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Institutional Capacity and the Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education Programme in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria

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Abstract: **This study examined institutional capacity and the implementation of Entrepreneurship Education Programme (EEP) in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. A total of 373 respondents comprising 120 academic staff, 78 non-academic staff, and 175 students drawn from federal and state Colleges of Education across six South-South states participated. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire rated on a 5-point Likert scale and analysed using mean, standard deviation, One-Way ANOVA, and Independent Samples t-test at 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed human resource capacity was partially adequate (grand mean = 2.80), physical infrastructure grossly inadequate (grand mean = 2.15), curriculum implementation moderately adequate (grand mean = 2.89), and funding and policy support critically deficient (grand mean = 2.24). Student entrepreneurial outcomes were moderately positive (grand mean = 2.96). All five null hypotheses were rejected ($p < 0.05$), confirming that institutional capacity significantly determined programme implementation quality. The overall grand mean of 2.61 indicated partial adequacy. It was recommended that governments and the NCCE urgently invest in physical infrastructure, establish dedicated Entrepreneurship Resource Centres, and institutionalise robust funding frameworks to bridge the implementation gap.**

Keywords: **Institutional Capacity, Entrepreneurship Education, Colleges of Education, South-South Nigeria, Programme *Implementation, NCCE.***

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship education has emerged as one of the most strategically significant components of contemporary higher education. Governments and international organisations increasingly recognise that equipping graduates with entrepreneurial knowledge, attitudes, and skills is no longer optional but imperative (Oyinlola et al., 2024). The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development explicitly identifies entrepreneurship as a driver of SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 4 (inclusive and quality education). In Nigeria, the Federal Government mandated integration of entrepreneurship studies into all tertiary institutions from 2006, reaffirmed in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2023). Despite this policy thrust, the production of graduates who are job-creators rather than job-seekers remains elusive. Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2024) reported a 9% unemployment rate among post-secondary graduates in Q1 2024, with a NEET rate of 14.4% , reflecting chronic mismatch between tertiary education outputs and labour market realities.

Colleges of Education occupy a pivotal position in Nigeria's education architecture, training certified teachers for the basic education sector. Beyond teacher preparation, they are mandated by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) to integrate entrepreneurship education as a compulsory component for all NCE programmes. Research evidence, however, indicates persistent capacity deficits undermining effective delivery (Ajike, Obi, & Eze, 2023; Alabi & Amadi, 2022; Nwachukwu et al., 2021).

The South-South geopolitical zone, comprising Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States, presents a uniquely compelling context. Despite being Nigeria's primary oil-producing region, it is paradoxically characterised by widespread poverty, environmental degradation, and youth unemployment (Development Aid, 2024). Effective entrepreneurship education in its Colleges of Education is therefore not merely an academic concern; it is a socio-economic development imperative. This study investigates the relationship between institutional capacity and the implementation of the Entrepreneurship Education Programme in Colleges of Education in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Institutional capacity, in the context of educational programme implementation, refers to the collective ability of an institution, encompassing human resources, financial resources, physical infrastructure, organisational structures, and governance systems, to perform its mandated functions effectively and sustainably (Bhattacherjee, 2022; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2020). For a College of Education to implement an entrepreneurship education programme successfully, it must possess adequate capacity across all these dimensions: academic staff sufficiently trained; classrooms, workshops, and laboratories appropriately equipped; administrative systems supportive; and funding sustainable over time.

A systematic review of 85 published studies on this subject found that Colleges of Education have made some progress in implementing entrepreneurship curricula but continue to fall short due to inadequate qualified teachers, poor government funding, and limited facilities (WJAR, 2024). Scholars such as Neck and Greene (as cited in Talukder, Lakner, & Temesi, 2025) argue that entrepreneurship education must shift from content-driven toward practice-oriented delivery. Experiential learning through incubation hubs, mentorship networks, and digital innovation ecosystems has become standard in high-income economies (Udeozor et al., 2025). In sub-Saharan Africa, inadequate funding, poorly trained educators, and a mismatch between curriculum and labour market realities consistently undermine programme effectiveness (Adediji et al., 2024). The NCCE's ongoing curriculum review, integrating Artificial Intelligence and digital competencies, further underscores the urgency of assessing capacity in this region (Guardian Nigeria, 2026).

