STRATEGIES FOR STIMULATING ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDIES' STUDENTS THROUGH DIGITALIZED INSTRUCTIONS IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHEAST NIGERIA

[1]Paul-Mgbeafulike, V. S, PhD., [2]Udogu Anthony N. PhD., Ikpeama F. U. PhD

[1&3]Department of Business Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
[2]Department of Criminology and Security Studies,Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam
[1]vs.paul-mgbeafulike@unizik.edu.ng [2]an.udogu@coou.edu.ng [3]fu.ikpeama@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract
The study examined digitalized instruction for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset among Nigerian entrepreneurship studies students in southeast Nigeria. The study answered two research questions while two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in carrying out the study. The area of the study was limited to Abia and Enugu States in Southeast Nigeria. All the 65 Entrepreneurship Lecturers and 249 final year students of Entrepreneurship in public universities in the two states making a total of 314 respondents were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability technique which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.835. Out of the 314 copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents, 303 copies were filled and returned. Data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study identified 10 strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions and 15 possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instruction. The result of the hypotheses showed significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents on strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in students through digitalized instructions whereas there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students on possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instruction Based on the findings, the study among others recommended adequate provision of digital teaching and learning facilities in all entrepreneurship centres and programmes for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in learners.

Keywords: Digitalized instruction, entrepreneurial mindset, graduates, entrepreneurship, southeast

Introduction

It has been discovered that global economy is largely being driven by small, medium and large-scale private investors and entrepreneurs. Hence, entrepreneurship development has continued to dominate round table discussions across both developed and developing countries around the world. Entrepreneurship deals with effort to equip trainees with the willingness and ability to seek for investment opportunities, to establish and to run an enterprise successfully. According to Okolie et al (2014), entrepreneurship studies provide opportunities for youths to be experienced, acquire entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and attitudes including opportunity

recognition, idea creation and marshalling resources in the face of risk to chase opportunities, venture creation and operation, creativity and critical thinking. Aja et al (2018) shares that entrepreneurship is regarded as the engine room for every country's economic development because it is a sure way of generating employment opportunities, providing needed manpower for industrial development, marketing, capacity building of the citizenry and effective resource distribution which are necessary paraphernalia for national development. In the opinion of Agboola (2015), entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish it as well as run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. Entrepreneurship skills related to creativity, innovation, personal characteristics, invention, and development of practical skills are seen as outcome of positive entrepreneurial mindset.

Entrepreneurial mindset must first be stimulated in learners before the acceptance of the ideologies and development of innovative tendencies of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial mindset as described by Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship [NFTE] (2022) is a set of skills that enable people to identify and make the most of opportunities, overcome and learn from setbacks, and succeed in a variety of settings. According to Connatser (2019), entrepreneurial mindset is a specific state of mind which orientates human conduct toward entrepreneurial activities and outcomes. The individuals with sound entrepreneurial mindsets are often drawn to opportunities, innovations and new value creation. The mindset allows an entrepreneur to keep changing and trying new things to improve their processes in order to create the extra degree of effort which turns hot water into steam that can power a train (Daspit, Fox and Findley, 2021).

The objectives of entrepreneurship studies as established in Nigerian tertiary institutions according to Ossai and Nwalado (2012), is to offer functional education to the youths that will enable them to be self employed and self-reliant, providing the young graduates adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities, provide young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them establish a career in small and medium sized businesses and create smooth transition from traditional to modern industrial economy among others. Unfortunately, these objectives have not been effectively achieved in Nigerian education sector. Hence, considering the strategic importance of entrepreneurship in nation building, effort must be made by the government to proactively address rising unemployment rate among Nigerian graduates through building entrepreneurial mindset in them while in their training institutions. It is therefore imperative to note that building entrepreneurial mind set in young learners can be stimulated by interplay of modern teaching or training techniques such as the use of digitalized instruction.

