Influence Of Mentoring On Entrepreneurship Development Of Business Education Students In Public Tertiary Institutions In Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the influence of mentoring on entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. Two research questions and two hypotheses were posed to guide the study. The population of the study comprised 111 lecturers and 729 undergraduate students in business education in three public tertiary institutions in Rivers State: namely the Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and the Federal College of Education Technical, Omoku. Purposive sampling technique was employed due to the small nature of the population. A validated 16-item self-designed instrument titled “Influence of Mentoring on Entrepreneurship Development Questionnaire (IMEDG)” was used for data collection. The researchers employed face and content validity methods and established the reliability of the research instrument through test-retest. The Pearson Product moment Correction Coefficient was used to arrive at the reliability index of 0.80. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed among others that mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of students, entrepreneurship motivation enhances to high extent students’ self-independences, students ability to identify challenges, students ability to excel on entrepreneurship development programmes. It was recommended among others that mentoring programmes should be integrated into entrepreneurship education programmes and made compulsory at all levels of education.

Keywords: Mentoring, Entrepreneurship Development, Business Education, Tertiary Institutions.

INTRODUCTION
Business education represents a broad and diverse disciple that is included in all levels of educational delivery systems – elementary, secondary and post secondary (Amesi, 2016). It is perceived by Okoli and Osifila (2010) as an important part of general education which emphasizes skills and competency acquisition for use in office and business related occupations. Nwaneweiizi and Essien (2010) described business education as encompassing education for office occupations, business teaching, business administration and economic understanding. According to Okolocha and Oneneke (2013), business education equips its recipients with personal skills, consumer skills and knowledge for clerical and managerial abilities needed to adapt to changing economic and business realities and these skills make them to be wealth and job creators rather than wealth and job seekers.

In order to function effectively, there is need for business education students to be mentored by experts. Mentoring is a help or assistance given a professionally trained personnel called the counselor to an individual or group of people who have challenges to help them understand themselves and their environment with a view to solving their problems, make necessary adjustment and productive life and finally live satisfactory and productive life now and in the future (Anyamene, et al., 2010). Amaewhule (2014) opined that mentoring is an enabling process which encourages self-responsibility, as people make
choices and decisions or share inner burden. This implies that mentoring enables people to examine their needs and problems and in so doing, reduces the confusion in thoughts and feelings that should be stressed.

The lack of vocational mentoring through occupational information has led to the production of graduates without entrepreneurship knowledge and skills for effective running of business. Shane (2003) contends that the result of entrepreneurship may be a new organization or a part of revitalizing mature organization in response to a perceived opportunity. In today’s world, anybody, industry or business leader with innovative and creative business abilities is described as an entrepreneur or someone who engages in entrepreneurship (Okala, 2008). Entrepreneurship education plays a prominent role in providing the opportunity for new entrepreneurs to develop entrepreneurship knowledge and skills needed to start-up a new venture and to manage it successfully. Abdullah (2009) opined that entrepreneurship education increases new entrepreneurs’ interest in becoming entrepreneurs at some stage after graduation.

Knowledge is an indispensable asset to an enterprise that when it is properly harnessed, managed and utilized, will not only bring about increased productivity, but also expansion, growth and sustained profitability to the enterprise. Koeing (2012) is of the opinion that knowledge is classified as explicit, implicit and tacit. Explicit is the information or knowledge that is set out in tangible form. Implicit is the information or knowledge that is set out in tangible form but could be made explicit, while tacit is the knowledge that one would have extreme difficulty in operational set out in tangible form. This knowledge according to Yakin and Kapu (2008) is homologeous to entrepreneurship knowledge. Entrepreneurship knowledge represents innovation or internalized knowledge that an individual may be able to convert into an innovative ventures.

Stressing further, Abdullah (2009) averred that entrepreneurship competencies enhance entrepreneurship key skills, intention to create new ventures and business ownership and provide opportunities which affect their desire to step into entrepreneurship. This method of entrepreneurship development is referred to as traditional and repetitive. The traditional method of entrepreneurship development makes students to get bored and distracted easily. The beginning entrepreneurs are bored because they are not actively and fully engaged in the process of learning entrepreneurial knowledge (Koeing, 2012).

Entrepreneurial motivation simply refers to the processes thereby entrepreneurs find opportunities, evaluate these opportunities and if the opportunities are feasible, they request for resource to develop them (Shane, 2003). Azikiwe (2010) posited that mentoring business education students in entrepreneurial motivation enhances students’ capacity to sustain enthusiasm to start up a new business or manage an existing one. Igboko (2009) averred that mentoring improves on the techniques of provoking students’ intellect towards problem solving.