Statement of the Problem

The implementation of entrepreneurship education programmes in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria continues to face persistent challenges undermining its effectiveness and broader national development goals. Despite federal government policy mandating entrepreneurship education integration into tertiary institutions, a documented gap exists between policy formulation and actual programme delivery at the institutional level (Oyinlola et al., 2024). Many Colleges of Education in the zone lack the requisite human, material, and infrastructural capacity to translate entrepreneurship curricula into meaningful learning experiences, while lecturer capacity remains questionable as instruction stays predominantly theoretical, misaligned with labour market demands (Nwachukwu & Gervase, 2026). The absence of functional entrepreneurship laboratories, business incubation centres, and relevant instructional materials has severely constrained practical skill acquisition, compounded by chronic underfunding, irregular policy implementation, and infrastructural decay (Imo, Egbe, & Terfa, 2024).

A further disconnect exists between the curriculum and the socio-economic realities of the South-South region, including agribusiness, oil and gas servicing, and maritime commerce, while stakeholder engagement with industry, communities, and government remains largely superficial. The cumulative effect is the continued production of employment-seekers rather than job creators, with Nigeria annually releasing over 500,000 graduates into a labour market without corresponding job creation. This study therefore investigates the relationship between institutional capacity and entrepreneurship education programme implementation in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

Justification of the Study

This study is justified on theoretical, empirical, and policy grounds significant to education, economic development, and institutional governance in Nigeria. Theoretically, it contributes to existing frameworks on institutional capacity-building and programme implementation in teacher education, particularly within the South-South zone, which has received inadequate scholarly attention in entrepreneurship education research. Empirically, it generates fresh, context-specific data illuminating the relationship between institutional capacity, in human resources, funding, and infrastructure, and actual programme delivery, filling a critical research gap (Oyinlola et al., 2024). It is relevant to educational administrators and provosts requiring evidence-based guidance on staff training and resource allocation, given that systematic staff development is essential for institutional success (Adanu, 2024). It equally provides curriculum planners and policymakers

at the NCCE and Federal Ministry of Education with recommendations for strengthening the entrepreneurship education policy framework, while offering strategic insights for addressing the disconnect between educational leadership, community development, and economic empowerment (Nwaham, Nwachukwu, & Okokoyo, 2024). Additionally, it exposes professional development gaps for lecturers, assists NGOs and development partners in designing targeted interventions, and serves as a reference for future researchers across other geopolitical zones. Ultimately, the study contributes to the attainment of SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by generating evidence supporting improved entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigerian teacher training institutions.

Significance of the Study

This study holds considerable significance for diverse stakeholders across academic, policy, and socio-economic domains:

(i). It is significant to college administrators and provosts, providing evidence-based data to guide institutional decisions on staff deployment, resource allocation, and programme strengthening, given the established need for systematic staff development as a pathway to institutional success (Adanu, 2024).

(ii). It benefits curriculum planners and the NCCE by revealing the extent to which entrepreneurship education curricula in South-South Colleges of Education align with institutional capacity realities, serving as a basis for policy review and curriculum reform.

(iii). It is significant to lecturers by exposing professional development gaps that hinder effective programme delivery, informing targeted capacity-building initiatives, as entrepreneurship curriculum implementation has been identified as a vital driver of job creation and sustainable development (Akinyele & Agbonna, 2025).

(iv). It directly benefits students in the South-South zone, as improved programme implementation will enhance acquisition of practical entrepreneurial skills and competencies needed for self-employment in a competitive labour market.

(v). It provides reliable data for government agencies and development partners to guide investment decisions and collaborative frameworks for strengthening entrepreneurship education in teacher training institutions.

(vi). It advances the national agenda of reducing graduate unemployment and poverty, as entrepreneurship education is globally recognised as a strategic tool for producing job creators, directly supporting attainment of SDG 8 and SDG 4 (Adelowo & Henrico, 2025).

(vii). It enriches academic literature on entrepreneurship education in sub-Saharan Africa by generating region-specific empirical evidence from the South-South zone, a context frequently underrepresented in existing scholarly discourse (Oyinlola et al., 2024).

(viii). It serves as a useful reference for future researchers conducting comparative studies across other geopolitical zones or in developing country contexts with similar institutional capacity constraints.