Digitalized instruction is the type of instructional model that engages multiple learner senses, including sight, sound, and in some instances touch, where the media is interactive (Centre for Teaching, Learning and Mentoring, 2021). According to Shukla (2022), digital instructions require organized electronic resources to support instructions. This is because, digitalized instruction encompasses all forms of teaching and learning experiences that involve the use of audio, video, and visual contents to impart knowledge to the learners. Tosh, Doan, Woo and Henry (2019), describes digital instructions as online and technology-based teaching and learning platforms. The major goal of digital instruction according to the report of State Educational Technology Directors Association (2019) is to provide a clear picture of instruction to help encourage increased comprehension of digital learning. Digitalized instruction is becoming increasingly prominent method of teaching for improved assimilation, retention and stimulating modern generation of students in formal learning environment.

From the foregoing, the development of entrepreneurial skills and mindsets is critical for fostering innovation, job creation, and economic growth, especially in developing zones like Southeast Nigeria. Despite the inclusion of Entrepreneurship Studies in university curricula, many students in this zone struggle to develop the practical, innovative, and proactive mindset necessary for successful entrepreneurship. Traditional methods of instruction, such as lectures and theoretical case studies, often fail to engage students effectively or provide them with the experiential learning opportunities needed to nurture entrepreneurial thinking. Moreover, the rapidly evolving digital landscape offers numerous tools and platforms for innovative teaching and learning, yet many universities in Southeast Nigeria have not fully embraced these digital resources. The lack of a structured, digitalized instructional approach that integrates modern technology with entrepreneurship education limits students' exposure to real-world entrepreneurial challenges, creative problem-solving, and the development of critical skills such as adaptability and resourcefulness. This gap in instructional strategy contributes to the inability of graduates to effectively identify opportunities, take calculated risks, and transform ideas into viable businesses. Addressing this issue is essential not only for enhancing the quality of entrepreneurship education but also for equipping students with the capabilities to thrive in an increasingly competitive and technology-driven global economy. It is based on this background that this study was carried out to examine the strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in Southeast Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in Southeast Nigeria?
2. What are the possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets among students of entrepreneurship studies in universities in southeast Nigeria?

Hypotheses

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students on the strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in Southeast Nigeria

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students the possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets among students of entrepreneurship studies in universities in southeast Nigeria.

Methods

Two research questions were developed to guide the study using descriptive survey research design. Two hypotheses were formulated for the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study area is Southeast Nigeria, made up of five states which include: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. Multistage random sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study. The first stage was random selection of two states of Abia and Enugu. At the second stage, four public Universities with Entrepreneurship centres were selected from the two states. The four selected universities are: (i) Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, (ii) Abia State University, Uturu, (iii) University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State and (iv) Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. The

third stage of the sampling was selection of all the 65 Entrepreneurship Lecturers and 249 final year students of Entrepreneurship making a total of 314 respondents of the study.

The instrument for data collection for the study was a structured questionnaire, which were structured into two major sections. The section A of the questionnaire was made to collect personal data of the respondents while Section B was structured to obtain data based on the two research questions that guided the study. The response option for the section B of the questionnaire was 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The instrument was face-validated by three Senior Lecturers of Entrepreneurship centers in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. To obtain the reliability of the instrument, 15 copies of the instrument was administered to 5 Entrepreneurship Lecturers and 10 Entrepreneurship students in the University.

Data collected were analysed using Cronbach Alpha reliability technique which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.835 indicating that the instrument was about 84% reliable for data collection for the study. Data for the study were collected by the researchers with the help of four research assistants. Each of the four research assistants handled data collection from each of the four universities covered for the study. Out of the 314 copies of the questionnaire administered, 303 copies were filled and returned. Data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The cut-off point of the 4-point response options was 2.50. Based on this computation, any item whose mean value fell above 2.50 was interpreted as "Agreed"; while items with mean values less than 2.50 was interpreted as "Disagree". The hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected when the t-cal (t-calculated) value was greater than t-tab (t-table) value of 1.96 while the hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted when the t-cal (t-calculated) value was less than t-tab (t-table) value of 1.96 at obtained degree of freedom.

Research Question One

What are the strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in Southeast Nigeria?

