Variation of Attitude among University Students towards Entrepreneurship Education

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Abstract: This paper examines the differences of attitude towards entrepreneurship education among students of some selected universities in north eastern Nigeria. Five universities where purposively selected, the respondents were randomly selected and stratified into two groups, males and females, science and humanities. The data were gathered through the use of structured questionnaires on four points Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strong disagree. Four hundred questionnaires were distributed and three hundred and seventy five were retrieved successfully from the respondents. SPSS version 16 was used in the analysis of the data. Descriptive, chi-square and t test were used to determine differences of attitude among the respondents. The chi-square results for the two hypothesis indicated that there is no significant differences of attitude among the respondents. Where the calculated value is 2.5628 and the tabulated value is 24.996 for the hypothesis one. Calculated value is 4.0609 and the tabulated value is 24.996 for the hypothesis two. The data was subjected to further statistical analysis using t test. The t test results confirmed the chi-square test results.

Key words: Attitude, Students, Universities, Entrepreneurship, Education, Male, Female, Science, Humanities.
Introduction

Precisely, there is growing research interest about entrepreneurship and its education in Nigeria due to the strategic role it plays as the engine drive for economic growth and development. Though entrepreneurship is not a new concept, but it has been drawing attention and research interest in order to solve the problems of underdevelopment, unemployment and under utilization of resources that continue to force Nigerians to live below the poverty line and to remain in vicious circle of poverty. That makes it imperative for attention to shift to speedy development of entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship education and other programmes.

National Universities Commission (2011) said the best way to solve the current problem of unemployment is by ensuring that students in institutions of higher learning undertake compulsory entrepreneurship education. According to Akinkugbe (2004) the reason for entrepreneurship education is to enable the students to acquire the skills and to develop an entrepreneurial orientation and mindset as a necessary preparation for the business, vocational and professional lives after their formal university education by complementing their academic education with entrepreneurship and financial education, they are leveraged with the qualities and skills they need to become more relevant in today’s global market. The reasons for entrepreneurship education according Cotton & Stampfi (2000) is that it will help students to acquire increased understanding of entrepreneurship, equip them with entrepreneurial approach to the world of work and prepare them to act a entrepreneurs and managers of new businesses.

Research has been extensively focused on the field of entrepreneurship education, which has enjoyed tremendous growth level internationally (Hill, Cinneide et al. 2003; Raichaudhuri 2005). This is evident from studies which have been conducted on the ability of entrepreneurship to create new jobs and the importance of entrepreneurship
education in producing potential entrepreneurs from the educational system (Kourilsky 1995; Kuratko 2005; Venkatachal and Waqif 2005). For example, Volery and Mueller (2006) highlighted the possibility of the role of entrepreneurship education in influencing an individual’s decision to become an entrepreneur. Participation in entrepreneurship education, in this regard, has been associated with the increasing interest towards choosing entrepreneurship as a viable career option (Gorman, Hanlon et al. 1997).

**Statement of the Problem**

The National Universities Commission grieved over the massive unemployed graduates in Nigeria and the imbalance between labour market requirements and lack of necessary employable skills by the graduates. This necessitated intensive and frantic effort on entrepreneurship education. That is why the Nigerian government through the National Universities Commission made it compulsory on every undergraduate student to offer entrepreneurship education course as a step towards stimulating active and productive entrepreneurial activities in the country. It is believed, would help in developing students’ attitude and interest in entrepreneurship. This effort however is being seriously threatened as some students are still not having favourable attitude and keen interest towards entrepreneurship and its education. This leads to situation where students are not equipped with the desirable skills and competencies required for job creation and becoming entrepreneurs (Madumere, 2006; Amaewhule, 2007; Nwangwu, 2007; Ekpoh & Edet, 2011; Samuel Bassey and Samuel 2012). This situation is made worse by the paucity of research to assess the differences of attitude that exist among students. This study filled this gap in the literature by investigating the differences of students’ attitude towards entrepreneurship education in some selected universities in north east Nigeria.
Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

i. examine the differences of attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education

ii. examine the differences of attitude between science and humanities students towards entrepreneurship education

Hypothesis

The study has the following hypotheses:

$H_0$: There are no significant differences of attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education

$H_0$: There are no significant differences of attitude between science and humanities students towards entrepreneurship education

