



USE OF MOTHER TONGUE AND GENDER AS DETERMINANTS OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

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Abstract:

The study investigated the use of mother tongue and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education (EE) in higher education institutions (HEIs) using the Faculty of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria as a case study. The objective was to determine the relationship between the use of the mother tongue, gender, and students' attitude toward entrepreneurship education. Two hypotheses were formulated to serve as a guide to the study. Three hundred (300) Alex Ekwueme Federal University students were randomly selected for the study. A questionnaire titled "Use of mother tongue scale and students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education" questionnaire was administered and used for data collection. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the criterion variable (students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education correlated positively and low towards the use of the mother tongue. Also, gender was not a determinant factor in both students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education and the use of the mother tongue. The results also showed that only students with knowledge of the use of the mother tongue with the regression coefficient (b) of .258, and a beta weight of .592 significantly have a good attitude towards entrepreneurship education, while gender was not a significant factor in predicting students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Based on these findings, some recommendations were made which include, but are not limited to, that students should be encouraged to be knowledgeable on the use of their mother tongue, understand, speak, and use their mother tongue, irrespective of gender. The university should encourage the use of the mother tongue in entrepreneurship education.

Keywords: *Mother Tongue, Gender, Students, Students' Attitude, Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Education.*

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INTRODUCTION

Discussions on the promotion of the use of the mother tongue in teaching and learning in Nigerian schools have increased tremendously (Mezieobi, Obiechina & Birabil, 2014; Pulka & Ayuba, 2014). This is because, with the English language as the official language in Nigeria, the over 774 local dialects in Nigeria are completely ignored (Mezieobi, 2013). Mother tongue, gender, students' attitudes and entrepreneurship education in contemporary times are vital concepts that need to be given priority in scholastic writings. The main reason for discussing the topic is to sort out the arguments on the relationship between the use of mother tongue and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education. Attitude can be conceived as an individual's feelings, opinions, ideologies, and perceptions about a particular thing, subject matter, experience, exposure, and so on. Agulanna and Onukogu (2012) pinpointed that attitude is a learned tendency to evaluate some object, person, or issue in a particular way. According to Petty, Wegener, and Fabrigan (2017), attitude means a relatively stable assessment of persons, objects, situations, or issues along a continuum ranging from positive to negative. On the same note, Cetin (2016) stated that attitude is a tendency attributed to individuals, and creates ideas, feelings, and behaviours about a psychological object in an orderly manner. For Kara (2010), attitude is described as that which can cause individuals to always behave in the same way to people, objects, events, and constant foundations, and unchangeable beliefs, feelings, and tendencies. Attitude informs an individual's behaviour and disposition towards a particular thing, event, occasion, presentation, experience, and so on. Attitudes are formed to serve an objective for the person who holds them (Agulanna & Onukogu, 2012). Furthermore, attitudes inform people's behaviour towards set goals. They also assist individuals in interpreting whatever new information they get based on already-formed attitudes. They further stated that attitudes are formed through learning and experience. Learning theories exposes the fact that attitudes are learned through classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and modeling (Agulanna & Onukogu, 2012). Attitude is very essential especially for students in entrepreneurship education classroom. The disposition of the students towards entrepreneurship education will determine whether or not they will perform excellently in entrepreneurship education.

Furthermore, gender is a variable in this study. In education and even entrepreneurship education, gender plays very important roles. An individual's gender can have an impact on his or her attitude toward entrepreneurship education. Gender as the social construction of female and male identity, is more than biological differences between men and women. It is also how those differences have been valued, used, and relied upon to simply classify women and men and to allocate roles and expectations to them (Nzewi, 2017). For Aydon (2015), gender is described as the social phenomenon of distinguishing males and females based on a set of identity traits. It is a social, not psychological, or biological construction. On the same note, Ametefe and Ametefe (2017) noted that gender is a social construct that establishes and differentiates status and roles between men and women, particularly in the way they contribute and participate in social, political, and economic activities and are rewarded by the economy and most social institutions. It has been noted that gender is a contextual issue in research generally. Oluwagbohunmi (2014) has stated that 90% of male students are better than their female counterparts and the results were statistically significant valued at 5% level. Also, Voyer and Voyer (2014) found out that females perform better than their male counterparts in academics, and the results were statistically significantly valued at 5%. The two perceptions are perceived as contradicting each other.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CHAPTER