A number of factors have been found to motivate entrepreneurs. Amadi (2012) contends that these factors can be internal. Motivators are classified into four categories. These include extrinsic rewards, independence/autonomy, intrinsic rewards and family security. However, Yakin and Kapu (2008) classified entrepreneurial motivations into four categories. These are: financial, recognition, freedom and family tradition (i.e. the motive to continue the family business and to imitate family members). In the opinion of Brana (2008) motivating factors can also be classified as push or pull factors. Push factors include the need to increase family income, dissatisfaction with a salary-based job, problems with finding an appropriate job and the need for flexibility for family responsibilities. Pull factors on the other side include the need for independence, self-actualization, increase status-quo and reputation in society (Yakin & Kapu, 2008).

In addition to factors that motivate entrepreneurs, another frequently studied dimension of entrepreneurship research addresses the problems faced by entrepreneurship (Yakin & Kapu, 2008). Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) opined that entrepreneurs are faced with such problems as the liability of newness, lack of funding management, identifying an appropriate market segment, protecting intellectual property, operational issues, and legal/regulatory issues. Ekpe, Raza and Mat (2012) identified ten critical problems encountered by entrepreneurs in their first three years in business. These problems include: finding new customers, obtaining financing, recruiting and hiring new managers, dealing with current employee problems, product pricing, planning for market expansion, handling legal problems, product quality, and dealing with government agencies. Unlike in developed countries, an unstable and
bureaucratic business context is the common problem in Nigeria. For instance, entrepreneurs in Africa struggle with government. Laws concerning private enterprises such as enforcement of contract and private property laws, as well as overly complex business registration and tax system.

On the success factors of entrepreneurs, Brana (2008) posited that capital is a major factor linked to entrepreneurs’ success. He further explained that capital exists as human capital, social and reputational capital. Human capital is an individual’s knowledge and skills, and it is important in entrepreneurial discovery, problem solving, adapting to change, and implementing new technologies. According to Shrader and Siegel (2007), two critical components of human capital are education and prior experience. Social capital often thought of as social networks, is a set of social resources embedded in relationships and is derived not only from networks, but also from norms and relationships in the social structure in which a person operates. Reputational capital refers to social resources and legitimacy certified by well-regarded individuals and organizations and it accrues from a good reputation (Antonic, 2003).

Statement of the Problem
It has been observed by parents, teachers and the general public that the purpose of introducing entrepreneurship education by the Federal Government in all tertiary institutions in the country, including the universities has not been satisfactorily achieved (Pihie, 2009 in Umunadi, 2010). This has been largely attributed to the claim that vocational mentoring/ counseling has not been fully integrated into entrepreneurship education programme. As such, business education students have not been properly mentored on the requisite knowledge, skills, attitude and competencies needed for entrepreneurship development. In addition, students seem not to have been adequately taught entrepreneurship knowledge, motivation, ambition and skills acquisition (Agboola & Ademiluyi, 2015). Under these circumstances, it would appear that entrepreneurship education programme may not be meeting the expectations of the society. The present problem is that research in this area of mentoring business education students for entrepreneurship development through entrepreneurship knowledge and motivation is not very common particularly in Rivers State. A gap in knowledge therefore exists in which this study will fill empirically.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of mentoring on entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Find out the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. Examine the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Questions
The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the extent to which mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
2. What is the extent to which mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

$H_0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

$H_0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
METHODOLOGY
The study adopted the descriptive survey research design with a population of 111 business education lecturers and 729 undergraduate students of business degree programme from the three public tertiary institutions in Rivers State, namely Rivers State University (RSU), Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUOE) and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku (FCETO). A validated 16-item self-designed instrument titled “Influence of Mentoring on Entrepreneurship Development Questionnaire (IMEDQ)” was used for data collection. The instrument was designed using the four point modified Likert rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4 points, High Extent (HE) = 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point. Its reliability co-efficient was established at 0.80 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Out of the 840 copies of the questionnaire distributed, only 831 of the copies were correctly filled and retrieved. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistics to answer the research questions while z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any value from 3.50 – 4.00 was regarded as Very High Extent, from 2.50 – 3.49 as High Extent, From 1.50 – 2.49 as Low Extent, and from 0.50 – 1.49 as Very Low Extent. A null hypothesis was accepted if the calculated z-value is less than the critical z-value of ±1.96 and rejected if the calculated z-value is greater than the critical z-value of ±1.96.

RESULTS
The results obtained from this study after data analysis were presented and analyzed as follows:

Research Question 1:
What is the extent to which mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1  Extent the Mentoring on Entrepreneurship Knowledge Influences the Entrepreneurship Development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire Items</th>
<th>Lecturers N = 111</th>
<th>Students N = 720</th>
<th>Mean Set</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$X_L$</td>
<td>$SD_L$</td>
<td>$X_S$</td>
<td>$SD_S$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge improves students’ ability to effectively communicate their intentions.</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge improves their ability to acquire self-confidence.</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge improves students’ business knowledge and skills through sharing experiences.</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge improves their ability to come to terms with business reality</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge improves</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
their ability to understand nature of business environment.

6. Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge improves their knowledge to identify business opportunities.

7. Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship knowledge enable them to be more equipped to start up new ventures on graduation.

Aggregate mean and standard deviation

The data on Table 1 revealed the items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 have mean values and standard deviation values for lecturers and students respectively that fell within the range of high extent. Therefore, with an aggregate weighted mean set of 2.97, it was evident that lecturers and students agreed to a high extent that the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What is the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire Items</th>
<th>Lecturers N = 111</th>
<th>Students N = 720</th>
<th>Mean Set</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\bar{X}_L$</td>
<td>$SD_L$</td>
<td>$\bar{X}_S$</td>
<td>$SD_S$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their self independence.</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their effectiveness to want to venture into new business.</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their ability to identify challenges.</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their ability to want to excel.</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their ability to be resilient.

Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation makes them to aim higher.

Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their capacity to sustain enthusiasm to start up or manage an existing venture on graduation.

Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances the technique of provoking students’ intellect towards problem solving.

Mentoring business education students on entrepreneurship motivation enhances their capacity to stimulate independent thinking.

The data on Table 2 revealed that items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 have mean values and standard deviation values for lecturers and students respectively that fell within the range of high extent. Therefore, with an aggregate weighted mean set of 2.94, it was evident that lecturers and students agreed to a high extent that the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis 1**

\[ H_0: \text{There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring of on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.} \]
Table 3

Z-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Lecturers and Students on the Extent the Mentoring on Entrepreneurship Knowledge Influences the Entrepreneurship Development of business education students of business education students in Public Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Z-cal.</th>
<th>Z-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>-1.83</td>
<td>±1.96</td>
<td>Ho₁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 showed z-test of difference between lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at -1.83 while the critical z-value stood at ±1.96, using 829 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, the researcher therefore, accepted the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis 2**

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4.6

Z-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Lecturers and Students on the Extent the Mentoring on Entrepreneurship Motivation Influences the Entrepreneurship Development of business education students in Public Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Z-cal.</th>
<th>Z-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>±1.96</td>
<td>Ho₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 showed the z-test of difference between lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at -0.58 while the ±1.96, using 829 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, the researcher therefore, accepted the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences their entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

On the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge influences the entrepreneurship development of business education students, the findings of this study revealed that mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge improves to a high extent students’ ability to effectively communicate their intention; students’ business knowledge and skills through sharing experiences; students’ ability to come to terms with business environment; students’ knowledge to identify business opportunities; and its enables them to be equipped to start up new ventures on graduation. These findings agree with the assertions of Abdullah (2009) that entrepreneurship education increases new entrepreneurs interest in becoming entrepreneurs at some stage after graduation as entrepreneurial competencies enhances key skills,
intention to create new ventures and provides opportunities for students to exercise significant responsibilities which affect their desire to step into entrepreneurship. Shane (2003) also supported these findings as he opined that the result of entrepreneurship may be new organization or a part of revitalizing mature organization in response to a perceived opportunity.

On the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship motivation influences the entrepreneurship development of students, the findings of this study revealed that entrepreneurship motivation enhances to a high extent students’ self independence; students’ ability to identify challenges; students’ ability to excel; students’ ability to be resilient and makes them to aim higher; students’ capacity to sustain enthusiasm to start up or manage an exiting venture on graduation, and the technique of provoking students intellect towards problem solving; and students capacity to stimulate independent thinking. In corroboration with these findings, Azikiwe (2010) posited that mentoring business education students in entrepreneurial motivation enhance students’ capacity to sustain enthusiasm to start up further supported by Igboko (2009) who averred that mentoring improves on the techniques of provoking students’ intellect towards problem solving. Stressing further, Shane (2003) opined that entrepreneurial motivation refers to the processes whereby entrepreneurs find opportunities, evaluate these opportunities and if the opportunities are feasible, they request for resources to develop these opportunities.

The findings of this study revealed in tables 3 and 4 that there were no significance differences in the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge and motivation influence the entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION
Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that the mentoring on entrepreneurship knowledge and entrepreneurship motivation influences to a high extent the entrepreneurship development of business education students. These assertions were discovered in the course of investigating influence of mentoring on entrepreneurship development of business education students in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:
1. Mentoring programmes should be integrated into entrepreneurship education programmes and made compulsory at all levels of education.
2. Government should provide adequate funding to enhance the smooth and effective running of entrepreneurship programmes.
3. Lecturers of undergraduate entrepreneurship education programmes should adopt a more practical skills approach in teaching entrepreneurship education courses in tertiary institutions.

REFERENCES


