



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND SKILL
ENHANCEMENT OF UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES
IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract:

The essence of entrepreneurship education is to inculcate the entrepreneurship spirit and culture in students in order to enhance their skills. This study examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education and skill enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design which is a systematic gathering of information from respondents for the purpose of understanding and/or predicting some aspects of interest of the behaviour of the population. A sample of 379 university undergraduate students were selected from the population of 27,201 in the four universities in Bayelsa State. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v23). The findings of the study showed that entrepreneurial innovation and entrepreneurial competency as two proxies for entrepreneurship education were significantly related with skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. Based on the findings, the study recommends that, in order to keep pace with changes in our environment and fulfil the needs of students, the curriculum for entrepreneurship education should be revised on a regular basis to provide practical skills with regards to critical thinking that would motivate business ideas as well as jobs and wealth generation.

Keywords: entrepreneurial innovation, entrepreneurial competency, leadership skills, skill enhancement

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1. Introduction

Education and training are essential components of learning and play a very significant part in the building of an entrepreneurial mindset and culture in our higher education institutions of learning. In addition to the educational impact and influence, universities should have a holistic and very significant impact on the development of adolescents (Njoroge & Gathungu, 2013). The goal of entrepreneurship education is to instil an entrepreneurial attitude and culture in students (Akpomi, 2009; Adejimiola & Olufunmilayo, 2009). Entrepreneurship education is often regarded as one of the most important factors that impact students' career choices (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). The Nigerian government made entrepreneurship education compulsory in all its higher education institutions (including the universities) to enable graduates to study and acquire skills and knowledge so they can contribute substantially to economic development through self-employment, job and wealth creation.

Nigeria now has 65 universities, with the Federal Government owning about 26% while the States and private sector controlling about 28% and 46%, respectively (National Universities Commission (NUC), 2018). These universities churn out graduates every year into the labour market without the equivalent job creation in the economy to absorb them. Not surprisingly, this increases the unemployment pool every year. In fact, Nigeria's unemployment rate is increasing at a geometrically as there is little or no investment in the manufacturing or production sector. Indeed, the problem of unemployment persists despite the efforts of government to intervene through such programmes as the National Directorate of Employment and the National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP).

Many scholars and also practitioners have for long advocated the necessity for higher institutions to instil entrepreneurial spirit in university products. For example, Nwangwu (2007) argued in favour of entrepreneurial education, claiming that graduates with proper skills and training will be more creative and imaginative when it comes to recognizing noble business prospects. More universities have implemented a wide range of entrepreneurship programmes and training activities which according to Fayolle (2004) is impacting students in terms of developing entrepreneurial enthusiasm and moving into businesses of their choice. According to Souitaris, Zerbinati and Al-Lahan (2007), entrepreneurial programmes foster attitudes and behaviours that encourage entrepreneurial intents among youngsters who care about their country's economic growth.

More importantly, each nation's power and degree of growth are determined by the strength and development of its human resources. Education systems, particularly higher education systems, are used to create efficient human resources in such a country. Curricular concerns are at the heart of any educational institution. Curriculum for skill development is critical to national growth. Higher education is a primary means through which people gain the skills they need to perform and be useful in society. Higher education that is skill-oriented is in high demand in today's environment. The

introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and general technical advancements have rendered liberal education, which was important in the pre-colonial era, essentially obsolete in today's technologically advanced world. Despite the importance of entrepreneurship education among undergraduates in Nigeria, (Adetayo, et al., 2015; Afolabi, et al., 2017), little is known about the antecedents or outcomes of entrepreneurship education and skills development of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

2. Statement of the Problem

The inability of higher institution graduates to secure available jobs in the labour market due to lack of relevant skills as demanded by employers of labour, is one the most serious challenges confronting the Nigeria higher education system and the society at large. As more and more youths from the different higher institutions are being turned out yearly, the numbers of job seekers continue to increase thereby heightening competition for the available jobs in the market. The problem of graduate unemployability is further complicated by the current wider labour market uncertainty globally. On the other hand, the complaint by employers of labour on the lack of appropriate skills among higher institutions graduates raise the questions of higher institutions relevance to economic issues in the country (Isuku, 2017).

