

# An Evaluation of Students' Attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education in some Selected Universities in North East Nigeria

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the cognitive, affective, and behavioural components of students' attitude and to examine the overall attitude of students towards Entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The respondents were students from five selected universities in north eastern Nigeria. Purposive sampling was used in selection of the universities, while simple random sampling was employed in selection of the respondents. The instrument used was structured questionnaire based on Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree on four points. Four hundred questionnaires were distributed, but only three hundred and seventy five were successfully retrieved and analysed. SPSS version 16 was used in the analysis of the data. The study falls within the domain of descriptive study. The results indicated that the students cognitive component of attitude is rated at 84.31

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*Index terms*— attitude, entrepreneurship, education, universities, cognitive, affective, behavior.

## 1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been recognised as the determinant or pivotal element of economic growth and development (Kidane and Harvey, 2009; Nafukko and Muyia, 2010 and Kavitha et al, 2013). This is because Entrepreneurship leads to the creation of small and medium scale businesses, providing employment opportunities, income generation, uplifting of standard of living, and utilisation of human, material and financial resources of a country in the right direction. Many countries have placed intensive and frantic efforts and programmes towards development of Entrepreneurship. Because of the importance and role of Entrepreneurship in the economy, the federal government of Nigeria through national universities commission introduced Entrepreneurship education course under general studies programmes which is mandatory for all undergraduate students in the country. It is believed that it will facilitate the development of favourable attitude towards Entrepreneurship and its education. Similarly, the federal government has established Entrepreneurship study centres in all the federal universities in the country in order to facilitate towards development of entrepreneurs.

According to federal government through the Ministry of Education in conjunction National Universities Commission (2011) has approved the establishment of Entrepreneurship Study Centres (ESCs) in all federal own Universities in the country. The establishment of the centres is to be funded by Educational Trust Fund (ETF). The ministry has also approved the establishment of project implementation committee to fast track the establishment and development of entrepreneurship education in the universities (NBF News, 2011). The primary role of the centre is stimulation of entrepreneurial competencies among students, staff and the community. The Entrepreneurship Study Centre is expected to: Develop and offer courses, seminars, workshops and conferences to advance and propagate entrepreneurship, Offer a 2-credit units course to semifinal/final-year students, Provide entrepreneurial clinical services in entrepreneurship to students, staff and members of the public, Serve as a National Centre for the training and development of experts in entrepreneurship, Promote research and experimentation in entrepreneurship.

Similarly, another role assigned to the Entrepreneurship Development Centre according to Inegbenebor (2005) the Centre is expected to: Identify all innovations and inventions in the Universities for the purpose

## 5 B) ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDE

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45 of assisting the innovators/inventors to commercialize them and establish contacts with potentials business  
46 partners, Provide inventors/ innovators technical and professional expertise to patent and further develop their  
47 inventions/innovations (University of ??enin, 2002).

48 Therefore, Individuals/students may form and implement an Entrepreneurial action in anticipation of outcome.  
49 When the perceived outcome is poor or pessimistic, they tend to develop negative attitude. Reverse is the case  
50 when they perceived the outcome to be positive or optimistic, they tend to develop and retain A positive attitude  
51 towards the attitude object (Entrepreneurship Education).

## 52 2 II.

### 53 3 Objectives of the Study

54 The study has the following objectives: i. To examine the cognitive component of students attitude towards En-  
55 trepreneurship education: ii. To examine the affective component of students attitude towards Entrepreneurship  
56 education: iii. To examine the behavioural component of students attitude towards Entrepreneurship education:  
57 iv. To examine the overall attitude of students towards Entrepreneurship education.

