
Attitudes of Students Towards Entrepreneurial Activities Through Entrepreneurship
Counseling Among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of entrepreneurship counseling on student's attitude towards entrepreneurial activities among undergraduate students. The study was a quasi-experimental design that employed a pre-test, post-test and control group method. The sample was made up of 40 students purposively selected from third year regular degree students in Imo State University Owerri. The instrument for data collection was 20-item students. Attitude towards entrepreneurial activities scale (SATEAS). The research questions were answered with mean statistic and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested with F-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed among other that entrepreneurship counseling is effective in the improvement of students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, counselling, student's, attitude*

Introduction

The rates at which young university graduates seek employment in Nigeria outweigh the capacity and strength of the nation. Thus, it is not out of place for Nigeria to seek solution to her socio-economic problem especially in job creation among her citizenry (Oluwatoyin, 2014). To this effect, the Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Universities Commission (NUC) approved the inclusion of entrepreneurship education as an undergraduate course in Nigerian universities.

Entrepreneurship according to Gana (2011) is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. It is the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. The wealth created by individuals who assume the major risk in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment or provide value for some product or service. The product or service may or may not be new or unique but value must some how be infused by the necessary skills and resources (Hisrich and Peters, 2012).

Going beyond employability, entrepreneurship capacities enable graduates by self determination to create their own future, exploit their opportunities that emerge in their complex unpredictable worlds and contribute better to economic development and social well-being (Anyamene, 2009). Considering the fact that the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth is quite complex, many different approaches toward encouraging entrepreneurship have been applied but have yielded no applicable dividend. However, Nwokolo, (2014) advocated the need to adopt guidance and counselling as this will appeal to the conscience of the students to get involved in entrepreneurship development. This is because entrepreneurship development focuses on the individual who wishes to start or expand a business and bring in innovation into the business.

In developing countries, the primary barrier to economic growth is often how to develop entrepreneurship to produce dynamic entrepreneurs who can bring new innovations into the system. This entrepreneurship development is a process of enhancing entrepreneurship skill and institution-building programmes (Daren, 2012). These entrepreneurship skills include human and public relations, accounting, students' self-esteem, communication and computer applications.

Okwuanaso and Nwazor (2010) pointed out that many graduates who work via entrepreneurship route fail because of their little knowledge of what it takes to manage a business effectively. It is for this reason that Anyamene (2009) opined that entrepreneurship education is very important since it is a cross-curricular approach to learning and it is learnt as a general course in tertiary institution in Nigeria. Furthermore, Ely (2014) recognized the very positive impact that entrepreneurship can have on employment, levels as well as the competitive advantages that small forms can introduce to the market place and advocate for entrepreneurship development programme. Following the high rate of unemployment in the country today, entrepreneurship counselling is a vital tool towards achieving entrepreneurship spirit, interest and attitude in school leavers as well as undergraduate's students.

Entrepreneurship counselling and education like other counselling strategies has been effectively used by researchers such as Nwokolo and Anyamele (2014) to influence students positively towards positively entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship counselling can therefore be seen as the process of assisting prospective job trainees (students and apprentices) to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education and make useful enterprise career decisions that may enable them to make appropriate business choices or adjustments which will bring about satisfaction throughout their life span. Akinade (2005) availed that the purpose of entrepreneurship counseling includes; identification of personal preferences, exploration of career options, collection and collation of data about career, making decisions about careers, implementing change from the present situation. In order to help the counselee achieve the above purposes and have a satisfying work life, they must be equipped with adequate information about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills.

A skill is an ability to perform a productive task at certain level of competence. Darren, Mark & Christopher (2012) posit that as a skill is associated with a particular task, a person who does not possess such a skill is unlikely to be able to carry out such a task or will be less productive than somebody who does possess this skill. Skills are what an individual possesses which may be learnt informally and/ or on-the-job. Skills are often associated with a qualification and its acquisition through formal and informal training and on-the-job experience.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to determine the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities of undergraduate students. Specifically, the study examined the effect of

1. Entrepreneurship counselling on students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities
2. Entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities?
2. What is the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students attitude towards entrepreneurial activities

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.
2. There is no significant difference between the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students' toward entrepreneurial activities.

Method

The study is a quasi experimental design in which entrepreneurial counselling technique was employed and manipulated to determine their effects on undergraduate students' negative attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

The population of the study comprised of 4311 students from Imo State University, Owerri. The sample for the study is 40 students elected through purposive and cluster sampling. Students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities scale (SATEAS) with responds level of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weights 4,3,2 and 1 respectively.

In using this scale, only those students that scored between 20-49 were considered as having negative attitude towards entrepreneurship or engaging in entrepreneurial activities. In this way 115 students having negative attitude towards entrepreneurship were identified based on their scores on SATEAS. This comprised 48 males and 67 females in order to make the group to be gender equitable, the research clustered the subjects along gender. Thereafter, the researcher selected 40 subjects comprising of 20 males and 20 females. The selected 40 participants were equally put into two experimental groups of entrepreneurship counseling (EC) and Control (C). In this way each group has 20 participants of 10 males and 10 females.