Universities and other higher institutions are expected to provide the intellectual capital, creative human force and entrepreneur to build up the economy as there is direct relationship between knowledge, capital and economy growth. Thus, the universities act as catalysts by developing the mature and responsible leaders having creative and problem-solving approach to develop the nations of the world (Muhammad & Imran, 2012). According to Akanmu (2011), despite an average economic growth rate of about 7% per annum over the last seven years, a good performance by global standards, wage employment in Nigeria is estimated to have declined by about 30%. Nigeria's economic performance over the last decade has not translated to jobs and real-life opportunities for its many youths. For instance, it is argued that three out of every ten graduates of tertiary institution in Nigeria are unable to find suitable work. The paradox is that those who are highly educated do not increase the chance of finding a job. Those who find work are not always usually gainfully employed. Some are forced to accept marginal jobs that do not use their qualifications. For those who are lucky to find jobs, employers are concerned about their skills and suitability with their job requirements. There is an increasing challenge in tertiary institutions in Nigeria as most employers of labour complain that most higher institutions graduates lack the relevant skills needed in the work place (Edinyang, Odey & Gimba, 2015).

A person's employability at any one time depends on a combination of their own skills, understanding and attributes, external factors, and circumstances, such as the state of the labour market (Jain 2009). Graduate employability remains a serious national issue due to the increasing number of graduates produced by higher education institutions

each year. Employers of labour and business owners have been raising concern over the years on the visible inability of most Nigerian graduates to fit into the work demand of modern complex organizations. This concern which came earlier incidentally coincided with the recent rapid expansion and growth in higher education output and thus created serious worry among stakeholders about the abilities of graduates to cope with the dynamics of labour market demands in this new era of globalization. Moreover, the general education system that seems to pay more attention to cognitive knowledge acquisition and less emphasis on entrepreneurial education may have enabled a wide skills-gap between labour demand and labour supply.

Empirical research findings by Aladekomo (2003), revealed that undergraduates lack basic entrepreneurial skills, despite the fact that they are aware of the need for technical and vocational education for quick and sustained growth. This could be because educational policies in Nigeria have traditionally educated individuals for paid work. Aladekomo (2003) further asserted that entrepreneurship education was not given prominence in higher institutions in Nigeria. The Centre for Industrial Research and Development (CIRD) partnered with the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) to introduce entrepreneurship education to the Nigerian higher education sector in 1999 through a federal government initiative. As a result of this, several Nigerian institutions began offering entrepreneurship courses as compulsory General Studies (GST) courses in their curriculum. The problem is that nobody knows the extent to which this entrepreneurship education has improved or not the skills of the university undergraduates in Nigeria. This study therefore attempts to determine the influence of entrepreneurship education on skill improvement among university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

2.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. The specific objectives are to:

- 1) Determine the relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.
- 2) Examine the relationship between entrepreneurial competency and skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

2.2 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial competency and skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

2.3 Study Variables and Conceptual Framework

The independent variable for this study is entrepreneurship education (EE) with its dimensions (proxies) as entrepreneurial innovation (EI), and entrepreneurial competency (EC) while the criterion variable is skill enhancement (SE) measured as leadership skills (LS) which are mathematically formulated as:

$$SE = f(EE)$$

But when represented by their proxies appear as follows:

$$LS = f(a + EI + EC + e)$$

Where:

F = Function of

a = Constant

SE = Skill Enhancement proxied by Leadership Skill (LS)

EE = Entrepreneurship Education proxied by:

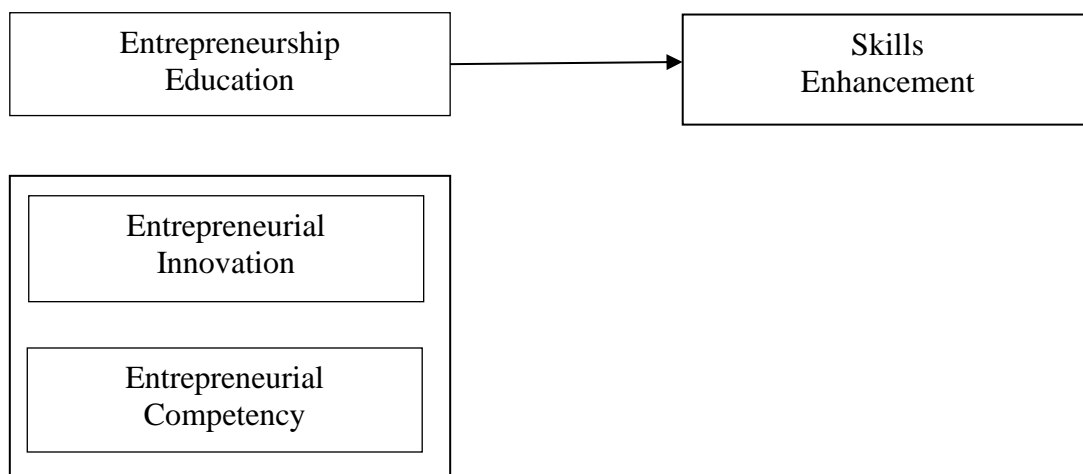
EI = Entrepreneurial innovation; and

EC = Entrepreneurial competency

e = error factor

2.4 Operational Framework

Figure 1: Operational Framework of Entrepreneurship Education and Skills Enhancement



Source: Adapted from Cronin, Allen & Russell, (2017), Adetayo et al. (2015), Afolabi et al. (2017), Shabbier et al. (2018)

3. Literature Review

3.1 Theoretical Foundation

The Personality Traits Theory (PTT) underpins this study. Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychological systems that determine one's characteristics, behaviour and thought (Allport, 1937). PTT suggests that personality is biologically determined at birth and shaped by a person's environmental experience (Allport, 1937). In another contribution, Eysenck (1952) identified three dimensions of personality as: extraversion which is the tendency to seek and engage with the company of others; introversion which is the tendency to avoid the company of others and to withdraw from social situations; and neuroticism, which is the tendency to be worried and anxious. Similarly, Cattell (1965) categorized personality traits into what is termed big five personality traits namely: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience. Proponents of personality trait theory argue personality traits are determining factors of behaviour that make a person perform in a relatively consistent way across various circumstances (Allport, 1937; Cattell, 1965; Eysenck, 1952).

A great number of personality traits have been identified and explored in examining the difference between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. These psychological traits, also called entrepreneurial traits or characteristics, include achievement motivation, locus of control, risk-taking propensity, tolerance of ambiguity, self-confidence, innovation, energy level, need for autonomy and independence. Proponents of personality traits theory further argue that personality traits can be influenced by unique, tacit, subjective personal knowledge, values, beliefs, perceptions and experiences of individuals that are not easily replicated hence the traits of an individual may serve as a catalyst which influences the risk perception of entrepreneurs in decision making (Rauch & Hulsink, 2015).

