

Entrepreneurship Education and Economic Growth of Benue State (2007 - 2016)

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Abstract: Nigeria is faced with numerous of problems among which are graduate unemployment, under-employment, poverty, crime, and other social vices, which are as a result of economic meltdown, which needs urgent consideration. In order to overcome this danger, this study examines the extent of relationship between entrepreneurship education and economic growth of Benue State. A critical examination of educational sector in Nigeria shows that efforts have been made by tertiary institutions in providing enabling environment towards entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, but little has been done in the area of entrepreneurship education with the escalating rate of unemployment of 14.2 % and poverty rate of 33.1% National Bureau of Statistics, 2016 ravaging the Country. The above are attributed mainly to faulty curriculum development, lack of sufficient and skilled manpower, poor state of infrastructure, faulty foundation, inadequate or outright lack of funding, hasty preparations and poor teaching methodology. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and a population of 1,325 final students drawn from the seven tertiary institutions in Benue State was used for the study. Data were collected for the study using a validated questionnaire structured on a 5-point rating scale. With the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0), the study employed the simple regression analysis to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that entrepreneurship education (academic skills and competency) is positive and insignificantly correlated with standard of living and innovation in Benue State. Based on the findings, it is therefore recommended that entrepreneurship education should be accorded the necessary attention and support by all the institutions for immediate improvement in its overall performance of Benue State and that entrepreneurship education in Benue State should be regarded as the beautiful bride that State and the Nation must be prepared to spend much on intellect, time, money, political will, honesty, dedication, sustained effort, and related human and material resources.

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I. Introduction

Entrepreneurship education was first taught at Harvard University in 1947 and became popular in business schools since 1970s and had begun to receive the attention of scholars all over the World. Governments, in both developed and developing Countries have embarked on major programmes designed to harness and boost entrepreneurship education in their home Country, underpinning these programmes is a common assumption that entrepreneurship education is associated with economic growth and development (Audretsch, 2003; Plummer & Taylor, 2004).

Entrepreneurship education is made up of all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision of accessing and transforming opportunities of different kinds (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014). Entrepreneurship education goes beyond business creation, it increasing students' ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes or challenges. Besides, it is the type of education that seeks to provide students and/or individuals with the knowledge, skills attitude, values, competencies and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings require in transforming their lifestyles (Okpala, 2014). It thus empowers students to develop and use their innate creative skills to take initiatives, responsibility and risks (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014). In support of this view, Ediagbonya (2013) argue that entrepreneurship education is the kind of education given to people with a view to developing entrepreneurship qualities properly followed up with support services for smooth take off and successful running of business. (Ekankumo & Kemebaradikumo, 2011) stress that entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students (especially those in tertiary institutions) with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial studies in a variety

of setting. From these assertions, it is obvious that a well implemented entrepreneurship education will lead to economic empowerment and development.

The directives of the Nigerian Government through the National Universities Commission (2004) to integrate entrepreneurship courses into the curriculum of Nigerian universities is a right call and at the right time since entrepreneurship education is expected to provide additional skills, resources, and methodologies to graduates to further transform their ideas into visible and viable businesses after graduating from the university. If this is rightly done, the graduates would not need to queue up in the labour market for paid employment but rather create jobs for themselves and for others. This will go a long way to reduce poverty in the society and unemployment in the labour market (Amoor, 2008). It is a well-known fact that, entrepreneurship constitutes a vital engine for economic growth, social, practical and all round development of any Country. It has been identified by many; both internationally and all over the Country; as a tool for a sustainable, virile and stable economy. No wonder successive Governments in Nigeria have attempted to strengthen relevant agencies in order to achieve this position of economic growth.

Economic growth arises from the fact of increasing per capita output and income as well as initiating and constituting change in the structure of business and society (Hisrich, Peters & Dean, 2008). In Nigeria, tertiary education is viewed as a good investment for economic growth & development. This is so because it is expected that this educational system will produce quality and quantity of human resources required for economic growth using the right mix of inputs (Durosaro, 2000). The goals of the Nigerian tertiary education include to contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society; develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments; and acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful member of the society (Okey, Ayang, & Ndum, 2012).

In relating entrepreneurship education and economic growth, (Dejardin, 2000) documented that an increase in the number of entrepreneurs leads to an increase in economic growth. Ahiauzu (2010) is of the same opinion and that is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and economic growth. Henderson (2007) concludes that entrepreneurship education will spur innovative ideas and add value through the commercialization of new products, the creation of new jobs, and the building of new firms.

In view of the above goals, regrettably in Nigeria, even though one of the major aims of entrepreneurship education at the tertiary level is to prepare the recipient of the educational programmes to become self-reliant, this has not been realized as evidenced from the huge number of unemployed graduates roaming the streets of major cities in Nigeria. If entrepreneurship education is to meet the challenges of preparing youths and adults for self-employment and self-reliance for sustainable growth and development, then there is the urgent need to infuse practical entrepreneurship education into the programmes of our tertiary institutions of learning. It is against this background that this study is carried out.