The researcher administered the test instrument twice to a sample of 300 level student from another faculty in Imo State University, Owerri. After a two weeks interval, the scores obtained during the first and second administration of the instrument were correlated using, cronbach alpha coefficient estimate method. The result of the analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.84.

The data obtained from the respondents by means of rating scale were analyzed using the mean statistics and standard deviation for the research question. The hypothesis were all tested with f-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The result of the study is in line with the research questions and hypotheses.

Research question 1

What is the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities as measured with their mean scores at follow up assessment period?

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

Table 1: Summary of analysis concerning research question1 and hypothesis 1

Test		Follow-up test				
Group	N	\bar{X}	S			
EC	20	67.25	9.999			
Control	20	71.80	2.956			
Test of between-subject Effects						
Dependent variable: Follow-up-test						
Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
Corrected model	18785.456 ^a	2	9392.728	174.998	.000	
Intercept	1317.843	1	1317.843	24.553	.000	
Post test	79.831	1	79.831	1.487	.230	
Treatments	1309.388	1	1309.388	24.395	.000	
Error	1985.919	37	53.673			
Total	104037.000	40				
Corrected total	20771.375	39				
a.R Squared = .904 (Adjusted R squared = .899)						

The result in table 1 shows that the mean score of the EC group was 67.25 which is higher than the mean score of control group which is 24.00. This means that entrepreneurship counselling is effective in the improvement of students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities. It further indicates that the f-calculated is 24.395 and its sig. value is .000. This significance value is less than 0.05 level of significance leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and concluding that there is significant difference between the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

Research Question 2

What is the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities measured with their mean scores at follow up assessment period?

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

Table 2: Summary of analysis concerning research question 2 and hypothesis 2

Test: Gender		Post-test			
	N	\bar{X}		S	
EC					
Male	10	71.50		4.353	
Female	10	63.00		12.329	
Test of between-subjects Effects					
Dependent variable: Follow-up-Test					
Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	19091.511 ^a	4	4772.886	99.445	.000
Intercept	1448.530	1	1418.530	30.181	.000
Post test	8.469	1	8.469	.176	.677
Treatments	1445.323	1	1445.323	30.114	.000
Gender	71.714	1	71.714	1.494	.230
Treatment gender	248.079	1	248.079	5.169	.029
Error	1919.831	35	47.995		
Total	104037.00	40			
Corrected total	20771.375	39			

a. R Squared = .919 (Adjusted R squared = .910)

The result presented in table 2 reflect the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities. The mean score obtained (71.50) of male students is greater than the mean score (63.00) of female students. It means that male students scored better than the female students, which implies that entrepreneurship counselling attitude of the male students towards entrepreneurial activities is greater than the female student.

It was also indicated that the f-calculated is 1.494 and its sig. value is 0.230. The sig. value is greater than 0.05 level of significance leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis and concluding that there is no significant difference between the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on male and female students' attitude toward entrepreneurial activities.

Discussion

The major finding of this study is that entrepreneurship counseling affects students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities.

Results as presented in table 1 revealed that entrepreneurship counselling is effective in the improvement of students' attitude towards entrepreneurial activities, hence the effectiveness proved significant. This finding is in agreement with Babatunde and Osakinle (2013) who investigated the effects of giving guidance and counselling techniques on students' vocational maturity. It revealed that the two techniques are effective in the improvement of students' vocational maturity. The career guidance facilitates development of intention to become

entrepreneur among counselling students more than entrepreneurial courses has done for business students.

Result as presented in table 2 indicate clearly that entrepreneurship-counselling therapy is more effective in improving attitude of the male students towards entrepreneurial activities than the female student. The difference between the mean scores of the male and female students was not significant. This finding agrees with that of Egunsola, Dazak and Daniel (2012) whose findings highlighted that male and female students exposure to EE is beneficial, it influenced self employment intentions of tertiary students; it enriched their knowledge on starting and owning business, and changed their perception about self-employment. This implies that gender is not a significant factor in the effectiveness of the therapy.

Conclusion

This study has specifically demonstrated the effect of entrepreneurship counselling on students; attitude towards entrepreneurial activities among undergraduate students in Imo state. It also revealed that entrepreneurship counselling is effective, it therefore implies that the treatment package can be conveniently be applied by behavioral scientist like counseling psychologists in schools and the society at large to help solve unemployment problem among the youths.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made

1. Counsellors should use practical tools rather than theories, make use of available resources in their localities and encourage students to be involved in the local traits in their communities, these will help to enhance students' skills and knowledge of entrepreneurship education needed.
2. Guidance-counsellors should help to promote early identification of negative attitude towards entrepreneurship education for early remedy.

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