58 III.

## 59 4 Literature Review a) Entrepreneurship Education

60 Entrepreneurship and the education of the entrepreneurs are the indispensable foundation of any country's  
61 economy. The reason for this fact is the entrepreneurs' position as the corner stone within the economic  
62 system. Entrepreneurship Education focuses on developing understanding of Entrepreneurs behaviour, skills  
63 and attributes in widely different context (Akponi, 2009). Entrepreneurship Education has been described as a  
64 scholarly field that seeks to understand how opportunities to bring into existence future goods and services are  
65 discovered, created and exploited, by whom, and with what consequences (Venkatraman, 1997). It is concerned  
66 with the creation and recognition of opportunities, as well as the pursuit of those opportunities by turning  
67 them into wealth creating businesses during a limited window of time (Sexton, 1997: Smilor, 1997). According  
68 to ??ostigo & Tomoborni (2002) Entrepreneurship Education develops and stimulates Entrepreneurial process,  
69 providing all tools necessary for starting up new venture. Bink (2005) is of the opined that Entrepreneurship  
70 Education refers to the pedagogical process involved in the encouragement of entrepreneurial activities, behaviours  
71 and mind-sets. Entrepreneurship Education has come to denote all forms of knowledge delivering that seek to  
72 empower the individuals/students to create real wealth in the economic sector, thereby, advancing the cause of  
73 development of the nation as a whole (Ekpoh & Edet, 2011). Similarly, Entrepreneurship education is the process  
74 of imparting knowledge and teaching skills to potential entrepreneurs on how to venture into business that is  
75 relatively small in nature for future development or advancement (Aminu, 2009).

76 The Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership Clearinghouse on Entrepreneurship Education (CELCEE, 1999)  
77 defined Entrepreneurship Education as the process of imparting individuals/students with the concepts and skills  
78 to recognized opportunities that others have overlooked, and to have the insight, self-esteem and knowledge to act  
79 where others have hesitated. Entrepreneurship Education has been view as a systematic training and instruction  
80 that transmit entrepreneurial knowledge and development of skills in students. Entrepreneurship education is  
81 meant to change students' behaviour pattern in the desired direction. Therefore, it is a continuing development of  
82 relevant Entrepreneurial skills and habits whose understanding and application enable the students to contribute  
83 meaningfully towards the growth and development of Nigerian economy. Though there is no consensus definition,  
84 but they all the definitions serve as complementary to one another.

## 85 5 b) Entrepreneurial Attitude

86 Different authors have defined attitude, however, the elements that constitute these definitions are similar and  
87 complementary. Attitude is the degree or extent to which an individual like or dislike something. Attitude is  
88 defined as the predisposition to respond in a general favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to the object  
89 of the attitude ??Ajzen 1987). According to Allport cited in Banu (1984) an attitude is a mental neural state of  
90 readiness, organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response  
91 to all objects and situations with which it is related. According to Hawkins et al (1983) Allport's definition  
92 raises three points: (a) Attitude is a state of readiness leading the individual to perceive things and individual  
93 around him in certain ways; that is to be more ready with certain categories and interpretations than with  
94 others. (b) Attitude is not innate, they are learned, they develop and they are organized through experience.  
95 These states of readiness are relatively enduring but they are modifiable and subject to change. (c) Aspect of  
96 Allport's definition follows from that attitude is dynamic. Attitude is not merely latent states of preparedness  
97 awaiting the presentation of an appropriate object for their activation. They have motivational qualities and can  
98 lead an individual to seek (or avoid) the objects about which they are organized.

99 An attitude is a tendency to act or react in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli. Here  
100 stimuli may be object, individual, idea or anything else that an individual can react negatively or positively to  
101 it. The reaction may take verbal, physical, mental or behavioural form ??Banu, 1984). Simpson and Oliver  
102 (1990) defined attitude as emotional trends in response to affairs, persons, locations, events or ideas. According

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103 to them the phrase such as "I like Entrepreneurship Education" or "I enjoy Entrepreneurship Education course"  
104 is enumerate as attitude. An attitude is an enduring organisation of motivational, emotional, perceptual and  
105 cognitive process with respect to some aspect of the environment (Hawkins et al 1983).

106 Therefore, attitude may be positive or negative, optimistic or pessimistic, rational or irrational, desirable  
107 or undesirable. Particular attitude may therefore be a problem or solution to a problem depending on the  
108 environmental factors that influence the attitude of an individual. According Sorenson as cited in Balama (1992)  
109 explains that individual/student acquire attitude from their environment, and learners (students) along with  
110 their school books. He further explained that if a student has a positive attitude towards a course he may amaze  
111 the teacher with an ability to learn it that out strip what might have been expected of him. Reverse is the case  
112 when a student holds negative attitude towards a course, he may strongly resist learning that the teacher's effort  
113 no matter how thorough and ingenious are futile.