Table 1: Strategies for Stimulating Entrepreneurial Mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' Students through Digitalized Instructions

SN	Strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in students through digitalized instructions include:	$\bar{X}$	SD	Rmks
1	Improved funding of entrepreneurship programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions.	3.57	0.68	**Agree**
2	Adequate provision of necessary digital instructional materials for effective stimulation of entrepreneurial mindset in students.	3.73	0.54	**Agree**
3	Regular organization of entrepreneurial mindset training for entrepreneurship students.	3.88	0.53	**Agree**
4	Capacity building and training of entrepreneurship lecturers and instructors in the use of digital instructional facilities.	3.59	0.65	**Agree**
5	Adoption of ICT-based instruction in entrepreneurship programme.	3.64	0.58	**Agree**
6	Increase in time allocation of Entrepreneurship studies lecturers and instruction	2.43	0.76	**Disagree**

7	Provision of steady electricity in institutions and entrepreneurship centre for uninterrupted use of digital instructional facilities.	3.55	0.71	**Agree**
8	Adopting private public partnership arrangement to support digitalized instruction in entrepreneurship education.	3.69	0.59	**Agree**
9	Adopting computer-based test in entrepreneurship assessment and examinations.	3.71	0.48	**Agree**
10	Restructuring entrepreneurship studies curriculum from 4 to 5 years degree programme.	2.05	0.79	**Disagree**
11	Provision of stable network services for uninterrupted digital or web-based teaching and learning entrepreneurship.	3.52	0.55	**Agree**
12	Recruiting entrepreneurship educators that are versatile in the use of digital learning resources to stimulate entrepreneurial mindset.	3.68	0.54	**Agree**
	Grand Mean	**3.42**	**0.61**	**Agree**

Note: $\overline{X}$ **=** *Mean;* ***SD*** = *Standard Deviation;* ***n*** = *number of respondents.*

The data in Table 1 reveals that the mean values of 10 out of the 12 items in the table ranged from 3.52 to 3.88 which are all greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale. This result implies that the 10 identified items are agreed by the respondents to be strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in southeast Nigeria. The mean values of items 6 and 10 are 2.43 and 2.05 which are in each case less than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale indicating that the two items are not strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in southeast Nigeria.

Research Question Two

What are the possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instruction in Southeast Nigeria?

Table 2: Possible Outcomes of Stimulating Entrepreneurial Mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' Students through Digitalized Instruction.

SN	Possible outcome of entrepreneurial mindsets include:	$\overline{X}$	SD	Rmks
1	Strong ability for creativity	3.46	0.61	**Agree**
2	Openness to positive ideas	3.70	0.52	**Agree**
3	Having strong curiosity for business ideas	3.58	0.72	**Agree**
4	Strong will and persuasion for doing something new	3.49	0.51	**Agree**
5	Self motivation attribute	3.74	0.50	**Agree**
6	Resiliency and tenacity	3.56	0.48	**Agree**
7	Strong innovative ideas	3.66	0.55	**Agree**
8	Tendencies for interest in paid jobs	2.40	0.65	**Disagree**
9	Learn from past failures	3.56	0.52	**Agree**
10	Positive mental attitudes	3.34	0.74	**Agree**
11	Independent thinking ability	3.68	0.45	**Agree**
12	Taking responsibility for everything that happens	3.51	0.52	**Agree**
13	Strong thirst for knowledge	3.48	0.48	**Agree**
14	Strong Flexibility	3.63	0.53	**Agree**

15	Firm informed decision making ability	3.70	0.65	**Agree**
16	Internal entrepreneurial drive and focus	3.55	0.77	**Agree**
	Grand Mean	**3.50**	**0.58**	**Agree**

Note: $\overline{X}$ **=** *Mean;* ***SD*** *= Standard Deviation;* ***n*** *= number of respondents.*

The data in Table 2 shows that the mean values of 15 out of the 16 items in the table ranged from 3.34 to 3.74 which are all greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale. This result indicates that the 15 identified items are possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mind-sets of students in Entrepreneurship Studies' through digitalized instruction. The mean value of item 8 is 2.40 which is less than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale indicating item 8 in not part of possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mind-sets of students in Entrepreneurship Studies' through digitalized instruction.

Testing of Hypotheses

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students on the strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions in Southeast Nigeria

Table 3: Test of Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Lecturers and Students on Strategies for Stimulating Entrepreneurial Mindset in Students through Digitalized Instructions.