Entrepreneurship Education

Several nations of the world, including Nigeria, have resorted to entrepreneurship – the capacity to transform ideas into income-yielding businesses – to address unemployment and related social and economic issues. In Nigeria for instance, the introduction of entrepreneurship education in schools was a reaction to the economic problems of unemployment, underemployment, and poverty. Both global and local assessments of current entrepreneurship education, however, demonstrate many substantive and pedagogical deficiencies in entrepreneurship education. Lectures, seminars, and practice (demonstration) are still the most common teaching methods in entrepreneurship education (Akpomi & Ikpesu, 2020; Prochazkova, 2015; Prochazkova & Noskova, 2020). In many Nigerian higher education institutions (HEIs), entrepreneurship education has been reduced to learning a trade and learning how to trade like tailoring, hairdressing, carpentry, weaving, and so on, with predictable results (Agbonlahor, 2016). Besides, most of the reviewed studies in entrepreneurship education – in content, policy, and pedagogy - have focused on understanding and promoting the unique personality of the entrepreneur, that is, psychological or the human capital perspective (Thornton, 1999). These deficiencies and the obvious minimal impact of the current entrepreneurship education programme in Nigeria's higher education institutions (HEIs), suggest a need for reform or, indeed, an alternative instructional model. Entrepreneurship education has been studied more from a focus on the individual entrepreneur than from the perspective of the social interactions that shape the entrepreneurial

process and context for learning (Toutain, Fayolle, Pittaway & Politis, 2017). Irrespective of the above weakness, it can be debated that entrepreneurship is fundamentally a collective process (Jones & Spicer, 2009), that it relies on the communication between individuals, their developing companies, and the environment (Bryat & Julien, 2001). Entrepreneurship education, or what Zozimo, Jack, and Hamilton (2017) referred to as entrepreneurial learning, is identified as a critical concept for advancing knowledge on entrepreneurship (Wang & Chugh 2014). This has led to the quest for more understanding and knowledge on how human beings learn from one another (Cope 2005; Hamilton 2011; Konopaski, Jack, & Hamilton 2015; Pittaway & Thorpe 2012) and, more particularly, how entrepreneurs learn through observing other individuals with whom they communicate in social contexts and who are often referred to as role models (Bosma et al. 2012; Hoffmann, Junge, & Malchow-Møller 2015). Entrepreneurship education encompasses all the pedagogical courses, programmes and processes offered to students, at all levels of educational endeavours, to develop or strengthen their entrepreneurial traits, attitude, and skills (Bae et al 2014; Fayolle, Gailly & Lassas- Clerc, 2016). According to Hahn, Minola, Gils, and Huybrechts (2017), entrepreneurship education, or what they referred to as entrepreneurship learning is defined as the key process through which students develop the entrepreneurship knowledge that facilitates them to identify and act upon entrepreneurship opportunities. Entrepreneurship education can also be defined as the process of inculcating in students business-oriented skills, ideas, and knowledge to enable them to become independent after graduation. For Iwu, Ezeudji, Eresia-Eke, and Tengeh (2016) engaging in entrepreneurial activity is considered one of the ways of becoming self-employed but in the actual sense of this chapter, sitting in a classroom where entrepreneurship education is taking place is considered the major way of becoming self-employed. This entrepreneurship education may be in theory or practice. Furthermore, entrepreneurship education is an educative process through which students are led, to acquire skills (ideas and knowledge) that have the ability to (productively) utilise these skills for self-sustenance and self-reliance (Onyeachu, 2011) that may have a spillover positive effect on national development (Mezieobi, 2016).