(ix). It assists NGOs and development partners in designing targeted intervention programmes for Colleges of Education in the South-South zone.

(x). Its recommendations are expected to contribute to long-term improvements in the quality, relevance, and impact of entrepreneurship education delivery across Nigerian teacher training institutions.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To investigate the capacity and implementation of the Entrepreneurship Education Programme (EEP) in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria, with a view to identifying challenges and providing recommendations for enhancing effective programme delivery.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

(i). Assess the existing human capacity, comprising qualified lecturers, trained facilitators, and administrative personnel, available for the implementation of the EEP in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

(ii). Examine the availability of material and infrastructural resources, including equipment, workshop facilities, instructional materials, and funding, that support implementation of the EEP.

(iii). Evaluate the extent to which the EEP curriculum has been implemented with respect to content coverage, pedagogical approaches, and practical skill acquisition.

(iv). Identify the challenges militating against effective capacity development and programme implementation of the EEP across the South-South geopolitical zone.

(v). Propose evidence-based strategies for strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing effective implementation of the EEP in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

(i) What is the level of human capacity, in terms of qualified lecturers, trained facilitators, and administrative personnel, available for EEP implementation in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?

(ii) To what extent are material and infrastructural resources, including equipment, workshop facilities, instructional materials, and funding, available to support EEP implementation?

(iii) To what extent has the EEP curriculum been implemented with respect to content coverage, pedagogical approaches, and practical skill acquisition?

(iv) What are the challenges militating against effective capacity development and EEP implementation in Colleges of Education across the South-South zone?

(v) What evidence-based strategies can be proposed for strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing EEP implementation in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?

(vi) What is the relationship between the level of institutional capacity and effective EEP implementation in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria?

Null Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in human resource capacity, comprising qualified lecturers, trained facilitators, and administrative personnel, for EEP implementation across Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the availability of material and infrastructural resources, including equipment, workshop facilities, instructional materials, and funding, for EEP support across Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

H_{03}: There is no significant difference in the extent of EEP curriculum implementation with respect to content coverage, pedagogical approaches, and practical skill acquisition across Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

H_{04}: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers and administrators regarding challenges militating against effective EEP capacity development and implementation across Colleges of Education in the South-South zone.

H_{05}: There is no significant relationship between the level of institutional capacity and effective EEP implementation in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria.

2. RESEARCH METHODLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to collect data from a large population through structured questionnaires without manipulating respondents or the study environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The descriptive survey method facilitated gathering of information about existing conditions, attitudes, and perceptions of stakeholders regarding EEP capacity and implementation. According to Yin (2018), this design is particularly suitable when the goal is to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon in a systematic and accurate manner, allowing for quantification, analysis, and generalisation of findings.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria, comprising Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States. This zone was selected due to its unique socio-economic characteristics, including oil-related environmental degradation, high youth unemployment, and the need for sustainable entrepreneurship skills, making effective EEP implementation particularly critical. Colleges of Education in the zone operate under the NCCE and are mandated to implement entrepreneurship education as a core curriculum component in line with the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2023).

Population of the study

The population comprised all academic staff, non-academic staff, and students in the 13 accredited Colleges of Education in the South-South zone. According to the NCCE (2023), the total population was 95,430, comprising 4,762 academic staff, 3,218 non-academic staff, and approximately 87,450 registered students, drawn from both federal and state-owned Colleges of Education.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. In the first stage, purposive sampling selected 8 of 13 Colleges of Education based on institutional accreditation status, geographical spread, and active EEP status (Etuk, Udoh, & Akpan, 2021). In the second stage, stratified random sampling selected respondents from three strata: academic staff, non-academic staff, and students, ensuring proportional representation. In the third stage, simple random sampling by balloting selected individual respondents from each stratum.

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula for finite populations:

$$\mathbf{n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)}$$

Where: n = required sample size;

N = total population (95,430);

e = margin of error (0.05).

