



ASSESSING THE PARTICIPATION OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The study assessed the participation of multinational corporations in the development of Entrepreneurship Education in university Business Education programmes in Rivers State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised of all 54 Corporate Social Responsibility Managers of the oil & gas multinational corporations and non-oil & gas multinational corporations doing business in Rivers State, Nigeria. The entire population was used for the study. A structured questionnaire titled "Participation of Multinational Corporations in Development of Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire" (PMCDDEEQ) was used as instrument for data collection. Three experts validated the instrument while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to obtain the reliability coefficient of 0.81. Only 41 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and used for the study. The items were rated on a four point rating scale; mean was used to answer the research questions and t-test was used in testing the hypotheses. The findings revealed a very low participation of multinational corporations in funding and provision of infrastructural facilities for University Business Education programmes in Rivers State. The researcher recommended that multinational corporations should initiate an Entrepreneurship Education Development Fund to help in the implementation of Entrepreneurship Education in University Business Education programmes in Rivers State and Nigeria at large.

Keywords: Multinational Corporations, Participation, Development, Business Education.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is currently a popular field of study amongst students of various levels of education and in tertiary institutions, entrepreneurship cuts across all fields of study because of the campaigns on self-reliance and the recognition given to small scale businesses as the vehicle for healthy economic development. The harsh economic realities in



many developing countries which have manifested themselves in high unemployment rates have made many of the unemployed to think of business ideas and this has given further rise to more focus and interest on entrepreneurship because it provides opportunities and make participants job creators rather than job seekers.

Amaewhule (2014) asserted that entrepreneurship is a process that involves the organizing, managing and harnessing of opportunities which are essential elements associated with activities in the world of work. Accordingly, Salihu(2016) believed that entrepreneurship is about taking a risk; it is the process of creating new venture that did not previously exist; it is the practice of starting new organization, especially new business; it involves creation of new wealth through implementation of new concepts. Thus, Entrepreneurship can be viewed as a risk taking venture put together for the purpose of satisfying a rising demand in goods or services as well as making profits in the process.

As earlier mentioned, there are ongoing campaigns by various levels of the government to encourage entrepreneurial activities amongst unemployed youths and even the employed to serve as an additional stream of income. Entrepreneurship is encouraged amongst all professions and today every professional desires to establish and commercialize their talents and skills; this they can achieve by learning the rudiments of running a modern commercial enterprise which is becoming more difficult because of the increasing complexities of factors affecting the running of such enterprise, particularly the environment (Barakabo, 2017). Therefore, it is pertinent that the right environment be created for effective delivery of Entrepreneurship Education as to grow young entrepreneurs that will help drive the nation's economy in the right and desired direction.

Entrepreneurship Education as defined by Adediran and Olughuiyi (2011) is education that seeks to prepare individuals to become enterprising and responsible entrepreneurial thinkers, who will contribute to economic development. Entrepreneurship Education is a carefully planned programme of instruction aimed at equipping students with entrepreneurial skills and competencies to enable them start and effectively manage their business enterprises for survival and success (Ezenwafor & Olaniyi, 2017). Entrepreneurship Education prepares and encourages participants to create employment opportunities for themselves and others by investing their knowledge, skills and other resources to satisfy needs in an environment to make profit. Consequently, Entrepreneurship Education is a key agent in the development of creativity and innovativeness in individuals for business success; it stimulates business interest and potentials as well as acquisition of relevant skills and competencies for the establishment and operation of a new profit-oriented business venture.

Entrepreneurship education is designed to communicate and inculcate competencies, knowledge and values needed to recognize business opportunity, organize, start and ensure the success of such business. Entrepreneurship education is a key driver of the economy of any nation; it encourages the creation of jobs and reduction of unemployment which is a major objective of the business education programme.

Business education is a programme of study put together for the empowerment of learners with requisite skills needed to function in the world of work. Amesi, Akpomi and Okwuanaso (2014) opined that business education means education for business or training skills, which are required in business offices and clerical occupation. Accordingly, Ubulom and Dambo (2016) maintained that business education is an aspect of the educational programme designed to provide an individual with the needed business and vocational attitudes, understanding, knowledge and skills. The business education programme contributes greatly



to the development of youths through its available options such as accounting, business management, secretarial, office technology, and marketing, among others. All of these options of the business education programme provide for the development of a variety of business related entrepreneurial competencies relevant for the management of any business enterprise (Wolugbom, 2017). Thus, entrepreneurship education can be fast driven to achieve its objectives through the business education programme with adequate support from government and other support agents as multinational corporations.