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Std. Error	t- Cal	t- tab	p-value	Decision
Entrepr Lecturers	64	3.56	0.48						
				301	0.051	2.26	1.96	0.55	**Sig.**
Entrepr Students	239	3.28	0.65						

Note: Sig. = Significant at 0.05.

The data presented on t-test statistics in Table 3 reveals that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 2.26 is greater than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.95 at 301 degree of freedom. This indicates that there was significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students on strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in students through digitalized instructions in Southeast Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the lecturers and students is rejected on hypothesis two.

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students on possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instruction in Southeast Nigeria.

Table 4: Test of Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Lecturers and Students on Possible Outcomes of Stimulating Entrepreneurial Mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' Students through Digitalized Instruction.

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Std. Error	t- Cal	t- tab	p-value	Decision
Entrepr Lecturers	64	3.52	0.49						
				301	0.018	0.34	1.96	0.55	**NS**
Entrepr Students	239	3.48	0.62						

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The data presented on t-test statistics in Table 4 shows that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.34 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.95 at 301 degrees of freedom. This indicates that there was no significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of Entrepreneurship Studies Lecturers and Students on possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instruction in southeast Nigeria. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the lecturers and students is accepted on hypothesis one.

Discussion of Findings

Result of the study as shown in table 1 identified 10 strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mind-set in students of Entrepreneurship Studies through digitalized instructions which among others include: improved funding of entrepreneurship programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions, adequate provision of necessary digital instructional materials for effective stimulation of entrepreneurial mindset in students, regular organization of entrepreneurial mindset training for entrepreneurship students, capacity building and training of entrepreneurship lecturers and instructors in the use of digital instructional facilities, provision of steady electricity in institutions and entrepreneurship centre for uninterrupted use of digital instructional facilities, adopting private public partnership arrangement to support digitalized instruction in entrepreneurship education and provision of stable network services for uninterrupted digital or web-based teaching and learning entrepreneurship. The findings of the study supported the report of UNESCO (2017) which submitted that entrepreneurial education can better be stimulated through improved use of interactive instructional techniques such as the use of digital facilities, creation of conducive learning environment in schools and engagement of problem-solving instructions. Ukachi and Ejiko (2019) reported that technical and vocational education should be well equipped with modern teaching and learning facilities with increased funding for guaranteed sound mind of the learners. The findings of Nwosu and Micah (2017) equally substantiated that adequate provision of finance for provision of needed instructional materials and facilities is very crucial to the overall success of education.

Result of the study as shown in table 2 revealed that 15 possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mind-sets in students of Entrepreneurship Studies' through digitalized instruction which among others include: strong ability for creativity, openness to positive ideas, having strong curiosity for business ideas, strong will and persuasion for doing something new, self motivation attribute, resiliency and tenacity, positive mental attitudes, independent thinking ability, strong thirst for knowledge, strong Flexibility and firm informed decision making ability. In affirmation with the findings, the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship [NFTE] (2022) reported that entrepreneurial mindsets in learners promote set of abilities as positive attitude,

openness to anything, strong will and persuasion, ability for creativity and innovative ideas that enable people to identify and make the most of opportunities, overcome and learn from setbacks, and succeed in a variety of settings.

Conclusion

There is increasing recognition for entrepreneurship in job creation and nation building. One of the strategic measures that could help promote entrepreneurship mindset in young Nigerians is ICT-based learning such as the use of digitalized instruction in entrepreneurship centres. Hence, this study examined digitalized instruction for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset among Nigerian graduates of entrepreneurship studies with southeast in focus. The results of the study identified 10 strategies for stimulating entrepreneurial mindset in Entrepreneurship Studies' students through digitalized instructions and 15 possible outcomes of stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in students of Entrepreneurship Studies' through digitalized instruction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended:

1. The government should ensure adequate provision of digital teaching and learning facilities in all entrepreneurship centre and improve in constant training and retraining of lecturers in effective use of digital teaching facilities for instructional delivery to students of entrepreneurship studies for development of entrepreneurial mind-set in students.
2. The available digital instructional facilities are not enough as such effort must be made to also ensure that there is stable electricity supply in all Nigerian institutions of higher learning for efficiency in the use of digital teaching facilities.

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