114 The Therefore, there is strong ascertaining that attitude plays very important role in determining the learning  
115 behaviours of students in schools. This called for continued effort by the researchers/teachers to make sure that  
116 students develop positive attitude and behaviour towards Entrepreneurship Education.

## 117 6 IV. Components of Entrepreneurial Attitude

118 The components of attitude comprise cognitive, affective and behavioural components. This consists of students'  
119 beliefs, thought and knowledge about an attitude object (Entrepreneurship Education). Belief may be correct or  
120 incorrect, true or not true, what is needed is only for the belief to exist. Similarly, beliefs are descriptive thoughts  
121 that an individual hold about something. According Amdam (2011) belief reflects an individual's knowledge  
122 and assessment of attitude object. He further explained that belief is the accumulated feelings and priorities  
123 that individuals have about something. Kotler (2000) maintain that the belief and values in a society has high  
124 degree of persistence, they shape and colour attitudes and behaviours of individuals/students. Belief is formed  
125 by an individual as he/she grow up into the society or associate with reference group. As the relationship of  
126 interaction continues to exist cordially, an individual will learn and formulate beliefs. Beliefs are influence mostly  
127 by social environment of an individual (family, reference group, and so on). The belief student is having towards  
128 Entrepreneurship Education course will help him/her to develop favourable component of this attitude as time  
129 goes on. b) Affective Component (feeling, emotion) It is the student's emotional reaction and feelings to an  
130 attitude object (Entrepreneurship Education). This has concurred with the research finding of Bird (1988) that  
131 perceived desirability of Entrepreneurship and its Education may be formed through intuitive thinking. That  
132 means perceived desirability of Entrepreneurship is formed through affective attitudinal judgement (Mitchell,  
133 et al 2002). The expression I like Entrepreneurship Education course or I hate Entrepreneurship Education  
134 course, is the expression of the emotional evaluation of the Entrepreneurship Education to the student. In the  
135 words of Hawkins et al (1983) due to individuals' unique motivational, personality, past experience, reference  
136 group, and physical conditions may evaluate the same feelings and emotions differently. That means some  
137 individuals/students may have a positive feelings towards the entrepreneurship education, while others could  
138 respond with a negative reaction.

## 139 7 c) Behavioural Component (behaviour, overt response and 140 willingness)

141 It is the way in which individuals/students responds or react to a specific set of attitudinal object. According to  
142 Mani (2008) this component reflects the willingness of students' behavioural intentions in form of goals, objectives  
143 and aspiration and expected responses to the attitude object (Entrepreneurship Education). For example, a  
144 student who intend to become an Entrepreneur before or after graduation, may form and plan behaviour towards  
145 attending and having keen interest in Entrepreneurship and its Education.

146 V.

## 147 8 Methodology

148 Descriptive survey research method was used for this study utilizing frequency and simple percentage. The  
149 sample for this study is undergraduate students drawn from five Universities in North East geopolitical zone.  
150 This is because all undergraduate students are offering Entrepreneurship Education course from the Division of  
151 General Studies of the respective universities. Purposive sampling was employed to select five Universities. The  
152 reasons for using this method is to compose a sample that has federal (UNIMAID and ATBU) and state (ADSU  
153 and GSU) Universities. Secondly, is to involve conventional (UNIMAID, ADSU and GSU) and special University  
154 (ATBU). Thirdly, to Year ( ) involve private University (AUN), and fourthly, is because the Universities are  
155 spread across the study area with exception of Yobe and Taraba states that are having infant Universities.