Multinational corporations as viewed by Andabai and Tonye (2015) are companies that own and manage business in two or more countries or conglomerates with parent headquarters located in developed countries and subsidiary operations in a number of other countries. Multinational corporations are enterprises that own or possess income-generating assets in more than one country or firms with both equity and contractual involvement such as management contracts, franchising, and leasing agreements in more than one country (Jiboku, 2018). Multinational corporations are organizations which control production of goods or services in different countries of the world including their own home country. Multinational corporations are foreign related enterprises set up for profit making and development of host communities through corporate social responsibility.

Corporate social responsibility as defined by Hakeem (2014) is the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time. The corporate social responsibility concept encourages companies to consider the interests of the communities by providing social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads, water supply in their area of operations as a way of impacting them positively. Corporate social responsibility is one of the important ways today in which enterprises affirm their principles and values, both in their own internal processes and operations and in their interaction with other actors (ILO, 2019).

In a study, assessing the development of entrepreneurship education through corporate social responsibility, Raimi (2015) asserted that there is increased involvement by multinational corporations in the wellbeing of host communities in form of community engagement, social entrepreneurship and corporate social entrepreneurship. Accordingly, Ismail, Muhammad and Mohd (2017) revealed that Mobile Telephone Network, a multinational corporation in Nigeria, initiated a youth skill development programme that has benefited four vocational colleges in Nigeria. However, Okokwo (2011) criticized the responses of multinational corporations towards corporate social responsibilities; saying it is nothing to write home about and Jiboku (2018) asserted that the situation in Nigeria is such that multinational corporations have been in operation for years without the development of local skills and that there appears to be a disconnect between multinational corporations' skills development programme and national skills development aspirations.

Nigeria has played host to multinational corporations long before independence till date. The number and activities of these multinational corporations have grown over time as Nigeria struggles to develop socio-economically as a nation. Specifically, Rivers State as one of the Niger Delta oil producing states seems to attract more presence of these multinational corporations that are into different areas of business as a result of her growing urban population. Noticeably, multinational corporations in Nigeria spread across various platforms and line of production; from oil and gas, telecommunications, health and wellness to consumables etcetera. Multinational corporations are important players in the global economy; they are important players in the development of society, and this is due to their economic



clout. Multinationals are expected to reach out to their host communities through adequate and effective corporate social responsibility projects execution. They are required to embark on human capital development projects as well as infrastructural boost of their host countries. Multinational corporations have been praised by many as agents of social, economic and technological development of host countries; others feel and regard multinational corporations as instruments of exploitation in their host countries. These views, Okonkwo (2011) asserted are based on the extent to which multinational corporations meet the societal expectations and demands as well as business expectations and demands in their environment.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship education is designed to communicate and inculcate competencies, knowledge and values needed to recognize business opportunity, organize, start and ensure the success of such business. On the other hand, business education is a programme of study put together for the empowerment of learners with requisite skills needed to function in the business world. Thus, Entrepreneurship education is achievable through the business education programme. The successful running of any entrepreneurial education programme requires adequate contributions from government and relevant stakeholders. Barakabo (2017) opined that vital contributions of the government or stakeholders to the enhancement of entrepreneurship education may include: funding which may include training fees and take off capital for the business; provision of facilities and infrastructure that encourage entrepreneurial development; ensuring security, safety and peace in the society; giving legal assistance to young entrepreneurs and empowering and influencing educational institutions that support entrepreneurship education.