Use of Mother Tongue in Teaching and Learning

Mother tongue, according to Okediadi (2017), refers to the first language an individual acquires. This language has greater prominence than any other language in the life of every individual. But debunking Okediadi's (2017) definition of mother tongue, the question is what if the first language, an individual acquires, is the English language which has been the case in contemporary Nigerian families? For Afolayan (2018), it is the only language of a monolingual person, which meets all his linguistic needs. It is usually the sequentially first language of a bilingual or a multilingual person. John-Nwosu (2018) averred that mother tongue is perceived as "whatever language a child speaks at home...or the language of the immediate environment of a child...". Mother tongue is the indigenous language that the federal government of Nigeria has endorsed as the language of instruction in the lower, middle and upper basic education level schools in Nigeria (Mezieobi, Obiechina & Birabil, 2014). Mother tongue is no more than the first language of any human in his/her immediate indigenous environment and on which effective take-off of one's life experiences and development are based. It is one's father's indigenous language or rather the language of one's ethnic group or indigenous community. Consequent to the fact that Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society, various mother tongues (MT) in Nigeria are aplenty and to the tune of 521, with a bewildering array of dialects which total about 1000 (Akpan, Mezieobi & Umoh, 2020). For this chapter, mother tongue will mean the language a child is born into through identifying with an ancestral origin. Furthermore, the Nigerian government is developing a policy in support of teaching and learning in the mother tongue in Nigerian schools. This language policy is part of a rising trend around the world to support mother tongue instruction in the early years of a child's education (Edgar, 2017). The mother tongue (first language, native language, or L1) is important for learning as a part of intellectual ability (Noormohamadi, 2008). Human beings acquire their mother tongue language from birth. It assists the child in his or her mental, moral and emotional development (Noormohamadi, 2008). Worthy of note is the fact that much of a child's future social and intellectual development is reliant on the milestone of the mother tongue (Plessis, 2008). Therefore, the mother tongue has a central role in education that demands the cognitive development of a child (Noormohamadi, 2008).

Also, there are several studies on different variables that serve as determinants of attitudes among students of higher education institutions (HEIs). Examples are:

- (1) Ludwig, Burton, Weingarten, Milan, Myers and Kligler (2015) carried out a study on the health of students in high schools stating that the health of students is essential in determining their attitudes.
- (2) Sharma (2014) examined classroom environment, parental education, income, and institution as a predictor of students' academic achievement. He stated that all these can determine students' attitudes.
- (3) Mosteller (1995) studied the location of the institution (urban or rural) to be a significant factor that contributes to the students' attitudes.
- (4) Gbore (2013) carried out a study on the relative contributions of teachers' variables and students' attitudes

toward teaching and learning. He found out that teachers' variables and students' attitudes affect both teaching and learning.

- (5) Oloyede (2010) carried out a research on self-concept in higher education institutions' (HEIs') chemistry. He stated that self-concept determines the attitude of students towards the teaching and learning of chemistry in higher education institutions (HEIs).
- (6) Sharma and Jha (2014) examined parents' educational achievement. They pinpointed that parents' educational achievement can impact on and influence students' attitudes towards teaching and learning, negatively or positively, depending on the success or failure recorded by the parents in their educational pursuit.
- (7) Schick, de Villiers, and Hoffmeister (2002) in their research pinpointed that language delays typically noticed in deaf children are causally related to delays in major aspects of cognitive development. They maintained, that children who cannot understand complex syntactic forms, like complements, have difficulty understanding how their thoughts and beliefs may differ from those around them (Noormohamadi, 2008). However, not many of these pieces of research combined the use of mother tongue and gender as correlates of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions (HEIs).

It is on this premise that this study seeks to examine the use of mother tongue and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education in Faculty of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike (AE-FUNAI), Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical backgrounds underpin this study. However, the study will be anchored on the following theories; Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) and the Social Constructivist Theory.

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)

Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) is a relevant theory that is associated with teaching and learning, knowledge acquisition, and pedagogic practices. This framework focuses on three types of knowledge: technological knowledge (TK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and content knowledge (CK). This order is important because the technology being implemented must communicate the content and support the pedagogy to enhance students' entrepreneurship education experience. TPACK is a theoretical explanation of the set of knowledge and competencies that entrepreneurship educationists need to effectively teach entrepreneurship education. According to Mishra and Koehler (2006), Content Knowledge (CK) connotes teachers' (entrepreneurship educationists in the context of this chapter) own knowledge of the subject matter. Technological Knowledge (TK) defines entrepreneurship educationists' understanding of how technology and content can both influence and push against each other, especially in the use of technology in entrepreneurship education. TPACK provides a practical framework that this study adopted for appraising current entrepreneurship education. The use of the mother tongue in entrepreneurship education is relevant and related to this theory because it drives the content knowledge of the subject matter to the entrepreneurship education student. Imagine explaining a concept to an individual using his or her mother tongue or local dialect, the individual will understand the concept and will become effective and efficient in explaining that particular concept to another individual. Therefore, the theory assisted in the development of the rubric for evaluating the efficacy of the use of mother tongue and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education.