Substituting:

n = 95,430 / (1 + 95,430 × 0.0025) n = 95,430 / (1 + 238.575) n = 95,430 / 239.575 **n ≈ 398**

A total initial sample of 398 respondents was therefore drawn from the selected Colleges of Education. However, following field administration, 398 questionnaires were distributed, of which 384 were returned, representing a 96.5% response rate. Upon inspection, 11 returned questionnaires were found to be incompletely filled and were discarded, yielding 373 valid questionnaires used for final analysis. This figure aligns with the minimum acceptable response threshold of 70% recommended for educational survey research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2020).

The 373 valid responses were distributed across the three strata as follows:

Stratum	Initial Sample	Valid Returns
Academic Staff	120	120
Non-Academic Staff	78	78
Students	200	175
Total	**398**	**373**

The proportional distribution of valid responses confirmed adequate representation across all three strata, with academic staff (n = 120), non-academic staff (n = 78), and students (n = 175) collectively constituting the analytical sample of 373 respondents, as reflected in the abstract and Table 1 of this study.

Instrument for Data Collection

The primary data collection instrument was a researcher-designed structured questionnaire titled the Capacity and Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education Programme Questionnaire (CIEPQ), comprising two sections. Section A

elicited demographic information. Section B contained 60 items organised under five clusters addressing: (i) human resource capacity, (ii) physical infrastructure and learning resources, (iii) curriculum implementation, (iv) funding and policy support, and (v) student entrepreneurial outcomes. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale: Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1) for perception items; Very Adequate (4) to Very Inadequate (1) for adequacy items.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Face and content validity were established through expert review by three specialists in Vocational and Technical Education, one in Entrepreneurship Education, and one in Educational Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Port Harcourt. Their corrections and suggestions were incorporated before final administration. Reliability was established through a pilot test with 30 respondents from the College of Education, Warri (excluded from the main study). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.87, exceeding the 0.70 threshold recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (as cited in Bhattacherjee, 2022), with individual cluster values ranging from 0.79 to 0.91.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through direct personal administration of questionnaires by the researcher and six trained research assistants. Of 398 questionnaires administered, 384 were returned (96.5% response rate); 11 were discarded for incompleteness, yielding 373 valid questionnaires. Data were analysed using IBM SPSS Version 28.0 (IBM Corp., 2023). Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) addressed the research questions; a criterion mean of 2.50 was used for decision-making. One-Way ANOVA tested hypotheses comparing more than two groups; Independent Samples t-test tested two-group comparisons, both at the 0.05 significance level. Effect sizes (Cohen's d and eta-squared) were computed to assess practical significance (Field, 2024).

3. RESULTS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic profile of the 373 respondents. Males constituted 57.4% and females 42.6%. Students were the largest group (46.9%), followed by academic staff (32.2%) and non-academic staff (20.9%). The majority held B.Ed/B.Sc (Ed) degrees (37.0%). State Colleges provided the majority of respondents (56.3%); Rivers State contributed the highest number (22.5%).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 373)

Variable	Category	Freq.	%
Gender	Male	214	57.4
	Female	159	42.6
Respondent Status	Academic Staff	120	32.2
	Non-Academic Staff	78	20.9
	Students	175	46.9
Academic Qual.	NCE/Diploma	49	13.1
	B.Ed/B.Sc (Ed)	138	37.0
	M.Ed/M.Sc	114	30.6
	Ph.D	72	19.3
Years of Experience	1–5 years	98	26.3
	6–10 years	112	30.0
	11–15 years	87	23.3
	16+ years	76	20.4
Institution Type	Federal College	163	43.7
	State College	210	56.3
State	Akwa Ibom	62	16.6
	Bayelsa	44	11.8
	Cross River	58	15.5

	Delta	68	18.2
	Edo	57	15.3
	Rivers	84	22.5
Total	—	373	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Summary of Grand Means Across Research Clusters

Table 2 presents the grand means across the five research clusters. Physical Infrastructure and Learning Resources (2.15) and Funding and Policy Support (2.24) both fell below the criterion mean of 2.50, confirming critical capacity deficits. Human Resource Capacity (2.80), Curriculum Implementation (2.89), and Student Entrepreneurial Outcomes (2.96) all exceeded the criterion mean, indicating partial adequacy. The overall grand mean of 2.61 confirms partial adequacy at the system level.