3.2 Entrepreneurship Education

Towobola and Raimi (2011) defined entrepreneurship education as a pragmatic and meaningful interaction between the learner and the teacher which develops the learners' capacity to recognize, analyse, and originate ideas as well as solve business challenges in their own way. According to UNESCO (2008), entrepreneurship education encompasses a variety of experiences that provide students with the aptitude and vision to access and convert a variety of opportunities. It is not only about starting a business. It is all about improving students' capacity to predict and adapt to societal shifts. UNESCO (2008) defined it as education and training that helps students develop and apply their creativity while also allowing them to take initiative, responsibility and risks. Entrepreneurship education, according to Lee and Wong (2004), is a catalyst for economic development and employment creation in every community. This is because it aims at giving students information, skills and drive that would help them succeed as entrepreneurs in a variety of contexts (Okafor, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education is the type of education provided to people with the goal of fostering entrepreneurial traits and providing support services to ensure a smooth start-up and effective operation of a firm. Entrepreneurship education, according to Mauchi *et al.* (2011) is the process of equipping people with the capacity to detect economic possibilities as well as the information, skills and attitudes necessary to act on them. Entrepreneurship education, according to Adebayo and Kolawole (2013), is a specialised training for students or trainees to learn skills, ideas, management talents, and capacities for self-employment rather than wage employment. In a similar spirit, Ekankumo and Kemebaradikumo (2011) stated that entrepreneurship education aims at providing students (particularly those in higher schools) with the information, skills, and drive to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours in a variety of settings.

While this is not a study of the definitions and descriptions of entrepreneurship education, there is a clear thread through all these definitions and descriptions of entrepreneurship education. Implicit in them is that a well-implemented entrepreneurship education will result in skills acquisition which will lead to job and wealth generation leading to economic empowerment and progress. In terms of breadth, nature and qualities, entrepreneurial education is a rebranding education culture aimed at ensuring a comprehensive educational system by re-engineering glaring flaws in the present system. Its goal is to provide students with the necessary skills and abilities to function in a global workforce.

In this study, entrepreneurship education is proxied by entrepreneurial innovation and entrepreneurial competency.

3.3 Skill Enhancement

Skill development is seen as a strategic management tool to deal with the contemporary corporate climate owing to the shift in the market from mass manufacturing to focused, branded and customized products and services, with a focus on quality, price, and delivery time. Many organizations are struggling to cope with new and emerging customer segments, cultural diversity in a global marketplace, market volatility, raised customer expectations about product and service quality, and the impact of the Internet on an organization's core business as a result of this change. Higher-level employment, such as management and professional roles, that need flexibility and problem-solving abilities have seen an increase in the job market. The literature on entrepreneurship emphasizes the need for soft skills such as leadership, moral principles and ethics, communication, and the capacity to adapt to different work situations (Beckton 2009). Entrepreneurial skills, according to Zepke and Leach (2010) and Syakir (2009), may improve an entrepreneur's abilities by encouraging them to take chances, find effective business strategies, and equip them to take advantage of all available possibilities.

Entrepreneurial skills acquisition can be obtained through various avenues such as: attending entrepreneurial training classes, development programmes, seminars, workshops, etc. universities, job rotation, special (intensive) training, article-ship or apprenticeship, organizational learning, R&D Institutions, consultants, national and

international agencies and bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and professional bodies (Odia & Odia 2013). Cooney 2012 viewed Entrepreneurship Skills as: inner discipline, ability to take risk, innovative, change-orientated and persistence. Ladzani and Van Vuuren (2002), viewed entrepreneurial skills as: creativity, innovation, ability to take risks, and to identify opportunities, ability to have a vision for growth and interpret successful entrepreneurial role models. There are several employability potentials associated with entrepreneurship training. These potentials include, for example, promoting the development of personal qualities such as creativity, risk-taking and responsibility and providing the technical and business know-how that are needed in order to start a new business venture. Unfortunately, many higher institutions in Nigeria do not have entrepreneurship programmes that could prepare students for the world of work.

While it is acknowledged that abilities generally apply to the person, Prochno (2001) found that they all have two aspects, the individual and the group (organizational). As a result, the notion of abilities has a relatively broad scope, making it complex and difficult to comprehend or understand and concept delimitate. Although several authors have looked into the concept (Kuhn & Weinberger, 2005; Heckman *et al.*, 2006; Heckman & Kautz, 2012; Weinberger, 2014) the jury is still out on the verdict of the notion of abilities of the individual.