Statement of the Problem

The increased rate of unemployment in Nigeria has been blamed on dwindling economic viability of the Country. Most worrisome is the rate of unemployment and under-employment amongst tertiary institutions' graduates as this prompted the Federal Government directive for immediate introduction of entrepreneurship education in all tertiary institutions in the Country, including the Universities. This introduction aggravated numerous problems confronting the Country's economic growth. Researchers like Gorman, Hanlon and King (1997); Odiba and Ann (2013) have documented that entrepreneurship education is a good option for the production of graduates that would be self-reliant thereby reducing unemployment and poverty in the Nigeria. Despite tertiary institutions efforts in providing enabling environment towards entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, a critical examination of the educational sector in Nigeria shows that very little has been done in the area of entrepreneurship education with the escalating rate of unemployment of 14.2 % and poverty rate of 33.1% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016) ravaging the Country which is attributed mainly to faulty curriculum development, lack of sufficient and skilled manpower, poor state of infrastructure, faulty foundation, inadequate or outright lack of funding, hasty preparations and poor teaching methodology (Jumoke, 2015; Osakwe, 2015).

However, empirical studies in Nigeria on entrepreneurship education have only focused on employment creation largely ignoring other aspects of economic growth. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to examine entrepreneurship education and economic growth in Benue State.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the extent of relationship between entrepreneurship education and economic growth of Benue State. The study specifically seeks to;

- i. Ascertain the type of relationship between academic skill and standard of living in Benue State.

ii. Examine the relationship between competency and innovation in Benue State.

Research Questions

In line with the research objectives, the following research questions are raised to guide the study;

To what extent does academic skill affect standard of living in Benue State?

To what extent does competency affect innovation in Benue State?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between academic skill and standard of living in Benue State

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between competency and innovation in Benue State

Scope of the Study

This research basically focuses on entrepreneurship education and economic growth in Benue State (2007 - 2016). The geographical spread is limited to tertiary institutions in Benue State namely; Benue State University, Makurdi which was established in 1992; Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi which was established in 1988; Benue State Polytechnic Ugbokolo, which was established in 1976; University of Mkar – Mkar Gboko which was founded in 2005; College of Education Katsina-Ala which was established in 1991, College of Education Oju which was established in 1992 and Akperan Orshi College of Agriculture Yandev-Gboko which was established in 1983. The formal teaching of entrepreneurial studies in the tertiary institutions commence in 2007, Following the directives of the Nigerian Government through the National Universities Commission (2004) to incorporate entrepreneurship courses into the curriculum of Nigerian universities and other tertiary institutions. Entrepreneurship education is measured in terms of academic skill development and competency. Also in order to measure economic growth, the study utilized standard of living and innovation.

II. Material and Methods

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship Education means many things to many people. Nwabuama (2004) views entrepreneurship education as the identification of the general characteristics of entrepreneurs and how potential entrepreneurs can be trained in management techniques needed for effective performance of persons for long time survival of an organization after the acquisition of occupational skills.

Olawolu and Kaegon (2012) confirms that entrepreneurship education prepares youths to be responsible and entering individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by exposing them in real life learning experiences where they will be required to think, take risks, manage circumstances and incidentally learn from the outcome. To (Ebele, 2008) entrepreneurship education is the teaching of knowledge and a skill that enables the students to plan, start and run their own business.

Swarland (2008) posits that entrepreneurship education aims to stimulate creativity in students, enables them to identify opportunities for innovation and motivate them to transform the ideas into practical and targeted activities whether in a social, cultural or economic context. Amusan (2004) agrees that entrepreneurship education will provide opportunities for students to access their attitude, aptitude and skills relating to those necessary for developing and running business.

In the same vein, Nwangwu (2007) opine that entrepreneurship education is a process of bringing together the factors of production, which include land, labour and capital so as to provide a product or service for public consumption. However, the operational definition of entrepreneurship education is the willingness and ability of a person or persons to acquire educational skills to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful business enterprise.

According to Akudolu (2010) entrepreneurship education is a process of acquisition of knowledge, attitude and skills to enable the learner apprehend life challenges in whatever form and take decisive steps to realize new trends and opportunities for meeting those challenges in all aspects of human life. Garba (2012) argued that entrepreneurship education is a process that provides trainees with knowledge, skills and attitudes to create wealth/jobs for poverty reduction and self-employment. The duo argued that entrepreneurship education focuses on aspects of training programmes that would lead the beneficiaries to creativity, innovation, and identification of business opportunity, self-reliance, job/wealth creation, income generation, employment generation, poverty reduction, self-esteem and freedom.

Entrepreneurship education as perceived by Omolay (2006) is a structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurial competencies, which in turn refers to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth-oriented ventures. Another view of entrepreneurship education is the term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities. Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (2004) points out that entrepreneurship

education is a life-long learning process and consists of five stages namely: basic, competency awareness, creative application, start-up and growth.