Table 2: Summary of Grand Means Across Five Research Clusters (N = 373)

S/N	Research Cluster	Items	Grand Mean	Grand SD	Decision
1	Human Resource Capacity	12	2.80	1.22	Partially Adequate
2	Physical Infrastructure & Learning Resources	12	2.15	1.13	Inadequate
3	Curriculum Implementation	12	2.89	1.24	Partially Adequate
4	Funding and Policy Support	12	2.24	1.13	Inadequate
5	Student Entrepreneurial Outcomes	12	2.96	1.25	Partially Adequate
—	Overall Grand Mean (All Clusters)	60	2.61	1.19	Partially Adequate

Decision Rule: Grand Mean ≥ 2.50 = Partially Adequate; Grand Mean < 2.50 = Inadequate.

Key Item-Level Findings

Table 3 presents selected high and low-performing items across the five clusters. Notable strengths included staff qualifications ($\bar{x}$ = 3.81), business plan development as a core requirement ($\bar{x}$ = 3.74), and students' improved entrepreneurial mindset ($\bar{x}$ = 3.62). Critical deficits were recorded for business simulation rooms ($\bar{x}$ = 1.70), prototype studios ($\bar{x}$ = 1.79), and endowment funds or revolving loan schemes ($\bar{x}$ = 1.62).

Table 3: Key Selected Item-Level Mean Ratings Across Clusters (N = 373)

S/N	Selected High/Low Performing Items	Mean	SD	Cluster	Decision
1	Academic staff possess relevant qualifications	3.81	1.12	Human Resource	Accepted
2	Lecturers attend professional development workshops	3.39	1.21	Human Resource	Accepted
3	Institution provides incentives to attract educators	2.17	1.17	Human Resource	Rejected
4	Textbooks and instructional materials available	2.55	1.25	Infrastructure	Accepted
5	Business simulation room/practicum farm functional	1.70	0.98	Infrastructure	Rejected
6	Prototype studios/maker-spaces accessible to students	1.79	1.03	Infrastructure	Rejected
7	Business plan development is a core requirement	3.74	1.14	Curriculum	Accepted
8	Formal monitoring and evaluation mechanism exists	2.26	1.17	Curriculum	Rejected
9	Entrepreneurship endowment fund/revolving loan scheme	1.62	0.94	Funding	Rejected
10	Private sector provides funding/sponsorshipsupport	1.96	1.10	Funding	Rejected
11	Students demonstrate improved entrepreneurial mindset	3.62	1.20	Outcomes	Accepted
12	Programme increases confidence to start a business	3.42	1.21	Outcomes	Accepted

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 2.50 = Accepted; Mean < 2.50 = Rejected.

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Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 4 presents the consolidated hypothesis testing outcomes. All five null hypotheses were rejected at the 0.05 significance level. Ho_1 confirmed significant differences in human resource capacity perceptions by academic qualification ($F = 8.214$, $p = 0.000$). Ho_2 established that institution type significantly influenced infrastructure adequacy perceptions, with federal institutions rated significantly higher ($t = 6.832$, $p = 0.000$). Ho_3 revealed significant differences in curriculum implementation perceptions by years of experience ($F = 5.491$, $p = 0.001$). Ho_4 confirmed significant differences in funding and policy support perceptions by institution type ($t = 7.103$, $p = 0.000$). Critically, Ho_5 confirmed a statistically significant relationship between overall institutional capacity and EEP implementation ($t = 9.648$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 4: Consolidated Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results ($\alpha = 0.05$, N = 373)

Ho	Null Hypothesis	df	Cal. Stat.	Crit. Val.	p-value	α	Decision
Ho_1	No sig. difference in human resource capacity by academic qualification	(3,369)	F=8.214	2.627	0.000	0.05	Rejected
HHo_2	No sig. difference in physical infrastructure by institution type	371	t=6.832	1.967	0.000	0.05	Rejected
HHo_3	No sig. difference in curriculum implementation by years of experience	(3,369)	F=5.491	2.627	0.001	0.05	Rejected
HHo_4	No sig. difference in funding & policy support by institution type	371	t=7.103	1.967	0.000	0.05	Rejected
HHo_5	No sig. relationship between institutional capacity and EEP implementation	371	t=9.648	1.967	0.000	0.05	Rejected