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship

According to Hisrich and Shepherd (2008) entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence. According to Shane (2010), entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur, which can be defined as "one who undertakes innovations, finances and displays business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods. Essien (2006) defined entrepreneurship “as the total of self asserting attribute that enables a person to identify business opportunity together with the capacity to organize needed resources with which to profitability, taken advantage of such opportunities in the face of calculated risks and uncertainties”. UNDP (2010) defined entrepreneurship as the process of using private initiative to transform a business concept into a new venture or to grow and diversify an existing venture or enterprise with high growth potential. Entrepreneurs identify an innovation
to seize an opportunity, mobilize money and management skills, and take calculated risks to open markets for new products, processes and services.

**Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education generally refers to programme that promote entrepreneurship awareness for career purposes and provide skill training for business creation and development (Vesper, 1983; Bechard & Toulouse, 1998). It is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude 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. Entrepreneurship education is indeed a critical resource for whole life education. Education can prepare for new venture initiation by transferring knowledge and developing relevant skills that improve the self-efficacy and effectiveness of the potential entrepreneur (Gorman et al., 1997).

Studies of students’ attitude towards entrepreneurship education have been motivated by the desire to increase interest, performance and students’ retention in entrepreneurship and its education. A numbers of studies are available that have linked attitude and entrepreneurship education and the relationship of some been favourable (Brenner, et al 1991: Fleming, 1994: Kolveried, 1996). According Oppenheim as cited in Banu (1984) a student who is having positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education, can express that by verbal discussion with colleagues and teachers, by expressing the extent to which he/she likes the course. For instance students who are having positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education course he/she may likely express happiness towards offering and learning the course. This is because he/she will perceive the new course as an advantage to add more skills and knowledge of entrepreneurship. According EU (2009) in order to appreciate entrepreneurship education, society must value and celebrate successful entrepreneurs and to tolerate failure. EU further added that positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education are
particularly important among those whom today’s and future Entrepreneurs depends, such as Schools, Universities, Investors, Communities, and the Media.

**Entrepreneurial Attitude**

Attitude has no one or generally accepted definition. But different authors have giving different definitions that try to capture the clear picture of attitude. According to Cambell and Roberts (1986) defined attitude as an enduring "syndrome of response consistent with regard to a set of social objects". Katz (2003) defined attitude as "the predisposition of an individual to evaluate some symbols, objects or aspect of this world in a favourable or unfavourable manner. Katz (2003) cited two streams of thought regarding attitude: one which minimizes individual/student’s rational powers and the other which invoke a rational model of man. Katz, who clearly asserts that at the psychological level the reasons for holding onto or for changing attitude is found in the functions they perform for the individuals. The functions are those of adjustment, ego defence, value expression and knowledge. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1987) Attitude is defined as the predisposition to respond in a general favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to the object of the attitude. Simpson and Oliver (1990) defined attitude as emotional trends in response to affairs, persons, locations, events or ideas.

According to Hawkins et al (1983) attitude definitions heaved three points: (a) Attitude is a state of readiness leading the individual to perceive things and individuals around him/her in certain ways; that is to be more ready with certain categories and interpretations than with others. In everyday activities students/individuals are often ready to deal with attitudinal objects they meet without having to stop and think about every encounter. (b) Attitude is not innate, they are learned, they develop and they are organized through experience. These states of readiness are relatively enduring but they are modifiable and subject to change. (c) Aspect of definition follows from that attitude are dynamic. Attitude is not merely latent states of preparedness awaiting the
presentation of an appropriate object for their activation. They have motivational qualities and can lead an individual to seek (or avoid) the objects about which they are organized.

**Differences of Attitude among Students towards Entrepreneurship Education**

In a study conducted among South African University students by Brijlal (2011) science students are having positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education with 49%, while humanities students show 44%. In a related study, Ifedili and Ofoegbu (2011) reported that students have 81% positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education, while 19% have negative attitude. Cheung and Chan (2011) in their study reported that management students indicated very strong agreement regarding their attitude about the importance of learning entrepreneurship education with 90%. In another study on the attitude of students towards entrepreneurship education conducted by Veciana et al (2005) shows that as higher as 92.2% of students gave affirmative responses in favour of entrepreneurship education. In a study carried out by Keat et al (2011) shows that students who are inclined towards entrepreneurship and its education responded positively with 75.4%, while the image of entrepreneur with 73.8%.