According to Alberti, Sciscia and Poli (2004) for effective entrepreneurship education there should be a relationship between the goals of entrepreneurship programme, the audiences to which the programme is delivered, the contents of the entrepreneurship courses or modules, the method of delivery or pedagogy, and finally, the assessment that will be used. Entrepreneurial training and education encourages Nigerian students to become jobs creator rather than job seekers. It also equips them with skills for constant improvement and innovations in their undertaken. It goes beyond business creation. It is about increasing student's ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes.

Economic Growth

Considerable intellectual effort has been advanced in the direction of establishing the concept of economic growth. The Global Economic Monitor (GEM) (2016) a research organization supported by the Babson College, Massachusetts, USA and the London Business School, London, is devoted to the study of the economic growth and how entrepreneurship can be cultivated particularly in developing Countries. An annual study of up to 42 Countries is carried out by GEM and the results published for World consumption.

Hisrich and Peters (2008), hold that economic growth arises from the fact of increasing per capita output and income as well as initiating and constituting change in the structure of business and society. These authors indicate that in many countries, rundown areas or communities have been energized through entrepreneurship programmes.

Anyanwuocha (1993) sees economic growth as a process by which there is a substantial increase in the actual out of goods and services per head. This in essence refers to a situation whereby real output in terms of goods and services increases at a faster rate compare to the rate of population. Output can only increase with a reasonable stock of capital in the economy.

Another scholar, Jhingan (2007) on his part views the concept as relating to a quantitative sustainable increase in the Country's per capita output, accompanied by expansion on its labour force, consumption, capital stock and volume of trade. (Todara, 1985) sees economic growth as a long-term rise in capacity to supply increasing diverse economic goods to its population. This growing capacity is based on advancing technological adjustment and the institutional and ideological adjustment that it demands.

One of the pioneering and greatest names in entrepreneurship was Professor Joseph Schumpeter (1934), an Austrian-American economist. Schumpeter extolled entrepreneurship and used the famous phrase "creative destruction" in his analysis. He argued that entrepreneurs play a critical role in capitalist economies by way of stimulating business through financial investment and innovation. Entrepreneurs create new products, services, and methods as they innovate and in the process, destroy old products, services, and methods. This pushes forward the development process.

Samuelson and Nordhaus (2010) note that Schumpeter challenged the glorification of perfect competition at the time, arguing that the essence of economic growth is innovation and those monopolies are the wellsprings of innovation in a capitalist economy. Entrepreneurship appears to have worked wonders in developed countries. Strom (2011) reviews the place of entrepreneurship in the developed world and declares: "We know that innovative entrepreneurs - those who bring new products and processes to the market - are disproportionately responsible for the breakthrough or 'disruptive' innovations that change our daily lives and allow for the rapid improvement in standards of living that developed countries have experienced over the past century, and also disproportionately responsible for job growth in industrialized economies.

In the emerging countries, most notably the ones described with the acronym BRICS –Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – (Naude, 2011) notes that "impressive growth has been driven by a veritable entrepreneurial revolution. The need in these economies to sustain growth through sustainable access to resources, knowledge, markets, and low-carbon industrialization puts a premium on innovative entrepreneurship." In the third group, (Naude, 2011) declares finally, in the least developed countries, where aid dependency is high; donors have been shifting the emphasis in development cooperation towards private sector development. In many of these countries, including resource-poor North African countries, populations consist of many young people who see little prospects of gaining employment with decent wages. Promoting youth entrepreneurship here has become a vital policy objective of many development organizations and donors. (Naude, 2011) concludes in the study sponsored by the United Nations University's World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) in Helsinki, Finland that entrepreneurship has the capacity to spur economic growth and that economic development and entrepreneurship work hand in hand even if the later could generate some unhappiness in the populace along the line. (Renjith, 2009) simply concludes that "the development of entrepreneurship is inevitable in the economic development of a country. The role played by entrepreneurship development can be expressed in the following words 'economic development is the effect for which entrepreneurship is a cause. (Ahiauzu, 2010) has done some work on what should be the role of

entrepreneurship in the economic development of Nigeria. First, he quotes (Dejardin, 2000) who asserts that “an increase in the number of entrepreneurs leads to an increase in economic growth. This is supported by Morrison (2000) who declares that throughout history, entrepreneurship has been found to be important and meaningful in society at points of transition, for example, traditional to modern, modern to postmodern and state-controlled economies to free market. Asc (2006) as also quoted by Ahiauzu (2010) asserts that there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth while Henderson (2007) states; Entrepreneurship is increasingly being recognized as a primary engine of economic growth. By combining existing resources with innovative ideas, entrepreneurs add value through the commercialization of new products, the creation of new jobs, and the building of new firms. The Global Economic Monitor indicates that nations with higher levels of entrepreneurial activity enjoy strong economic growth. In short, entrepreneurs are the link between new ideas and economic growth.