Multinational corporations as businesses with foreign background are presumed change agents and are expected to complement host government efforts towards the development of education and particularly entrepreneurship education which happens to be the tool for elimination of unemployment and poverty amongst youths. However, it is noticeable that public institutions of higher learning have been funded by government with little or no support from stakeholders as multinational corporations. Multinational corporations are often unable to deal effectively with important issues in the host country (Mohammed, Dima & Hina, 2018). Also, observations show that multinational corporations in Rivers State are more focused on entrepreneurship development amongst out-of-school youths with training of youths in pipeline welding, tailoring, fisheries, animal husbandry, catering, makeups etcetera and funding of start-ups as well as provision of kits. The researcher is therefore concerned with how multinational Corporations have so far participated in the development of entrepreneurship education through university business education programme which will be of major benefit to youths in schools and graduates as well.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. What is the level of participation of multinational corporations in funding University Business Education programmes for the development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State?
2. What is the level of participation of multinational corporations in providing infrastructural facilities for University Business Education programmes in development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State?



Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Managers of Oil/Gas multinational corporations and Non-Oil/Gas multinational corporations on their level of participation in funding University Business Education programmes for the development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Managers of Oil/Gas multinational corporations and Non-Oil/Gas multinational corporations on their level of participation in providing infrastructural facilities for University Business Education programmes in development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used in conducting the study. The population for the study as indicated in the table below comprised of all 54 Corporate Social Responsibility Managers of the oil/gas multinational corporations and non-oil/gas multinational corporations doing business in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Population Distribution

S/N	ORGANIZATIONS	TOTAL NO. OF MANAGERS
1.	Oil and Gas Multinational Corporations	18
2.	Non-Oil and Gas Multinational Corporations	36
G/TOTAL		54

Source: Rivers State Internal Revenue Service, 2020.

No sampling technique was used for the study, since the population was small. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Participation of Multinational Corporations in Development of Entrepreneurship Education Questionnaire" (PMCDEEQ). The instrument provided response to the two research questions with 15 items; Item 1-7 addressing Research Question One and item 8-15 addressing Research Question Two in a 4-point rating scale weighted as "High Level" (HL) – 4 points, "Moderate Level" (ML) – 3 points, "Low Level" (LL) – 2 points and "Very Low Level" (VLL) – 1 point. To establish the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face and content validity by two experts from the Department of Business Education and one expert from Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Faculty of Education in Rivers State University. To ensure the consistency of the instrument, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was adopted and a reliability coefficient of .89 was established. Only 41 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and used for the study; this represents 76 per cent of the total number distributed. The data analysis was done using the mean to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The mean was obtained by the summation of all responses as assigned to a rating scale in an item divided by the total number of responses: $4+3+2+1/4 = 2.50$. The mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted, while those below 2.50 were rejected. Also, the decision rules for the hypotheses was that any



hypothesis which z-calculated value is less than the z-critical table value of 1.96 is considered accepted whereas if it is more than the critical table value is considered rejected.

Results

Research Question 1

What is the level of participation of multinational corporations in funding University Business Education programmes for the development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on Participants funding of University Business Education

S/N	Statements	Oil MNCs (11)		Non-Oil MNCs (30)		Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
		\bar{X}	STD	\bar{X}	STD			
1.	My corporation funds Entrepreneurship Education researches in University Business Education.	1.55	0.99	1.50	0.89	1.53	0.94	LL
2.	My corporation assists in funding Entrepreneurship Education trainings for lecturers of University Business Education.	1.45	0.99	1.40	0.89	1.43	0.94	VLL
3.	My corporation fund Entrepreneurship Education excursions/field trips for University Business Education departments.	1.27	0.86	1.23	0.67	1.25	0.77	VLL
4.	My corporation provides Entrepreneurship Education stipends for staff/students of University Business Education departments.	1.09	0.29	1.03	0.18	1.06	0.24	VLL
5.	My corporation provides fund for Entrepreneurship Education practical's in University Business Education departments.	1.18	0.39	1.17	0.64	1.18	0.52	VLL
6.	My corporation funds visits of Entrepreneurship Education resource persons to Business Education departments.	1.27	0.62	1.23	0.67	1.25	0.65	VLL



7.	My corporation funds Entrepreneurship Education exhibitions in University Business Education departments.	1.64	0.98	1.63	0.87	1.64	0.93	LL
	Total Mean/SD	9.45	5.12	9.19	4.81	9.32	4.97	
	Grand Mean/SD	1.35	0.73	1.31	0.69	1.33	0.71	VLL

Source: Field work, 2020.