3.4 Entrepreneurial Innovation and Skill Enhancement

For a start-up, creativity and innovation may function as stimulating elements (Barringer & Ireland, 2006). Creativity is a key component of entrepreneurial skills and is required for the successful development of an innovative firm. Marvel & Lumpkin (2007) also emphasized the role of entrepreneurial skills in the development of entrepreneurial innovation, citing examples such as experience, knowledge and technological training. In fact, several studies, including Shepherd and DeTienne, (2005) and Thorpe *et al.*, (2005) have highlighted the importance of knowledge as part of an entrepreneur's skillset. They support its catalytic role in the hunt for possibilities, as well as its ability to drive the firm's inventive process. Actions connected to enhancing entrepreneurship skills can be used to enforce innovation in a company.

According to George and Bock (2011), entrepreneurial skills can help a company restructure its business strategy. The contribution of entrepreneurial skills is equally acknowledged in the growth of entrepreneurial innovation, because the skills are absorbed into the total firm's human capital. Bygrave & Hofer (1992) posited that a company owner's entrepreneurial skills may help them discover market possibilities and urge their staff to get more involved with their companies. Also, entrepreneurial skills play an important role in the translation of exceptional entrepreneurial ideas into marketable business ventures (Baron & Ensley 2006; Short *et al.*, 2010; Tang *et al.*, 2012). Finally, an entrepreneur's experience and knowledge are also components of their entrepreneurial skills, which may boost entrepreneurial creativity and lead to excellent company results.

3.5 Entrepreneurial Competency and Skill Enhancement

One of the key motivators for entrepreneurial competency study and practice is its ostensible link to business success and growth, and hence to economic development. Policymakers, in particular, have been concerned with preventing small business failure while still encouraging expansion. The literature has identified venture expansion as a critical indication of venture success (Covin & Slevin, 1997). Competencies are especially important in the context of entrepreneurship since they are linked to the start-up, survival, and/or expansion of a business (Baum *et al.*, 2001; Colombo & Grilli, 2005). Other research, (Lerner & Almor, 2002), have also shown that an entrepreneur's talents have a role in the success and growth of their business. Furthermore, Chandler & Jansen (1992) also found that strengthening entrepreneurial skills among entrepreneurs helps them to be more profitable and to expand.

Vijay and Ajay (2011) opined that a competence is an underlying characteristic of persons, which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job. A job competence is the underlying characteristics of a person. This could be expressed as motive, traits, skills, aspects of one's self-image, a body of knowledge, set of skills and cluster of appropriate motives/traits that an individual possesses to perform a given task. Entrepreneurs especially those operating in the SME context, face numerous situations that require them to make quick decisions, therefore having the abilities to undertake high level of conceptual activities are important for the survival and success of their business. They posit that competency model could shed some light into ways to increase the likelihood of business survival and success especially in the context of a developing country.

Endi *et al.* (2013) found that entrepreneurial competencies propel business performance, the higher the competence that SME owners portray the higher the likelihood of good business performance. Most of the business failures are due to SME owner-manager's incompetence, inadequacy and inexperience in managing their business and taking quick remedial action in crisis situations. Entrepreneurial competencies portfolio has a positive impact on the organizational performance as such are positively related to entrepreneurial survival and specifically, high entrepreneurial competencies and high managerial competencies are linked to satisfaction on financial performance whereas high managerial competencies and high technical competencies are linked to satisfaction on non-financial performance. Entrepreneurial competencies are a predictor of SMEs business survival and success (Ahmad *et al.*, 2010; Gerli, Gubitta & Griffin, 2012).