Standard of living

Standard of living refers to the level of wealth, comfort, material goods and necessities available to a certain socio-economic class in a certain geographic area, usually a Country. The standard of living includes factors such as income, quality and availability of employment, class disparity, poverty rate, quality and affordability of housing, hours of work required to purchase necessities, gross domestic product, inflation rate, amount of leisure time every year, affordable (or free) access to quality healthcare, quality and availability of education, life expectancy, incidence of disease, cost of goods and services, infrastructure, national economic growth, economic and political stability, political and religious freedom, environmental quality, climate and safety. The standard of living is closely related to quality of life.

Innovation

The meaning of innovation has been an area of interest both for researchers, scholars, scientists and for different industries. It is considered that the way the innovation has been defined within an organization will further determine which activities will take place within the company and which will be outsourced; including radical or incremental changes in products, processes and markets.

Defining innovation determines the degree and nature of innovation in a particular organization. Innovation, as a result of the innovation process is strongly influenced by how organizations define the concept of innovation. This fact highlights a number of critical implications for organizations and creates a new order for the management of innovation. Boer and During (2001) define innovation as Creating a new association (combination) product-market-technology-organization. Innovation can also be defined as the application of new ideas to the products, processes, or other aspects of the activities of a firm that lead to increased “value.” This “value” is defined in a broad way to include higher value added for the firm and also benefits to consumers or other firms

Theoretical Framework

Kirzner’s Theory

The Kirzner’s theory was first proposed by Kirzner Israel M. in (1979). It focuses on “entrepreneurial alertness” to available, but as yet unnoticed opportunities. The essence of theory is that someone is endowed with the trait to recognize something others have failed to recognize; that there is an opportunity waiting to be exploited. Kirzner believes that this alertness is a trait successful entrepreneurs have. The uses of entrepreneurial development to generate employment, economically empower the people, reduce poverty and propel economic growth.

The economic policy direction encapsulated in the Nigeria Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) I & II has entrepreneurship development as its focal point. Entrepreneurship development aims at equipping the youth and school leavers especially the graduates of Tertiary Institutions with skills to create jobs for them-selves and other people instead of hunting for non-existing jobs from the Public sector.

Later, Kirzner (1997) introduced the key concepts of “spontaneous learning”, “alertness” and “entrepreneurial discovery”. Entrepreneurial discovery thus plays a role, as it is seen as gradually pushing back the boundaries of sheer ignorance, by increasing mutual awareness among market participants and thus, in turn, driving prices, output and input quantities and qualities toward the values consistent with equilibrium.

Kirzner’s view of entrepreneurship is based on what he called “spontaneous learning”, as one gradually becomes aware of his entrepreneurial vision, he learns, and the state of mind that enables spontaneous learning to occur is “alertness”. It is alertness that allows entrepreneurs to identify profitable exchange (or in other words, arbitrage) opportunities, corroborating the importance of the entrepreneur’s “information-transforming” function.

According to Kirzner, an improvement in the technique of production or a shift in preferences leads to change (disequilibrium) in the market where initially there was equilibrium. If there is equilibrium in the market

there is nothing for the entrepreneur to do and no exchange and profit opportunities for them since everybody will be able to carry out his initially determined exchange plans. But whenever the change has occurred, some planned activities will not be realized. Kirzner states, there is no room for entrepreneurial discovery and creativity: the course of market events is foreordained by the data of market situation and for the system to create profit opportunities for entrepreneur there is need for an exogenous shock to the system.

Kirzner argues that the economy is in a constant state of disequilibrium due to shocks constantly hitting the economy. Furthermore, economic agents suffer from "utter ignorance"--they simply do not know that additional information is available. In this world, the alert entrepreneur discovers and exploits new business opportunities and eliminates (some of the) "utter ignorance" and thus moves the economy toward equilibrium, which is the state where no more information can be discovered.

Kirzner's analysis of entrepreneurship identifies a disequilibrium that can only be corrected (to equilibrium) by alert entrepreneurs who produce and exchange, but the emphasis is on the exchange opportunities and progress that comes mainly from this part. He postulates that entrepreneurial progress does not depend on a "great man" but it does depend on many great men, many players in the business arena.

To conclude, though there are many theories on entrepreneurship education and economic growth, however the Kirzner's Theory better explains entrepreneurship education as it relates to the economic growth outcomes. The theory throws more light on how entrepreneurship education can inculcate entrepreneurship spirit in an individual to spur a desired and expected economic growth outcome which relates to the study variables (i.e Innovation and Standard of Living).

Empirical Review

The empirical review covers issues relating to the relationship that literature has established between entrepreneurship education and economic growth. However, the empirical perspectives established by researchers have been reviewed below.

Acquah, Ojong and Bassey (2013), conducted a study on entrepreneurship and employment generation in Nigeria. Using the Chi-square statistical analysis, the correlation coefficient and the student "t" distribution, we extracted and assessed responses from 130 entrepreneurs based on the three research questions relating to funding, training and efficient use of funds. The result revealed that significant relationships exist between effective entrepreneurship administrations in terms of adequate training and the funding of entrepreneurship programmes and the efficient use of funds. It becomes apparent that any one of them taken into consideration is a factor that affects entrepreneurship development in the Nigerian economy.

