal opportunities to undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship education also empowers women, people living with disability, low-income earners, people living in remote places and other marginalized groups. By impacting entrepreneurship skills into these people, they are encouraged to develop entrepreneurial mindsets, start up their own businesses and develop themselves rather than becoming dependents or job-seekers. These findings are supported by Onelogo (2019), Drenkat and Gotip (2018), Onyido and Duru (2019). Entrepreneurship education supports the growth and development of micro, small and medium scale enterprises which play vital roles in poverty alleviation, tackling unemployment, social security, economic growth and sustainable development. This creates room for economic inclusion and even distribution of resources.

Lastly, the study revealed that the challenges of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State in building of a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable

development include: paucity of funds, curriculum issues, inadequate entrepreneurship education lecturers, inadequate facilities/infrastructure, emphasis on theory, inadequate government policies/ support. These findings are supported by Bento et al (2019), Ezeanyejí et al (2019), Chukwudi and Nwosu (2018), and Agboulahor (2016). Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is poorly funded. This has resulted to inadequate provision of numerous facilities and infrastructures necessary for effective entrepreneurship education. The entrepreneurship education curriculum in tertiary institutions is poorly designed and implemented. There is much emphasis on theory rather than practicals and a lot of lecturers/instructors deployed to teach entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are not professionally trained and they are saddle with high work load.

Ineffective government policies and support is another challenge hindering the development of a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development through entrepreneurship education. Double digit interest rates, high exchange rates, import/export policies, double taxation etc have negative impacts on the growth and development of business enterprises in Nigeria. other challenges include bad roads, epileptic power supply, poor network signals, poor water supply, and insecurity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria promotes the building of a skilled and inclusive society for sustainable development. However, improving entrepreneurship education and making the programs more effective by addressing the various challenges confronting entrepreneurship education in various tertiary institutions in Rivers State will play a crucial role in providing the necessary skills adequately and improving inclusivity in our society. By imparting these skills to every student without excluding or marginalizing anybody will advance social security, economic growth, productivity and sustainable development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should increase the funding of entrepreneurship education and ensure that funds released are adequately utilized in tertiary institutions.
2. Tertiary institutions in Rivers State should lay more emphasis on practicals and real-life situations, and less theory in the implementation of entrepreneurship education; hence, the need for a review of the entrepreneurship education curriculum and pedagogical approach used in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

3. Government should recruit more qualified and adequate number of entrepreneurship education lecturers/instructors in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

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