The Social Constructivist Theory

Lev Vygotsky is a Russian psychologist who propounded social constructivism. According to social constructivism, culture, and context are crucial when trying to make sense of society's happenings, and knowledge creation should be based on that understanding (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) proposes three primary themes concerning social development:

- Social interaction,
- The more knowledgeable other (MKO), and
- The zone of proximal development (ZPD).

Cognitive growth, especially inter-psychological development, necessitates social contact. The social constructivist theory of Lev Vygotsky serves as a strong foundation for this study. According to Vygotsky's theory of social interaction, the sociological method to entrepreneurship research used in this chapter comes from that theory. Cognitive development is heavily influenced by interpersonal social contact, according to social constructionism. This premise implies that entrepreneurship education should be studied, developed, and taught in social "jackets," since it is a social venture that involves many stakeholders. Another social constructivist premise that influenced this

study is the idea that knowledge is a socially and culturally created human product. Education should, therefore, be based on social knowledge and practical experience (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Gredler, 1997). Furthermore, social interaction is promoted through the use of language. The mother tongue of the students and teachers is the best medium for entrepreneurship education. Vygotsky (1978) has stated that a lot of the important education by the child occurs through social interaction with a skillful teacher. The teacher may model behaviours and/or provide verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this as cooperative or collaborative dialogue which is an important aspect of teaching and learning a language. This language becomes effective and efficient in entrepreneurship education process because it is the language of the origin of the learner (mother tongue). This theory is relevant to this study because when the entrepreneurship education (EE) learner graduates and finally becomes an entrepreneur, social interaction continues. The entrepreneur will need to interact with his environment (where the business is located), other individuals (customers, suppliers, apprentices and consultants-if need be), equipment-through operations, resources and so on. Even if the business is online-based, the entrepreneur will also interact with technology-trying to adapt to world trends from time to time.

Purpose of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- (1) To determine the coefficient correlation between the use of the mother tongue and students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education.
- (2) To ascertain the coefficient correlation between gender and students' attitude toward entrepreneurship education.
- (3) To obtain the multiple relationships between the use of mother tongue, gender, and students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

The following hypotheses were raised to guide the study. They are:

- (1) Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education is not significantly related to the use of the mother tongue.
- (2) Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education is not significantly related to gender.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researchers applied a correlational design in this study. Correlation design was used to understand the relationship and differences existing between two or more variables. The sampling technique adopted in the selection of the sample size is the simple random sampling technique by balloting. Three hundred (300) students from the Faculty of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria were used for the study as sample size.

The setting of the Study

The setting of the study was Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike (AE-FUNAI) Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The institution is a public university owned by the federal government and located in Ebonyi State. Alex Ekwueme Federal University was established in 2011. Therefore, the total population for the study comprised the entire students of Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike (AE-FUNAI), Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria which is 12,000 (twelve thousand) students (Students' Affairs Unit, 2023).

Participants

The participants for the study comprised three hundred (300) students of the Faculty of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The three hundred (300) samples (150 males and 150 females) were selected through a simple random sampling technique from first-degree/regular/full-time students of the institution's Faculty of Education.

Instrument

The instrument used for this study was a researchers' self-structured questionnaire titled 'use of mother tongue scale and students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education inventory'. The questionnaire comprised the sections A and B. Section A comprised fifteen (15) items drawn on the mother tongue while section B comprised fifteen (15) items on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education. The items were structured in a 4-Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was given face and content validities by two experts from the Faculties of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria and Imo State University, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. To test for the internal consistency of the questionnaire, a test-retest was adopted, and using Pearson product-moment correlation

coefficient (PPMCC), a coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. The scoring of the items was as follows: SA = 4 marks, A = 3 marks, D = 2 marks, SD = 1 mark for positive items while reversed scores were allocated to negative items.

Procedure

The researchers and two research assistants visited the Alex Ekwueme Federal University, campus. Six (6) of the researchers are teaching staff of the university. The three hundred (300) questionnaires administered were retrieved on the spot from respondents.