Martha (2015) conducted a study on entrepreneurship in higher education in Nigeria: an imperative for sustainable development. Descriptive design was adopted for the study and the population included all students in University of Lagos, University of Ibadan, University of Abuja, University of Uyo, and University of Nigeria, Nsukka. A sample of 40 students each was randomly selected from each of the above Universities, making a total number of 200 respondents. Four research questions were raised; mean was used to analyze the data. The findings of the study are: entrepreneurship education will provide students with occupational skill enhance the potential of student or individual and reinforce self-sufficiency and improves quality of life.

Babatunde and Durowaiye (2014) examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions among Nigerian undergraduates. Analytical techniques used include frequency count, percentages, and inferential statistics in the form of chi-square and degree of significance to know the impact of entrepreneurship education on the rate of students' self-employment intention. The study found that exposure to entrepreneurship education influences students' intentions of becoming self-employed. It was however discovered that most students were not very confident about their intentions due to fear of capital, failure, and lack of experience in business management. The study concludes that despite knowledge of entrepreneurship education as a contributing factor in the reduction of unemployment, Nigerian youth requires additional supports to overcome the foreseen challenges.

Joshua and Helen (2013) examine the relationship between entrepreneurship development and Youth unemployment reduction in Nigeria, using the ordinary least square regression /correlation models. The findings revealed that capacity utilization explain variations in unemployment but in a negative manner which the regression result shows that an increase in economic activities will improve the level of entrepreneurship positively. The third model strongly supports the need for government to encourage economic activities in order to improve entrepreneurship development that may reduce unemployment. The study concludes that Nigeria is not producing at full capacity of output; the existing excess labour in the country at present could not be fully absorbed by the industry in Nigeria because of their low productivity level and capacity utilization.

Olayinka, Olusegun & Babatunde (2015), empirically examined the impact of entrepreneurship training and education on poverty reduction in Nigeria. The researcher adopted a stratified random sampling technique, 500 entrepreneurs and apprenticeships were chosen from six recognized Local Government in Lagos State. The best linear unbiased estimator was used to test the relationship between entrepreneurship training and poverty

reduction in Nigeria. The result emanated from the findings suggests that there exist a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurship and poverty reduction.

Makinde (2013) conducted a study on curbing the unemployment problem in Nigeria through entrepreneurial development. The study made use of primary data sourced from 220 respondents in Kogi State through administering of questionnaires. Their responses were tested using appropriate statistical tools like the simple percentage and the Chi-square research techniques; our study revealed that the unemployment problem in Nigeria can be solved through entrepreneurial development and that government effort in this regard is not sufficient given the magnitude of the unemployed in Nigeria.

Osakwe (2015) examine entrepreneurship education in Delta State tertiary institution as a means of achieving national growth and development. Data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics of means and standard deviation. Results revealed that most of the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education is beneficial to national development despite its challenges in tertiary institutions.

Sofoluwe, Shokunbi, Raimi & Ajewole (2013), examined entrepreneurship education as a strategy for boosting human capital development and employability in Nigeria: issues, prospects, challenges and solutions. The study adopted the quantitative research method, specifically the use of a survey method for eliciting responses from a cross-section of academic staff and students from Yaba College of Technology, Lagos. Using the descriptive and inferential statistics, the key findings indicated that entrepreneurship education is a leeway to job creation, wealth creation, youth empowerment, peaceful society and economic growth & development.

Research Design

The study adopts the descriptive survey design using the questionnaire as the main instrument of data collection. The survey design uses questionnaires and/or interviews for collection of data from a population based on appropriate sampling techniques. Inferences are drawn from the study of the sample group using appropriate statistical techniques. The survey method is suitable for collection of information from a large sample of people and using sensitive questions. It is a useful measure of behaviour for measuring a large population after collecting the summarized information.

Population of the Study

The population for this study is made up of 1,325 final year students purposively drawn from Tertiary Institutions in Benue State. Table 1 below depicts the composition of the study population;

Table 1: Population of the Study

SN	Name of Institution	Number of Respondents
1	Benue State University, Makurdi	300
2	Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi	300
3	Benue State Polytechnic Ugbokolo	150
4	University of Mkar, Mkar	120
5	College of Education Oju	200
6	College of Education Katsina-Ala	135
7	College of Agriculture, Yandev	120
Total		1325

Source: Registry Section of Various Institutions (2017).