3.6 Empirical Review

This section examined previous studies that considered entrepreneurial education and skill development. Linan, Rodriguez-Cohard and Rued-Cantuche (2005) employed the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) to assess two distinct Spanish universities' entrepreneurial intents. The findings revealed that teenagers' ambition to become entrepreneurs is influenced by personal attraction to entrepreneurship, perceived societal

norms, and perceived feasibility or self-efficacy, as determined by factor and regression analyses. Onah, Ikeako and Iloabachie (2006) investigated the demands for entrepreneurship education among self-employed artisans and craftspeople in Enugu, Nigeria. A total of 600 artists and craftspeople were given the questionnaire. The researchers employed both mean scores and two-way analysis of variance in their research (ANOVA). The findings suggested that entrepreneurial abilities, which include management, accounting, public relations, marketing, communication, and record keeping accounted for a major portion of the craftsmen's and artisans' success.

In Nigeria, Mani (2013) examined the impact of entrepreneurial education on employment generation. The author found that the best way to learn about entrepreneurship was through trial and error. Entrepreneurial learning, according to the research, should be viewed as a lifetime process in which knowledge is constantly changed and altered as new experiences are gained. Agu and Chiaha (2013), on the other hand, looked at the influence of entrepreneurship education on the employability of Nigerian university graduates. A total of 320 people took part in the survey. According to the findings, entrepreneurship education equips graduates with employable skills. The influence of entrepreneurial education on job creation in Nigeria was investigated by Akhujemoukhan, Raimi and Sofoluwe (2013). To reach their conclusions, they used an econometric study based on secondary quantitative data. The study revealed that entrepreneurship is well-developed and can be used to reduce poverty, create jobs, accelerate the implementation of universal primary education, and promote gender equality.

In addition, Anam, Iba and Aregbe (2014) researched 60 beneficiaries of the Central Bank of Nigeria Entrepreneurial Development Centre in Calabar to investigate the influence of entrepreneurial education on productive employment and long-term poverty reduction in Cross River State. The findings revealed that there was a link between entrepreneurial education and the development of jobs and the decrease of poverty in the State.

3.7 Gap in the Literature

There are two major gaps in extant literature with respect to the relationship between entrepreneurship education and skills enhancement. The first is that there is no known study of the extent of the relationship if any and the second is that there is no such study conducted in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. This study aims to contribute to knowledge in these areas.

4. Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design because the study wanted to systematically gather information from respondents for the purpose of understanding and/or predicting some aspects of the behaviour of the population of interest. The Bowley proportional allocation formula was used to ascertain the individual sample size for each

of the universities. The intention was to get a reliable representation from each university in Bayelsa State.

There were 27,201 students in the four universities in Bayelsa State and the Krejcie and Morgan table was used to determine the sample size of 379.

Table 1: Population and Selection of Sample Size of Undergraduate Students in the Various Universities in Bayelsa State

S/N	Universities in Bayelsa State	Population size	Sample size
1	Niger Delta University	15,782	220
2	Federal University, Otuoke	9,568	133
3	University of Africa Toru-Orua	1,479	21
4	Bayelsa Medical University	372	5
	Total	27,201	379

Data Source: Admission offices of the Universities (2020).

4.1 Data Analysis and Results

In this section, the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis showing the Relationship between of Entrepreneurial Innovation (EI) and Leadership Skills (LS)

			Entrepreneurial Innovation (EI)	Leadership Skills (LS)
Spearman's rho	Entrepreneurial Innovation (EI)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.774
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	368	368
	Leadership Skills (LS)	Correlation Coefficient	.774	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	368	368
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Source: SPSS Output.

For the H₀₁ test, Table 2 above revealed a Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient of 0.774 and probability value of 0.000 on the relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and Skills enhancement (Leadership skills) of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. This result indicated that there was a strong positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and leadership skills of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted, because the PV value of (0.000) was less than the 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial competency and Skills enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between of Entrepreneurial Competency (EC) and Leadership Skills (LS)

			Entrepreneurial Competency (EC)	Leadership Skills (LS)
Spearman's rho	Entrepreneurial Competency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.782
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	368	368
	Skills Enhancement	Correlation Coefficient	.782	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	368	368
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Source: SPSS Output

For the decision on H₀₂, Table 3 above revealed a Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient of 0.782 and probability value of 0.000 on the relationship between Entrepreneurial Competency and Skills Enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. This result indicated that there was a strong positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial competency and Skills Enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypotheses was accepted because the PV of 0.000 was less than the 0.05 level of significance.