**Methodology**

**Population of the Study**

The population of the study were all undergraduate students in Nigerian Universities, while the target population were students from five universities in North-eastern Nigeria, namely: University of Maiduguri, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, Gombe State University, America University of Nigeria, Yola and Adamawa State University.

**Sources of Data**

Primary and secondary sources of data were used for this study. Primary source was used to gather information from the students of the population through, the use of
questionnaire across two semesters. The secondary data was obtained through the use of reports, journals, text books and other relevant published data.

**Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

The sample for this study is undergraduate students drawn from five Universities in North East geopolitical zone. This is because all undergraduate students are offering entrepreneurship education course from the Division/school of General Studies.

Multi stage sampling was applied. Purposive sampling was employed to select five Universities. The reasons for using this method is to compose a sample that has federal (UNIMAID and ATBU) and state (ADSU and GSU) Universities. Secondly, is to involve conventional (UNIMAID, ADSU and GSU) and special University (ATBU).thirdly, to involve private University (AUN). And fourthly, is because the Universities are spread across the study area with exception of Yobe and Taraba states which are having infant Universities.

Simple Random Sampling was used to select four faculties and respondents. The respondents were stratified into groups: male and female: Science and Humanities students. This is to give fear and equal chance of representation of groups involved in the study. The sample size for this study is four hundred. The respondents were collected proportionally from the five selected Universities. For example, the sample size (400) is divided by the number of faculties (28), gives 14.28. Then 14.28 is multiply by number of faculties in each of the selected University to give the total respondents for that university.
Methods of Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. The first section is about demographic characteristics of the respondents and second section measured attitude.

Structured questionnaire and Likert scale was used. The responses ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree (4 point scale). This has enabled the respondents to record the questionnaire easily. It also helps in keeping the respondents focus, and minimizes likelihood of misinterpretation.

Method of Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 16), descriptive statistics, chi square and t-test were used in the analysis of the collected data.

Results and Analysis

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents
The results indicated that 52.80% of the respondents are within the age of 18 to 25 years. 40.30% of the respondents shows fall within the age of 26 to 35 years. From 35 to 55 years constitute only 6.70% of the total respondents, while 56+ constitute only 0.3% of the respondents. This indicates that the respondents are within the labour force age, Therefore indicating that the students are having the potential to be become entrepreneurs. This result shows that large number of the students comprised of young and active potential entrepreneurs. They are likely to be more productive and may develop positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and its education. This consequently will be transformed into establishment of business that will create employment opportunities and reduce dependency on family and government.

The results indicated that male students constitute 60.80% of the sample, while female students constitute 39.20%. The findings reveal that singles constitute the large portion of the respondents with 77.30%, followed by married with 20.50% and then divorcees with 2.10%. The results shows that 52.50% of the respondents are science base students and 47.50% are humanities students.

Table 1: Attitude of Students towards Entrepreneurship Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>MALE STUDENTS</th>
<th>FEMALE STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (%)</td>
<td>DA (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Component</td>
<td>83.58</td>
<td>16.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Component</td>
<td>82.35</td>
<td>17.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural Component</td>
<td>77.63</td>
<td>22.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>81.19</td>
<td>18.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The results from table 1 indicated students’ attitude towards entrepreneurship education based on gender. Averagely, the male students are having 81.19% favourable attitude, while 18.81% indicated unfavourable attitude towards entrepreneurship education. On the other hand, 83.56% of female students indicated favourable attitude
towards entrepreneurship education, while 16.44% indicated unfavourable attitude. Generally this indicates that female (83.56%) students are having strong favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship education than their male (81.19%) counterpart.

Table 2: Attitude of Students towards Entrepreneurship Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>SCIENCE STUDENTS</th>
<th>HUMANITIES STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (%)</td>
<td>DA (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Component</td>
<td>84.42</td>
<td>15.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Component</td>
<td>85.68</td>
<td>14.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural Component</td>
<td>83.37</td>
<td>16.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>84.48</td>
<td>15.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 2 shows the attitude of students towards entrepreneurship education based on discipline. 84.48% of science students are having favourable attitude, while 15.52% are having unfavourable attitude towards entrepreneurship education. On the other hand, 79.97% of humanities students are having favourable attitude, while 20.03% are having unfavourable attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀: there is no significant difference of attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

Table 3: Summary Results of Chi-Square Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>X² Calculated</th>
<th>X² Tabulated</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>2.5628</td>
<td>24.996</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 3 is the decision table; it described the statistical parameter taken and the decision base on statistical point of view. The result show that the tabulated X² at 15 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 24.996, while the calculated X² value is 2.56283, which is less than the tabulated value.
**Decision**: since the calculated value is less than the tabulated value, hence we accept the null hypothesis that say there is no significant difference in attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education.