Sample Size

A total of 700 respondents who are students, representing 53% of the population are purposively selected to be the sample of the study. The research deemed the sample size appropriate because if the sample size is too large, the method becomes too sensitive; thereby making the goodness or fit measures indicate poorly (Sekaran 2006). Also, the sample size is handy, manageable and accessible to the research

Sampling Technique

This study adopted the stratified simple random sampling methods in selecting the sample units. However, the researcher adopted the stratified sampling method to select the students from the 7 tertiary institutions in Benue State based on the Bourley (1964) population allocation formula, as stated below;

$$nh = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$$

Where;

nh = number of units to the population

n = total sample size

N_h = number of students in each unit

N = population size

Therefore, the respondents will be selected as thus;

Table 2: Questionnaires to be Administered

SN	Institution	Computation of Sample	Sample
1.	Benue State University, Makurdi	$\frac{300}{1325} \times 700 = 158$	159
2.	Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi	$\frac{300}{1325} \times 700 = 158$	159
3.	Benue State Polytechnic Ugbokolo	$\frac{150}{1325} \times 700 = 79$	79
4.	University of Mkar, Mkar	$\frac{120}{1325} \times 700 = 63$	63
5.	College of Education Oju	$\frac{200}{1325} \times 700 = 106$	106
6.	College of Education Katsina-Ala	$\frac{135}{1325} \times 700 = 71$	71
7.	College of Agriculture, Yandev	$\frac{120}{1325} \times 700 = 63$	63
Total			700

Source: Researcher's Compilation, (2017).

The simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents for the administration of the questionnaire in the respective tertiary institutions for the study. This method of random sampling is preferred because each member of the population has equal chance of been selected and the rationale for the selection was that no member of the population has any more chance of being selected than other members

Sources of Data

Basically there are two sources of data; primary and secondary data. For the purpose of this research, the researcher utilized both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected with the aid of a well-structured questionnaire. Whereas, the secondary data was elicited from journals, internet sources, archival records, written and non-written documents (Sekaran, 2006). The secondary data collected were used on the discussion of prior research and other available literature on the research issues. These included: entrepreneurship education and economic growth both in parent and immediate disciplines. Following this, the review proposed a theoretical framework for the research and the research gaps in the existing body of knowledge, resulting in the formulation of hypotheses development for testing the theory.

Validity of Instruments

In establishing the face and content validity of the instrument in this research, prepared questionnaires were presented to two experts comprising one lecturer from the department of Management University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus and Business Administration, Benue State University. The drafted questionnaires were given to these experts who were requested to do the following:

- i. Edit the instrument by correcting or expunging ambiguous statements wrong spelling, difficult items requiring explanations and overlapping content.
- ii. Remove irrelevant questions so as to encourage quick response
- iii. Review the number of items by removing unnecessary repetitions
- iv. Add other items considered to be relevant to the study based on research question
- v. Make unnecessary recommendations that would improve the validity of the instrument.

Reliability of Instruments

In order to determine the reliability of the instrument a pilot test was conducted. Pilot testing of the questionnaires involves formally testing the questionnaires or survey on a small sample of respondents. The pilot study was administered to twenty (20) students who are final year University students from Benue State University and had enrolled in the Entrepreneurship Program of the Institution. The selected students do not form part of those to be used for the main study and were given questionnaires to answer. Data from the questionnaires were collected and tested to determine the reliability of the instrument using the Cronbach Alpha Method provided by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0). Thus, a content validity index of at least 0.70 will make the instrument be declared reasonably content valid (Udofia, 2012). The result of the reliability test for the entire instrument is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Anchor	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Academic Skills & Competency	5 Point	5	.98
Standard of living	5 Point	4	.86
Innovation	5 Point	4	.72
			0.81

Source: SPSS Version 20.0 Output

The Cronbach’s alpha conducted shows that all the variables have internal consistencies above the value 0.70 as indicated in Table 1. Therefore, since the overall cronbach alpha value of 0.81 is above 0.70 the questionnaire items were declared reasonably content valid and used to improve the final version of the questionnaire.

Method of Data Collection

The data of this study was collected by the researcher via self-administered questionnaires distributed to the respondents, i.e. students from the seven tertiary institutions in Benue State. The close ended questionnaires were divided into two parts for administrative convenience; Part A and B. Part A is based on the demographic information of the respondent and part B which comprises of five-point rating scale questions ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Disagree (3), Strongly Disagree (2) and Undecided (1) seek to find out entrepreneurship education as a panacea for economic growth in Benue State.

A total of 700 questionnaires were administered to the prospective respondents in the selected tertiary institutions in Benue State. The questionnaires were distributed with the help of the academic staff to the students at the selected classes, and were given 20-30 minutes to answer the questions. The researcher personally collected the completed questionnaire to ensure that every item in the questionnaire was duly responded to. This method of self-administered questionnaires yielded a higher response rate among the students as a sample

In addition, an oral interview was used in the course of questionnaire administration to complement some of the question items. The face to face talk will add more clarification on the scope of the questionnaire.

Methods of Data Analysis

To analyze the data obtained from the study, the descriptive and spearman’s rank order correlation methods was used. The cut off mean was used to analyze the research questions stated; the spearman rank order correlation was carried out to find out if there is a relationship between entrepreneurship education(academic skills) and economic growth (standard of living and innovation). Mathematically; the spearman’s rank order is expressed by the formula presented below.

$$R_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)}$$

Where

R_s = Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient d

$\sum d^2$ = Sum of the Squared differences of X and Y

n = number of set of ranking

To test the significance of the relationship between X and Y, the Z formula will be used which is expressed

$$Z = \frac{r \sqrt{n-1}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

Where:

r = Spearman correlation Co-efficient

n = number of set of ranking

Decision Rule: Accept H_0 if the Z calculated value is less than the Z critical, otherwise, reject H_0

Operational Measurement of Variables

Entrepreneurship Education: This is the independent variable of study. It is measure in terms of academic skill and competency.