5. Discussion of Findings

Hypotheses H₀₁ and H₀₂ were aimed at examining the significance of the relationship between entrepreneurship education and skill enhancement of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient analysis. For Hypothesis One, (H₀₁), the analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and leadership skills of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State (Rho= 0.774). Hypothesis Two (H₀₂), also revealed a positively statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial competency and leadership skills of university undergraduates in Bayelsa State (Rho= 0.782). Therefore, entrepreneurial competency has a positive relationship with leadership skills. This result supported the works of Agu and Chiaha (2013), Akhuemoukhan, Raimi, and Sofoluwe (2013) who all found that entrepreneurship education actually provided employable skills that could be used for job and wealth creation. The finding concurs with Mani (2013) who investigated the impact of entrepreneurial education on employment generation and found that the best way to learn about entrepreneurship is through trial and error – a form of entrepreneurship education for skills acquisition. The study also corroborates with the study of Sara, Shehu and Muhammad (2020) who examined entrepreneurship education as a means of self-reliance among senior secondary school students in Kumbotso local government, Kano state, Nigeria and found

that fishery, animal husbandry and leather works are the most frequently taught entrepreneurship education subjects in senior secondary schools, in Kumbotso Local Government Kano State and they indeed provided tools (skills) for the students. The findings also revealed, Class size (40.55%), and Poor excursion trips to industries (32.26%) as the major challenges affecting entrepreneurship education in Kumbotso local government, Kano State. Likewise, the current finding supports Anam, Iba and Aregbe (2014) who examined the influence of entrepreneurial education on productive employment and long-term poverty reduction in Cross River State and found that there is a link between entrepreneurial education and the development of skills for jobs (skills enhancement) and the decrease of poverty in the State.

Furthermore, the finding is in line with Mahajar and Yunus (2012) who explored the inclination towards entrepreneurship among university students and found that the role of universities in promoting entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial curriculum and content and role models had significant impact on the inclination of the students towards entrepreneurship. Also, the finding is in support of a similar study conducted by Gafar, Kasim and Martin (2013) who examined and found a relationship between entrepreneurship training in the tertiary institutions and development of innovative business idea to the business venture start-up stage and found BT- 64 PPP passed the suitability fitness for motivating entrepreneurial idea generation, interaction and networking, as entrepreneurial learning outcomes.

6. Conclusion

Effective entrepreneurship education focuses on the development of entrepreneurial competencies and skills, which are transferable and beneficial in many work contexts. The aim is not only to strengthen the capacity and desire of more individuals to start their own enterprises, but also to develop an entrepreneurial culture in society. This study therefore concludes that the promotion of entrepreneurship education significantly promotes skill enhancement among university undergraduates in Bayelsa State.

7.1 Recommendations

As a result of the findings, the researcher therefore recommends that:

- 1) There should be regular train-the-trainer's programmes and university administration in collaboration with the government and other stakeholders, should recognize and award students whose projects or products are deemed outstanding, as well as provide technical assistance and sponsorship where possible. This would motivate university graduates to start their own businesses either during their studies or when they graduate.
- 2) In order to keep pace with changes in our environment and fulfil the needs of students, the curriculum for entrepreneurship education should be revised on a regular basis to provide relevant skills with regards to critical thinking that would motivate business idea generation.

7.2 Contribution to Knowledge

The study has contributed to the body of knowledge of entrepreneurship education in specific areas like entrepreneurial innovation and entrepreneurial competency and on skill enhancement measures like leadership skills. It has also added data from Bayelsa State, Nigeria to the information and knowledge base on entrepreneurship education and skills enhancement.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

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