Data Analysis

The data generated from the questionnaires administered were analysed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The SPSS 15.0 statistical package was utilised in the computation.

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Use of Mother Tongue(MT) on Students' attitude towards Entrepreneurship Educations

S/N	Mother Tongue Knowledge	\bar{x}	Std	Rem	Students' Attitude towards entrepreneurship education	\bar{x}	Std	Rem
1	Current textbooks available on the mother tongue, have improved my understanding of the use of the mother tongue	3.09	0.41	A	Developing of reading culture of materials on entrepreneurship education	3.50	0.25	A
2	Attending classes where the teacher uses the mother tongue to teach, makes me understand my mother tongue	1.67	0.27	D	Ability to learn about entrepreneurship education	2.11	0.32	D
3	Watching movies on the impacts of the use of the mother tongue affects my use of the mother tongue in the classroom	2.21	0.31	D	Enhancing study duration on entrepreneurship education	2.50	0.39	A
4	I enjoy reading books in my mother tongue at my school	1.63	0.40	D	Cultivation of research skills in entrepreneurship education	3.12	0.42	A
5	My school has a lot of resources on the use of the mother tongue	1.80	0.32	D	Appreciation of books on entrepreneurship education	2.56	0.39	A
6	Mother tongue knowledge orientation on entrepreneurship education is well organised	1.62	0.23	D	Disposition to entrepreneurship education and knowledge building on entrepreneurship education	1.50	0.21	D
7	Computer literacy skills have positively affected my entrepreneurship education capacity in the use of the mother tongue	1.57	0.25	D	Ability to adapt to any environment on entrepreneurship education	2.01	0.36	D
8	Consulted books in the mother tongue are always relevant to entrepreneurship education	1.61	0.41	D	Exploring reading group opportunities in entrepreneurship education	2.00	0.29	D
9	I am being encouraged to research in my school on impacts of the use of the mother tongue in entrepreneurship education	3.06	0.42	A	Receptive to other people's ideas and contributions to entrepreneurship education	1.61	0.26	D
10	Maintenance of a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship education	1.54	0.25	D	Enjoying the positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education	1.84	0.21	D
11	Poor information services on the use of the mother tongue in my school discourage me from accessing materials on entrepreneurship education	3.09	0.23	A	Unwillingness to make use of materials on entrepreneurship education for pieces of research	1.54	0.24	D
12	I learn a lot in school about the use of the mother tongue, and without accessing materials on the mother tongue	1.42	0.21	SD	Unwilling to participate in a literacy programme on entrepreneurship education	1.52	0.21	D

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Use of Mother Tongue(MT) on Students' attitude towards Entrepreneurship Educations

S/N	Mother Tongue Knowledge	\bar{x}	Std	Rem	Students' Attitude towards entrepreneurship education	\bar{x}	Std	Rem
13	Educational activities in my mother tongue are not prohibited in my school	1.56	0.40	D	Lack of interest on computer skills programme on entrepreneurship education	1.62	0.23	D
14	Increase in information materials available on the mother tongue	1.52	0.32	D	Unwilling to read books on entrepreneurship education	1.50	0.26	D
15	High levels of crime happen due to the effects of the use of the mother tongue in schools	1.82	0.32	D	Inability to make reference/consultation on entrepreneurship education, irrespective of the effects of entrepreneurship education	1.50	0.21	D
Overall Mean							4.44	

The result presented in Table 1 shows that all the items are positive. This is evident in the level of the respondents' agreement with the items' statement shown in the details of the table above. Meanwhile, the result shows that students' attitude toward entrepreneurship education is greatly influenced by the knowledge of entrepreneurship education in our higher education institutions (HEIs).

Table two: Descriptive Statistics and correlation between the use of mother tongue and gender on students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education

Variables	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	T	Sig.
(constant)	23	2.316		19.518	.000
Use of Mother Tongue	0.516	0.138	0.592	7.518	.000
Gender	-0.54	0.702	-0.122	-1.542	0.884

Dependent variable: students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

The regression analysis results show that the only students' use of mother tongue knowledge with the regression coefficient (0) of 0.516 and a beta weight of 0.592 significantly contributed to students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education while the contribution of gender was not significant. The prediction equation is, therefore, as follows:

$$\text{Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education} = 23 + 0.516 (\text{MT}) - 0.54G$$

Based on the result, the null hypothesis which proposed a no significant contribution of the individual variable to the prediction of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education was accepted for mother tongue knowledge and rejected for gender.