*Ho_1 and Ho_3 tested using One-Way ANOVA; Ho_2, Ho_4, and Ho_5 tested using Independent Samples t-test. *All hypotheses rejected at $\alpha = 0.05$.*

4. DISCUSSION

The partial adequacy of human resource capacity reflects a mixed institutional reality. Academic staff were generally found to possess relevant qualifications and engage in professional development activities, consistent with Adediji et al. (2024), who found evidence of staff engagement with professional learning even under systemic constraints. However, critical weaknesses existed in industry linkage: industry-academia exchange programmes, mentoring by industry practitioners, institutional incentives for qualified educators, and favourable staff-to-student ratios were all inadequate. These findings align with the International Journal of Educational Management, Planning and Studies (2024), which identified the inability to attract and retain faculty with relevant industry experience as a persistent challenge. For entrepreneurship education to move beyond theoretical instruction, it must be animated by educators with lived entrepreneurial experience and active industry networks (Udeozor et al., 2025).

The finding that physical infrastructure was grossly inadequate is the most striking outcome of this study. The near-total absence of incubation hubs, prototype studios, maker-spaces, functional ICT facilities, and business simulation laboratories fundamentally undermines practice-oriented entrepreneurship education. This resonates with Businessday Nigeria (2025), documenting Nigeria's educational institutions' overemphasis on theoretical knowledge rooted in infrastructural neglect. The significant disparity between federal and state institutions, confirmed by Ho_2, mirrors TETFund's uneven reach (Ogunode & Agbor, 2023). The federal government's phased establishment of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hubs across tertiary institutions is promising (Tribune Online, 2025), but most South-South Colleges of Education had not yet benefited at the time of this study.

Curriculum implementation showed more encouraging results. Strong affirmation that the curriculum aligned with NCCE minimum standards, that business plan development was a core requirement, and that teaching methods integrated theoretical and practical components suggests regulatory frameworks function reasonably. The NCCE's 40-30-30 methodology, allocating course time to knowledge acquisition, skills development, and attitude formation, represents a

pedagogically innovative design (Entrepreneurship for Development Conference, 2025). Nevertheless, structured industrial attachment ($\bar{x}$ = 2.40) and formal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms ($\bar{x}$ = 2.26) remained critically weak, consistent with findings from the World Journal of Applied Research (2024).

The critical inadequacy in funding and policy support is the most urgent policy finding of this study. While policy documents were recognised as providing regulatory frameworks, translation into financial resource allocation was severely deficient. Nigeria consistently fails to meet UNESCO's recommended 15–20% national budget allocation to education, with the 2024 federal budget allocating only 6.4% (Businessday Nigeria, 2025). The near-total absence of private sector funding, endowment funds, alumni financial support, and international donor partnerships signals failure of diversified funding mobilisation. TETFund's 2025 intervention cycle, allocating approximately 2.1 billion naira to each College of Education for Entrepreneurship for Innovation Hubs, represents a promising policy response (The Nigeria Education News, 2025), but its reach to South-South state Colleges remains limited.

Despite significant capacity deficits in other dimensions, student entrepreneurial outcomes showed partial but meaningful positivity. The finding that students demonstrated improved entrepreneurial mindset after programme completion is consistent with a substantial body of literature affirming that entrepreneurship education can meaningfully shift students' self-perceptions and entrepreneurial orientations even under resource-constrained conditions (Frontiers in Education, 2025). The strong affirmation that the programme enhanced confidence to start a business ($\bar{x}$ = 3.42) and promoted gender-inclusive entrepreneurship skills ($\bar{x}$ = 3.34) represents a meaningful contribution to the region's development potential. However, the absence of entrepreneurship clubs, structured mentorship ($\bar{x}$ = 2.24), and business pitch events represents missed co-curricular opportunities that comparable programmes in South Africa have used effectively (EDHE, 2026).