156 Simple Random Sampling was used to select four faculties and respondents. The sample size for this study is  
157 four hundred. The respondents were collected proportionally from the five selected Universities. The instrument  
158 for data collection was questionnaire adopted from the work of Mc Stay (2008) with modifications. The  
159 questionnaire was divided into four main sections. The first section is about demographic characteristics of  
160 the respondents. The second section measured cognitive component of attitude. Third section measured affective

161 component of attitude, while the fourth section measured the behavioural component of attitude. Structured  
162 questionnaire and Likert scale was used. The responses ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree (4 point  
163 scale). Four hundred questionnaires were administered and 375 were successfully retrieved and analysed. The  
164 Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 16) was used in the analysis of the collected data. The results  
165 in table 1 show that the students averagely are having favourable cognitive towards entrepreneurship education  
166 with mean of 84.31%, while 15.69% indicated unfavourable cognitive. 91.50% of the students believe that they  
167 can identify new business opportunities. 84.00% of the students believe that they can create products that  
168 fulfil customers' needs. 89.10%gave affirmative response to successfully develop new business. The responses in  
169 relation to carrying out of feasibility study and analysis related to starting a new business, 84.30% of the students  
170 responded. 82.10% of the students responded positively in relation to their ability to identify new sources of  
171 financing businesses. Developing good relation with people to assist in finding business opportunity received  
172 82.70% affirmative response. The students' responses show with 76.50% the strength to tolerate unexpected  
173 changes, setbacks and risks in their businesses. Affective component of attitude refers to the students feeling and  
174 emotional reaction towards entrepreneurship education. Therefore, the results in table 2 shows that students a  
175 having strong feeling towards entrepreneurship education with average of 83.34%. 82.40% indicated that they  
176 want become entrepreneurs. Having pleasure of been entrepreneurs indicated is rated at 83.50%. The students  
177 also showed high desirability for entrepreneurs with 86.10%, while personal Satisfaction was rated at 81.30%.  
178 thereby, influencing their intention to be entrepreneurs. The results in 3 indicated that the students a having  
179 positive behavioural tendencies towards entrepreneurship education averagely with 78.72%. The students showed  
180 that they enjoy entrepreneurship education lecture with 80.80%, interest to be an entrepreneur was rated with  
181 78.10%. The respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education course is of the same importance with their  
182 major courses with 69.90%.81.30% agreed that entrepreneurship education have prepared them to make a good  
183 career choice as entrepreneurs, while they agreed that they are happy to learn entrepreneurial skills and knowledge  
184 with 83.50%. The results in table 4 show that generally the students are holding very strong attitude towards  
185 entrepreneurship education. The results indicated that the students are having very strong attitude that is rated  
186 at 82.12%. This indicates that the student will like to become entrepreneurs.

## 187 **9 VI. Analysis and Results**

## 188 **10 VII.**

## 189 **11 Discussion of Findings**

190 The results indicated that the overall attitude of students is 82.12%. That means they hold strong positive  
191 attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Students with strong positive attitude tend to interpret that going  
192 into entrepreneurial activities is feasible and hence desirable. This has agreed with the findings of Mitchell  
193 et al (2002), Bird (1988), ??hapero and Sokol (1982). Furthermore, the findings of Ajzen (1991) agreed with  
194 this result, where if students perceive that entrepreneurship and its education will help them in achieving their  
195 goals, they tend to develop positive attitude towards it. These results also agreed with the findings of ??fedili  
196 and Ofogbu (2011), where students indicated 81% positive attitude toward entrepreneurship education. It also  
197 agreed with the finding of ??eciana (2000), which shows the level of students' attitude at 92.2%. Same with the  
198 findings of Cheung and Chan (2011)

## 199 **12 Conclusion**

200 The study evaluated students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities. The results  
201 showed that the students are holding strong favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Therefore,  
202 Nigerian universities should strive to inculcate sound and qualitative entrepreneurship education to their students.  
203 This would lead to development of favourable attitude, and when students are having favourable attitude towards  
204 entrepreneurship education, they tend to develop and sustain intention to start businesses. Finally, the intention  
205 may lead to actual venturing into business activities.

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Figure 1:

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Agreed

Disagreed

Figure 2: Table 1 :

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Agreed

Disagreed

Figure 3: Table 2 :

3

Agreed

Disagreed

Figure 4: Table 3 :

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Statement	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)
Cognitive Component	84.31	15.69
Affective Component	83.34	16.66
Behavioural Component	78.72	21.28
Mean	82.12	17.88

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Figure 5: Table 4 :



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