Table Three: Descriptive Statistics and correlation matrix for the relationship between the predictor variables and criterion variable

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education	Use of mother tongue	Gender
Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education	300	29.7466	4.44684	2.000	0.598	-0.152
Use of Mother Tongue	300	29.2134	5.10242	0.598	2.000	-0.102
Gender	300	2.9	0.998	-0.152	-0.102	2.000

The result from the table indicates that the mean and standard deviation of the respondents. The participants' value for students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education was $M=29.7466$, $SD = 4.4684$, use of mother tongue was $M = 29.2134$, $SD = 0.998$. Meanwhile, the matrix correlation between the two variables (use of mother tongue and gender) and the criterion variable (students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education) indicated that students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education correlate positively and low towards the use of mother tongue. Also, gender was never a determinant of both students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education and their mother tongue knowledge.

Table four: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis between the predictor variable and the criterion variable

Multiple R (adjusted) = 0.61 [^] , multiple R ² (ADJUSTED) = 0.186 Adjusted R ² = 0.162, Std. Error of the estimate = 4.26386					
Mode	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	136.922	4	64.462	15.062	0.736 ^b
Resident	1336.264	294	9.09		
Total	1473.186	298			

Dependent variable: students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education

Predictors: (constant), gender, use of mother tongue (MT).

From table 3, it was indicated that the independent variables gave a co-efficient of multiple regression [®] of 0.61, multiple R² (0.186), and adjusted R³ = (0.162), which indicate that 93% of the two variables accounted for the students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education. This, therefore, indicates that the analysis of the independent variables as a block did not contribute to the students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education. The table from the analysis of variable is also indicated, it produced an F-ratio 15.062 and was found to be insignificant at 0.05 levels.

Discussion of the findings

Table one states that there is no significant correlation between the use of the mother tongue and gender on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education. The result from the study shows that the matrix correlation between the two variables (use of mother tongue and gender) and the criterion variable (students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education) indicates that students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education correlate positively and low towards the use of mother tongue.

Also, gender was not a determinant of both students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship education and their use of the mother tongue. This result is in connection with Almamum, Rahman, Rahman, and Hossaim (2012) when they observed that respondents have positive attitudes towards education irrespective of their gender.

Table two states that there are no significant multiple relationships between students' knowledge of the mother tongue, gender, and their attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Results of the regression analysis showed that only students' knowledge of the mother tongue (MT) with the regression coefficient (b) of 0.516 and a beta weight of 0.592 significantly contributed to students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education, while the contribution of gender was not significant in predicting students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Therefore, the result of the null hypothesis which proposed a no significant contribution of the individual variable to the prediction of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education was accepted for use of mother tongue (MT) and rejected for gender. This is in correlation with the research by Aryana (2010) who found a positive correlation between students' self-esteem and attitude towards learning. Also, Akpan, Mezieobi, and Umoh (2020) revealed that the mother tongue has the strongest impact on education and that improving the use of the mother tongue in entrepreneurship education is important. It also ranks as high as the use of the mother tongue to influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education.

Furthermore, Pulka and Ayuba (2014) carried out a study on 'an assessment of factors influencing students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. They found out that the correlation analysis shows that there is a significant influence of factors influencing attitude on students' entrepreneurial attitudes. Therefore,

we reject the null hypothesis that says: Factors influencing attitude have no significant influence on students' entrepreneurial attitude. The alternative hypothesis: Factors influencing attitude have a significant influence on students' entrepreneurial attitude is accepted (p.510).