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that:

This study examined institutional capacity and the implementation of Entrepreneurship Education Programme in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria. Findings reveal that effective implementation is significantly constrained by multidimensional capacity deficits spanning human, infrastructural, financial, and administrative dimensions. Although policy frameworks such as the NCCE minimum standards provide a sound conceptual basis, their translation into meaningful learning outcomes remains hampered by systemic inadequacies. The rejection of all five null hypotheses confirms that institutional capacity, encompassing human resources, physical infrastructure, curriculum delivery, and funding, is a statistically significant determinant of programme implementation quality. The overall grand mean of 2.61 reflects partial adequacy, with physical infrastructure and funding emerging as the most critical areas requiring urgent intervention. A paradigm shift from policy rhetoric to deliberate institutional investment is imperative if entrepreneurship education is to serve as a genuine driver of graduate self-reliance and economic empowerment in the South-South region.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

(i) Sustained Investment in Faculty Capacity Development: The NCCE and TETFund should design and fund targeted, regular capacity-building programmes for entrepreneurship educators, covering pedagogy, business incubation, experiential learning, and digital entrepreneurship skills, linked to career progression.

(ii) Establishment of Entrepreneurship Resource Centres: Each College of Education should establish a dedicated Entrepreneurship Resource Centre (ERC) equipped with digital infrastructure, prototyping tools, and incubation spaces, made a mandatory accreditation criterion by the NCCE.

(iii) Integration of Experiential and Practice-Based Learning: The curriculum should be restructured to prioritise project-based and action-oriented pedagogies, with mandatory SME internships, live business projects, and student-run enterprise schemes embedded into programme structures.

(iv) Strengthening Industry-Academia Partnerships: Colleges should formalise strategic partnerships with local entrepreneurs, SMEs, industry associations, and development agencies for mentorship, internship placements, and funding of student ventures.

(v) Diversification and Adequacy of Funding: Federal and state governments must increase dedicated, ring-fenced funding for entrepreneurship education. Colleges should generate internally generated revenue through consultancy and enterprise activities, while actively engaging NGOs, CSR frameworks, and development partners as supplementary sources.

(vi) Strengthening Institutional Governance and Monitoring: The NCCE and state ministries of education should establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework with defined performance indicators, periodic audits, and public reporting tied to institutional ratings and resource allocation.

VALUE ADDED TO KNOWLEDGE

The study provides several valuable contributions to knowledge as follows:

(i). The study provides original empirical evidence on institutional capacity deficits affecting entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education in South-South Nigeria, a sub-sector that has received limited scholarly attention, filling a critical gap in the literature on teacher education and entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

(ii). The study contextualises capacity-building frameworks within the specific domain of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian Colleges of Education, offering a more nuanced understanding of how multi-level capacity variables interact to shape programme implementation outcomes in developing country settings.

(iii). The study contributes an implicit framework for assessing entrepreneurship education readiness across key institutional dimensions, faculty competence, curriculum design, infrastructure, funding, leadership, and stakeholder engagement, offering a holistic diagnostic tool for researchers and policymakers.

(iv). By mapping specific capacity deficits to implementation failures, the study enables policymakers, the NCCE, and college administrators to make data-informed decisions on resource allocation, programme design, and governance reform at institutional, state, and national levels.

(v). The study opens new research frontiers at the intersection of teacher education and entrepreneurship studies, inviting future inquiry into graduate entrepreneurial outcomes, gender equity in programme access, comparative institutional performance, and the effectiveness of specific capacity-building interventions.

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

Based on the findings of the study the following implications are provided:

(i). The findings call for a comprehensive national policy specifically targeting entrepreneurship education in Colleges of Education. The NCCE must make demonstrated institutional capacity a condition for accreditation, while governments address the structural disconnect between curriculum mandates and available institutional resources.

(ii). College administrators must prioritise entrepreneurship education in strategic plans, budgets, and staff development. Institutions need to move beyond mere compliance and cultivate transformative cultures that embed innovation and enterprise as core educational values, backed by robust internal quality assurance systems.

(iii). A fundamental reorientation from didactic to experiential, student-centred learning is imperative. Curriculum content must also be contextualised to South-South regional economic realities, including oil and gas, agriculture, maritime, and creative industries, to enhance relevance and student motivation.

(iv). Capacity deficits represent not merely an educational shortfall but a socioeconomic crisis, given the region's graduate unemployment rates. Effective entrepreneurship education can catalyse small business creation, community development, and economic resilience, making urgent capacity investment a regional development priority.

(v). Longitudinal, comparative, and equity-focused studies are needed, alongside action research that tests specific capacity-building strategies in real institutional contexts to generate actionable knowledge for practitioners and policymakers.

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