The data presented in Table 2 shows the responses of the respondents in the various average mean scores of 1.53, 1.43, 1.25, 1.06, 1.18, 1.25 and 1.64 which implies a low level of participation of the respondents corporations' in terms of funding entrepreneurship education researches in university business education; funding entrepreneurship education trainings for lecturers of university business education; funding entrepreneurship education excursions/field trips for university business education department; providing entrepreneurship education stipends for staff/students of university business education departments; providing funds for entrepreneurship education practical's for university business education department; funding visits of entrepreneurship education resource persons to university business education department or even funding entrepreneurship education exhibitions in university business education department. The table also revealed a grand mean of 1.33 and a grand standard deviation of 0.71 which indicates a very low level of participation of multinational corporations in funding university business education programmes for the development of entrepreneurship education as evident in the responses of the respondents in both oil and non-oil multinational corporations as studied in Rivers State.

Research Question 2

What is the level of participation of multinational corporations in providing infrastructural facilities for University Business Education programmes in development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings on Participants Infrastructural Facilities Provision for University Business Education

S/N	Statements	Oil MNCs (11)		Non-Oil MNCs (30)		Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
		\bar{X}	STD	\bar{X}	STD			
8.	My corporation participates in building of Entrepreneurship Education lecture halls for University Business Education departments.	1.09	0.29	1.07	0.25	1.08	0.27	VLL
9.	My corporation participates in building of Entrepreneurship Education laboratories for university Business Education departments.	1.18	0.39	1.17	0.52	1.18	0.46	VLL



10.	My corporation participates in building of Entrepreneurship Education workshops for University Business Education departments.	1.27	0.86	1.23	0.67	1.25	0.77	VLL
11.	My corporation participates in setting up Entrepreneurship Education model offices for University Business Education departments.	1.09	0.29	1.07	0.25	1.08	0.27	VLL
12.	My corporation participates in setting up Entrepreneurship Education resource centre for University Business Education departments.	1.36	0.88	1.33	0.87	1.35	0.88	VLL
13.	My corporation participates in building of staff offices in support of Entrepreneurship Education in University Business Education departments.	1.09	0.29	1.03	0.18	1.06	0.24	VLL
14.	My corporation participates in providing auditorium for organizing Entrepreneurship Education exhibitions for University Business Education departments.	1.45	0.99	1.40	0.89	1.43	0.94	VLL
15.	My corporation assists in providing class/staff furniture in support of Entrepreneurship Education in University Business Education departments.	1.64	0.98	1.63	0.87	1.64	0.93	LL
	Total Mean/SD	10.17	4.97	9.93	4.50	10.05	4.74	
	Grand Mean/SD	1.27	0.62	1.24	0.56	1.26	0.59	VLL

Source: Field work, 2020.

The data presented in table 3 shows the responses of the respondents in the various average mean scores of 1.08, 1.18, 1.25, 1.08, 1.35, 1.06, 1.43 and 1.64 which implies a low level of participation of the respondents corporations in terms of building of entrepreneurship education lecture halls; building entrepreneurship education laboratories; building entrepreneurship education workshops; setting up entrepreneurship education model offices; entrepreneurship education resource centre; building of staff offices in support of entrepreneurship education; providing auditorium for organizing entrepreneurship education exhibitions or assist in providing class/staff furniture's in support of entrepreneurship education in university business education departments. The table also revealed a grand mean of 1.26 and a grand standard deviation of 0.59 which indicates a low level of participation of multinational corporations in providing infrastructural facilities for university business education



programmes in the development of entrepreneurship education as evident in the responses of the respondents in both oil and non-oil multinational corporations as studied in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Managers of Oil and Gas multinational corporations and Non-Oil and Gas multinational corporations on their level of participation in funding University Business Education programmes for the development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test Result on Participation of Multinational Corporations in funding University Business Education Programmes

Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t- Cal Value	t- Crit Value	L/Sig	Decision
Oil MNCs	11	1.35	0.73					
				39	0.16	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Non-Oil MNCs	30	1.31	0.69					

Source: Field work, 2020.