Gender Implications of Finding

- Gender is not a factor that influences students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education, therefore, students can learn effectively in any condition irrespective of their gender.
- According to the finding, gender was not observed to be a determinant of both students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education and their knowledge of the mother tongue. This implies that entrepreneurship educationists are duty-bound to provide varieties of information materials to satisfy the information needs of students on entrepreneurship education irrespective of their gender and mother tongue.
- Male and female genders can acquire knowledge of entrepreneurship education simultaneously and freely, without any gender bias.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to a university – Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. This can affect the generalization of the findings to other higher education institutions (HEIs) including universities, colleges of education and polytechnics, and other levels of education (primary – lower basic education level schools, middle basic education level schools, and secondary – upper basic education level schools and senior secondary schools) in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

Several works of literature have related the use of mother tongue, gender, and students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education. This study showed that knowledge of the use of the mother tongue (MT) is very important in students' education and can influence their attitudes towards entrepreneurship education. It is also essential to state that gender, according to this research, did not affect students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education. The use of the mother tongue in entrepreneurship education (classroom interaction in entrepreneurship education) is a contemporary issue. The issue of the English language, as the official language in Nigeria, makes the use of the mother tongue in Nigeria education more difficult, even though, the Nigerian government is encouraging schools to promote the use of the mother tongue as the language for teaching and learning. Entrepreneurship education is an important area of study in the 21st century, especially with the quest of nations to grow and develop their economy. Nigerian higher education institutions (HEIs) are, therefore, encouraged to reposition entrepreneurship education and promote the acquisition of entrepreneurship knowledge among students irrespective of their gender, attitude, character, behaviour, self-esteem, background, mother tongue, and so on.

Recommendations

From the results of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers should encourage their students about entrepreneurship education at all times. Students are desirous of listening and believing their teachers (Okeke & Anyaogu, 2019). Therefore, if the teachers persuade and encourage the students to be committed to entrepreneurship education, the students will respect their teachers.
- Resources or teaching materials on entrepreneurship education should be recommended for students to use. Students need to have resources on entrepreneurship education for their regular reading. According to John-Nwosu (2018), for a student to understand a subject, topic, course, module, and so on, the students need reading materials.
- Improved communication between teachers and students should be promoted by the school's leadership. Entrepreneurship education has a lot to do with the interaction between the entrepreneurship education teacher(s) and the entrepreneurship education student(s). Improved rapport between the entrepreneurship education teacher and the entrepreneurship education student will make for effective entrepreneurship education.
- The school's library should be equipped with materials and resources on the use of mother-tongue (MT) and entrepreneurship education. Anyanwu and Njoku (2021) noted that students should be encouraged to read all manner of books in the schools' libraries. Every subject, course, or discipline, should have books in the schools' libraries.
- Entrepreneurship education in contemporary times should be student-centred and practice-based. The students need to be active participants in the entrepreneurship education classroom. The entrepreneurship education teacher can give the students roles to play, ask them questions regularly and make them demonstrate concepts or ideas in the entrepreneurship education process.

- Triangulation of teaching methods should be encouraged in entrepreneurship education. This will enable students, with different learning styles and levels of understanding, to acquire the knowledge that will emanate from the entrepreneurship education processes (Offem & Bisong, 2020; Obi, 2021). Triangulation of teaching methods means the combination of two or more teaching methods in teaching and learning (Offem & Bisong, 2020).
- Teachers should be encouraged to use the mother tongue in entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions (HEIs). 'Entrepreneurship education' in the mother tongue requires special tactics (Mezieobi et al, 2014). Therefore, encouraging the entrepreneurship education teacher will enable him/her to explore the use of special tactics in entrepreneurship education in the mother tongue.
- In an entrepreneurship education classroom, the students should be encouraged to engage in social interactions and networking. This is important because entrepreneurship is now more focused on teams, networks, and social capital, rather than the entrepreneurial personality.

The use of technology in entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria should be promoted. This is because digitalisation of entrepreneurship education breeds globalisation. In the globalised world, entrepreneurship education has a relation with globalization, trade, and the economy. Igwe and Rahman (2022) have noted that research on globalisation has been gaining momentum as scholars and policymakers analyse the relationship between globalisation, trade, and economic competitiveness from different dimensions.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. The study should be conducted with all levels of education in other universities in Nigeria.
2. There should also be the same study conducted with all levels of education in Nigeria.
3. The study could be done with quasi-experimental and factorial design.
4. A comparative research on the use of mother tongue and gender as determinants of students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education in secondary schools (upper basic education level schools – JSS 1-3 and senior secondary schools, primary schools (lower basic education level schools – primary 1-3 and middle basic education level schools – primary 4-6) or tertiary institutions like colleges of education and polytechnics can be carried out.
5. A comparative study on the use of mother tongue and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education in public and private institutions of learning can be carried out.
6. The study should be extended to private educational institutions.

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