Economic Growth: this is the dependent variable of study. It is measure in terms of standard of living and innovation.

III. Results

Data Presentation and Analysis

It is worth knowing that out of the 700 copies of questionnaires distributed to the respondents only 659 copies representing 94% of the total number of the questionnaires were successfully filled and returned. While 41 copies representing 6% were not returned and could not be used for the analysis. However, the analysis was based on 659 questionnaires completed and returned.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the Effect of Academic Skill on Standard of Living

Statement	Mean	Decision
1. Students' future seems hopeful that their financial status are changing for the better	3.63	Agreed
2. With the current entrepreneurship education, the student have always been satisfied with the financial rewards they received from the government	3.20	Disagreed
3. Entrepreneurship education has given students ideas to start up their business thereby making them to be self-reliance	3.50	Agreed
4. Entrepreneurship education has given students a sense of direction and purpose in their life	2.90	Disagreed
Overall Mean	3.30	Disagreed
Cronbach Alpha (α)	0.82	
Valid N (listwise)	659	

Source: Field Survey, (2017).

Decision rule:

If mean <3.5 the respondents Disagree

If mean \geq 3.5 the respondents Agree

Table 1 shows the responses to the Likert-scale question and the sample mean (\bar{x}). The respondents agreed that their future seems hopeful that their financial status is changing for the better. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 3.63 (mean is \geq 3.5).

For question 2, the respondents disagreed that the current academic skill (entrepreneurship education) has always been satisfied with the financial rewards they received from the programme. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 3.20 (mean is < 3.5).

For question 3, the respondents agreed that academic skill (Entrepreneurship education) have given them ideas to start up their business, thereby making them to be self-reliance. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 3.50 (mean is = 3.5).

For question 4, the respondents disagreed that academic skill (entrepreneurship education) has given them a sense of direction and purpose in their life. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 2.90 (mean is < 3.5).

On the average, the respondents disagreed that academic skill (entrepreneurship education) has effect on the standard of living. Hence, the overall mean of the responses is 3.30 (mean is < 3.5).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on the effect of Competency on Innovation

Statement	Mean	Decision
5. Entrepreneurship education has instilled in me the confidence needed to explore new ideas in nonconventional ways	3.82	Agreed
6. Entrepreneurship exams/ assignment require students to create innovative solutions to presented problems	3.53	Agreed
7. Entrepreneurship education has helped to channel students' creativity into innovative products and solutions	2.80	Disagreed
8. Students out of class experiences had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest in ideas	2.90	Disagreed
Overall Mean	3.26	Disagreed
Cronbach Alpha (α)	0.72	
Valid N (listwise)	659	

Source: Field Survey, (2017).

Decision rule:

If mean <3.5 the respondents Disagree

If mean ≥3.5 the respondents Agree

Table 2 shows the responses to the Likert-scale question and the sample mean (x) on the effect of competency (entrepreneurship education) on innovation in Benue State. For question 5, the respondents agreed that of competency (entrepreneurship education) has instilled in them the confidence needed to explore new ideas in non-conventional ways. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 3.82 (mean is ≥ 3.5). For question 6, the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship exams/ assignment require students to create innovative solutions to presented problems. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 3.53 (mean is ≥ 3.5).

For question 7, the respondents disagreed that of competency (entrepreneurship education) has helped to channel students' creativity into innovative products and solutions. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 2.80 (mean is < 3.5).

For question 8, the respondents disagreed that Students out of class experiences had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest in ideas. Hence, the associated sample mean of the responses is 2.90 (mean is < 3.5).

On the average, the respondents disagreed that of competency (entrepreneurship education) have effect on innovation in Benue State. Hence, the overall mean of the responses is 3.26 (mean is < 3.5).

Test of Hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis One

H₁: There is no significant relationship between academic skill and standard of living in Benue State.

Table 3: Analysis of the relationship between Academic Skill and Standard of Living in Benue State

		Academic skill	Standard of Living
Spearman's rho	Academic skill (Entrepreneurship Education)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.
		N	659
	Standard of Living	Correlation Coefficient	.177
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.060
		N	659

Source: Field Survey, (2017).

Decision: Table 3, present the result from the Spearman rank order correlation statistics. The correlation coefficient (0.177) indicated a weak positive relationship between academic skill (entrepreneurship education) and standard of living. However, the null hypothesis accepted since the p-value (0.060) is greater than 0.05 ($r_s=0.177, p>0.001$). Thus, there is no significant relationship between academic skill (entrepreneurship education) and standard of living in Benue State. In support of this insignificant relationship, squaring the correlation coefficient indicated that 3.1% of the variability of standard of living was accounted for by academic skill (entrepreneurship education).