**Further Statistical Analysis for the Hypothesis**

This was done in order to determine whether the chi-square test result is accurate not. From all indications the results of both tests reaffirm each other, that there is no significant difference in attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education.

**Table 4: Summary Table of t test (Group Statistics)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>1.8221</td>
<td>0.8188</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>1.7662</td>
<td>0.7966</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 3 showed the results of T test. The mean of the groups showed some similarities, 1.8221 for male and 1.7662 for female students with significance value of 0.3753 for levene test at 0.05 level of significance. From the table, the results indicated that there is statistically no significant difference in attitude between the mean scores of male (1.8221) and female (1.7662) students towards entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

\[
P < 0.05 = \text{there is significant difference in attitude among gender = reject Ho} \\
P > 0.05 = \text{there is no significant difference in attitude among gender = accept Ho}
\]

**Decision**: since there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude between male and female students, we therefore, conclude that we accept the null hypothesis
that: there is no significant difference in attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education.

Ho: There is no significant difference in attitude between Science and Humanities students towards entrepreneurship education.

**Table 5: Summary of Chi-Square Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Variables N</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>X² Calculated</th>
<th>X² Tabulated</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>6.0615</td>
<td>24.996</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 5 is the decision table; it described the statistical parameter taken and the decision base on statistical point of view. The result show that the tabulated X² at 15 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 24.996, while the calculated X² value is 6.0615, which is less than the tabulated value.

**Decision:** since the calculated value is less than the tabulated value, hence we accept the null hypothesis that say there is no significant difference in attitude between science and humanities students towards entrepreneurship education.

**Further Statistical Analysis for the Hypothesis**

This was done in order to determine whether the chi-square test result is accurate not. From all indications the results of both testes reaffirm each other, that there is no significant difference in attitude between science and humanities students towards entrepreneurship education.
Table 6: Summary Table of t test (Group Statistics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>1.8557</td>
<td>0.8071</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3778</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>1.7388</td>
<td>0.8040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 6 showed the results of t test. The mean of the groups showed some similarities, 1.8557 for science and 1.7388 for humanities students with significance value of 0.3778 for levene test at 0.05 level of significance. From the table, the results indicated that there is statistically no significant difference in attitude between the mean scores of male (1.8557) and female (1.7388) students towards entrepreneurship education.

\[ P < 0.05 = \text{there is significant difference in attitude between the two faculties} = \text{reject Ho} \]
\[ P > 0.05 = \text{there is no significant difference in attitude between the two faculties} = \text{accept Ho} \]

**Decision:** since there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude between science and humanities students, we therefore, conclude that we accept the null hypothesis that: there is no significant difference in attitude between science and humanities students towards entrepreneurship education.

**Discussion of Findings**

The results indicated that the male students’ attitude is 81.19%, while female students are 83.56%. That means they hold strong positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Students with strong positive attitude tend to interpret that going into entrepreneurial activities is feasible and hence desirable. These results also agreed with the findings of Ifedili and Ofogbu (2011), where students indicated 81% positive attitude toward entrepreneurship education. It also agreed with the finding of Veciana (2000), which shows the level of students’ attitude at 92.2%. Same
with the findings of Cheung and Chan (2011) indicated positive attitude of 90%. The research findings of Keat et al. (2011) responded with 75.4% positive attitude. The hypothesis test indicated that there is statistically no difference of attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education. This means that the female students are of approximately the same level of attitude towards entrepreneurship education with their male counterpart. Consequently, they may develop strong interest to participate in entrepreneurship education lectures, workshop etc and may lead to development of strong intention to start business before or after graduation.

**Conclusion**

From this study, it can be concluded that the students are holding strong positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference of attitude between male and female students towards entrepreneurship education.
References