Table 4 above revealed a t-calculated value of 0.16 which is less than the standard t-critical value of 1.96; thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. The result therefore is that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Managers of Oil and Gas multinational corporations and Non-Oil and Gas multinational corporations on their level of participation in funding university business education programmes for the development of entrepreneurship education in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Managers of Oil and Gas multinational corporations and Non-Oil and Gas multinational corporations on their level of participation in providing infrastructural facilities for University Business Education programmes in development of Entrepreneurship Education in Rivers State.

Table 5: z-test Result on Participation of Multinational Corporations in Providing Infrastructural Facilities for University Business Education Programmes

Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	z- Cal Value	z- Crit Value	L/Sig	Decision
Oil MNCs	11	1.27	0.62					
				39	0.14	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Non-Oil MNCs	30	1.24	0.56					

Source: Field work, 2020.



Table 4 above revealed a z-calculated value of 0.14 which is less than the standard z-critical value of 1.96; thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. The result therefore is that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Managers of Oil and Gas multinational corporations and Non-Oil and Gas multinational corporations on their level of participation in providing infrastructural facilities for university business education programmes in development of entrepreneurship education in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

One of the findings of this study was low level participation of the respondents corporations in terms of funding entrepreneurship education researches; funding entrepreneurship education trainings for lecturers; funding entrepreneurship education excursions/field trips; funding entrepreneurship education stipends for staff/students; provide funds for entrepreneurship education practical's; funding visits of entrepreneurship education resource persons or even funding entrepreneurship education exhibitions for university business education departments; indicating a very low level of participation of multinational corporations (oil and non-oil corporations) in funding university business education programmes for the development of entrepreneurship education in Rivers State. This finding disagrees with Raimi (2015) who asserted that there is increased involvement by multinational corporations in the wellbeing of host communities in the forms of community engagement, social entrepreneurship and corporate social entrepreneurship but agrees with Jiboku (2018) who revealed that the situation in Nigeria is such that multinational corporations have been in operation for years without the development of local skills. this goes a long way to show the level of neglect in participation of multinational corporations in entrepreneurship education especially in terms of improving university business education programme in Rivers State, Niger Delta and Nigeria at large.

The study also revealed a low level participation of multinational corporations in terms of building of entrepreneurship education lecture halls; building of entrepreneurship education laboratories; building of entrepreneurship education workshops; setting up entrepreneurship education model offices; building of staff offices in support of entrepreneurship education; providing auditorium for organizing entrepreneurship education exhibitions and do not assist in providing class/staff furniture in support of entrepreneurship education in university business education departments; indicating a very low level of participation of multinational corporations (oil and non-oil corporations) in providing infrastructural facilities for university business education programmes in development of entrepreneurship education in Rivers State. This finding aligns with Okokwo (2011) who criticized the responses of multinational corporations towards corporate social responsibilities; saying their participation is nothing to write home about and Mohammed *et al.*, (2018) who argued that multinational corporations are often unable to deal effectively with important issues in host country but Ismail, *et al.* (2017) revealed that Mobile Telephone Network a multinational corporation in Nigeria once initiated a youth skill development programme that benefited four vocational colleges in Nigeria. Considering the number of multinational corporations doing business in Nigeria and the involvement of MTN in setting up a youth skill development project in four out of the numerous vocational colleges and programmes; one will adjudge this as quite insignificant and it goes a long way to show the poor participation of multinational corporations in development of entrepreneurship education in universities.



Conclusion

Entrepreneurship has been proven to be a major drive of the economy for both developing and developed nations all over the world and as such it requires the support of every successive government and stakeholders, if the issue of unemployment and poverty is to be tackled head-on. The objectives of university business education makes the business education programme a reliable avenue through which entrepreneurship education can be accessed; thus, relevant contributions to the business education programme will help promote the development of entrepreneurship education in Rivers State and Nigeria at large. In a bid to achieving the desired developmental strides in entrepreneurship education, there is need for government and non-state actors to partner with the private sector especially multinational corporations which seems to be doing little or nothing at present. Their participation will help complement efforts of government and international organizations in promoting entrepreneurship education.

Recommendations

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

1. Multinational corporations should initiate an entrepreneurial education development fund to help in the implementation of entrepreneurship education in university business education programmes.
2. Multinational corporations should ensure that their corporate social responsibility projects are geared towards complementing government efforts in terms of providing infrastructural facilities that will help in development of entrepreneurship education in university business education programmes.

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