Table 4: Analysis of the Relationship between Competency and Innovation in Benue State

		Competency	Innovation
Spearman's rho	Competency (Entrepreneurship Education)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.
		N	659
	Innovation	Correlation Coefficient	.278
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.058
		N	659

Source: Field Survey, (2017).

Decision: Table 4, present the result from the Spearman rank order correlation statistics to test hypothesis two. The correlation coefficient (0.278) indicated a weak positive relationship between competency (entrepreneurship education) and innovation. However, the null hypothesis is accepted since the p-value (0.058) is greater than 0.05 ($r_s=0.278, p>0.001$). Thus, there is no significant relationship between competency (entrepreneurship education) and innovation in Benue State. In support of this insignificant relationship, squaring the correlation coefficient indicated that 7.7% of the variability of innovation among students in Benue State was accounted for by competency (entrepreneurship education).

IV. Discussion

From the result of the data analysis, the following findings as regards the subject; entrepreneurship education and economic growth of Benue State, has been deduced; the result of the study shows that entrepreneurship education (academic skills) is positive and insignificantly correlated with standard of living and innovation in Benue State. The finding is contrary to the result of Sofoluwe, Shokunbi, Raimi & Ajewole (2013), Martha (2015) & Osakwe (2015) who documented that entrepreneurship education will provide innovative skill, enhance the potential of individual, and reinforces self-sufficiency and improve quality of life.

V. Conclusion

The study established two main findings and concluded on entrepreneurship education programme in Benue State, Nigeria. First, the study established that entrepreneurship education has an insignificant positive relationship with standard of living in Benue State. Secondly, entrepreneurship education has an insignificant positive relationship with innovation in Benue State. Based on the findings, the goals and objectives of entrepreneurship education programme have not been sufficiently achieved in Benue State, Nigeria. Yet, entrepreneurship is a major source of employment, economic growth, promoting product and service quality, competition, and economic flexibility. The supply of quality and potential entrepreneurs from our tertiary institutions is limited in Nigeria because entrepreneurship is rarely portrayed in favourable light with weak and incomplete curricula to spark the desired outcome of economic growth. The Benue State scene reveals that the typical students' attitude towards self-employment and innovativeness has long been insignificant.

Recommendations

- i. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were given;
- ii. Entrepreneurship education programme should be accorded the necessary attention and support by all the Institutions for immediate improvement in its overall performance in Benue State. The State Government in collaboration with the Federal Government, the NUC and other agencies such as SMEDA to assist tertiary institutions to deepen entrepreneurship education with the needed practical skills, curricula and teaching methodology that will result in National competitiveness, development and growth.
- iii. Entrepreneurship education programme should be a lifelong learning process in Nigeria. This is embraced by the America Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education that entrepreneurship education is a lifelong learning process that has at least five stages of development. That is: stage one, covering primary and secondary schools and focusing on basics of entrepreneurship education; stage two, covering vocational schools and focusing on competency awareness; stage three, covering tertiary colleges and focusing on creative applications; stage four, covering college and university and focusing on start-up; and stage five, covering university and focusing on growth. What is needed is a knowledge, skills and abilities analysis of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs need to be multi – skilled for the purpose of creating technical capabilities, technical functions, social insights and customer value.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A

Instructions: Please fill in the correct information or tick as appropriate (√)

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 21-30yrs [] 31- 40yrs [] 41-50yrs [] 50 above []
3. Educational Qualification: OND / NCE [] B.Sc/B. Ed/ HND [] M.Sc / M.A / MBA [] Ph.D and Others []

PART B

Instruction: In the following section, please be guided by the scoring system below. Select the most suitable option regarding your opinion

Keys to responses categories

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|------|
| Strongly Agree | - | (SA) |
| Agree | - | (A) |
| Undecided | - | (U) |
| Disagree | - | (D) |
| Strongly Disagree | - | (SD) |

Item No.	Item Description	SA	A	U	D	SD
Q1	Academic Skill & Competency					
1	I have a better understanding about business as a result of taking up the entrepreneurship course					
2	I learnt a lot in my area of business interest by doing the entrepreneurship course					
3	The methodologies introduced by my instructor for the entrepreneurship courses is very interesting					
4	My institution have adequate facilities to promote the entrepreneurship activities for students					
Q2	Standard of Living					
1	students future seems hopeful that their financial status are changing for the better					
2	With the current entrepreneurship education, the students have always been satisfied with the rewards they received from the programme					
3	Entrepreneurship educations have given the students ideas to start up their business thereby making them to be self – reliance.					
4	Entrepreneurship educations have given students a sense of direction and purpose in life after the entrepreneurship programme					
Q3	Innovation					
1	Entrepreneurship educations has instilled in me the confidence needed to explore new ideas in nonconventional ways					
2	Entrepreneurship exams/ assignment require students to create innovative solutions to presented problems					
3	Entrepreneurship education has helped to channel students' creativity into innovative products and solutions					
4	Students out of class experiences had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest in ideas					

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