

Institution: University of Essex
Unit of Assessment: 19 – Business and Management Studies
Title of case study: Creating Entrepreneurship Training Curricula in Africa and for the OECD
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Professor Jay Mitra's research has developed both a novel theory of entrepreneurship and a series of recommendations for effective teaching in entrepreneurship, with specific emphasis on how entrepreneurship education can help emerging economies. His research has informed his consultation work as a specialist in entrepreneurship training for the OECD's Local Economic and Employment Development Programme. Much of this research was conducted as part of a UK Government-sponsored Education Partnership in Africa programme, which established Mitra's links with education authorities and universities in Africa. The entrepreneurship education framework developed in the research has since been implemented nationwide in Nigeria as a result of these links.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Mitra's research into entrepreneurship has generated both a novel theory of entrepreneurship and a range of practical applications of that theory. His theoretical work has argued that entrepreneurship should be thought of in very broad terms as the creation of value in a variety of contexts. Thus an entrepreneur is not necessarily someone who simply generates monetary value by creating a profitable business, but could also be someone who generates social or cultural value by establishing enterprises that contribute in these areas. His theoretical work on entrepreneurship has also proposed a holistic approach to the teaching of entrepreneurship. Mitra's model for the development of entrepreneurship education involves a range of stakeholders who, on this model, would come together to share their expectations of entrepreneurship graduates and of the benefits entrepreneurship education can bring to regional and national economies. These expectations are then synthesised and integrated into the curriculum from the outset of the training programme.</p> <p>Mitra's research has applied this theory of entrepreneurship to both analyse regional entrepreneurship and to produce a framework for Higher Education teaching of entrepreneurship. This work has explored the ways in which Higher Education Institutions can help to encourage entrepreneurship and thus aid growth in both developed and developing economies. Specifically, his 2008 contribution to an OECD published collection suggested three principal features that should be included in any framework for HEI contribution to entrepreneurship. Mitra suggests that such a framework should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognise the strategies used by HEIs to promote entrepreneurship, with particular focus on education and training, and on knowledge transfer ▪ Understand the learning context and antecedents of HEIs (e.g. the nature of relevant Further Education institutions) ▪ Appreciate the importance of the regional context of the HEI <p>His work on regional entrepreneurship has included research on the role that entrepreneurship education can play in economic development, with particular focus on the contribution of entrepreneurship education to growth in Nigeria. The research culminated in a collaborative project undertaken with universities in Nigeria. In 2009, Mitra won funding from the British Council under the Education Partnership in Africa (EPA) programme. This project adopted an 'action-research' format, by which the researchers investigated models for teaching entrepreneurship by holding a</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

series of workshops, seminars, and conferences attended by a wide range of stakeholders contributing views on what would be required from a satisfactory entrepreneurship education programme. The EPA worked with a number of universities in Nigeria as well as the Nigerian National Universities Commission to develop a holistic model for entrepreneurship education based on the theoretical insights of Mitra's research. It was this model that was implemented to achieve the impact discussed in section 4.

3. References to the research

Mitra, J. (2008) Towards an analytical framework for policy development, in J. Potter (ed.) *Entrepreneurship and Higher Education*, OECD Publishing, 17-44. DOI: 10.1787/9789264044104-3-en

Abubakar, Y., and J. Mitra (2010) Factors influencing innovation performance in European regions: comparing manufacturing and services ICT sub-sectors, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, 11 (2), 156-77. DOI: 10.1504/IJEIM.2010.030066

Mitra, J., Y. Abubakar, and M. Sagagi (2011) Knowledge creation and human capital for development: the role of graduate entrepreneurship, *Education and Training*, 53 (5), 462-479. DOI: 10.1108/00400911111147758

Research Funding

J. Mitra; *Building a Capacity for Entrepreneurship Education and Research in Nigerian Universities*; The British Council; April 2009 – October 2010; £60,000 (£31,717.49 to Essex)

4. Details of the impact

Mitra's research in entrepreneurship education has produced a framework for best practice in entrepreneurship teaching. This framework has been developed in collaboration with policy makers, academics, students, and university managers. This collaborative research has allowed him to develop guidelines for entrepreneurship education that are informed by the practical concerns of those who train and teach potential entrepreneurs.

Nigerian and African Entrepreneurship Education

Collaborating particularly with members of relevant community groups in Nigeria, Mitra and his research team in the Education Partnership in Africa (EPA) programme developed principles for entrepreneurship education particularly suited to the concerns of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The resulting framework was tailored for application specifically in African universities, responding to the needs identified by the EPA's partner HEI institutions in Nigeria (the National Universities Commission (NUC), Bayero University (BUK), the University of Abuja, and Covenant University).

The EPA project influenced the teaching of entrepreneurship in Africa by two means. First, The research into entrepreneurship education involved a series of discussion and training events for university managers, administrators, and academics from British and African universities. The purpose of these events was to learn about the needs of these universities, to train attendees in how to teach entrepreneurship, and to develop better methods for training by learning from these pilot training events. The EPA held a total of 9 events from 2009 – 2010, and in that time trained over 200 delegates from the UK and from Africa, including members of Nigeria's National Universities Commission and Ministry of Education, senior managers from African universities, and

Impact case study (REF3b)

academics who specialise in the teaching and research of entrepreneurship [numbers taken from corroborating source 1].

Second, the EPA project produced a series of directives for cultivating Nigerian research and education in entrepreneurship. These directives were followed by the partner institutions from Nigeria that collaborated in the EPA project:

- In 2010 Bayero University (in Kano, Nigeria) established the Centre for African Entrepreneurship Research and Training (CAERT), in accordance with the EPA conclusions. The Centre has facilitated collaborative research involving 4 universities in Nigeria and the Philippines. Bayero University has also followed EPA recommendations by developing two new course curricula in entrepreneurship, one of which is now compulsory for all Nigerian undergraduates [as corroborated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Bayero, source 2]. Both the Director of CAERT and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Bayero University have confirmed that Mitra 'has been the key influence [on] the creation of [the] Centre' and that CAERT intends 'to continue work with Professor Mitra on many researches and capacity building projects' [corroborating sources 2 and 3].
- The EPA project led to the NUC designing 'some robust entrepreneurship courses in Nigerian universities' and setting up 'Entrepreneurship Development Centres in Nigerian universities'. As attested by their Director of Student Support Services, Mitra has an on-going consultation position with the NUC: 'The Commission will continue to count on the support and leadership of Mitra in future so as to help move entrepreneurship education programmes forward' [corroborating source 4].
- Following EPA recommendations for knowledge exchange programmes, Covenant University (Ota, Nigeria) started KE workshops in 2011 to communicate its entrepreneurship research to non-academic businesses. Thus far Covenant University have held 4 KE workshops for a total of 200 delegates [source 5].
- In order to follow EPA recommendations for encouraging student entrepreneurs, Kaduna State University (Kaduna, Nigeria) established the Network for African Students of Entrepreneurship. The Network offers mentoring and advice for student entrepreneurs and encourages exchange of information between students from universities nationwide. The NUC has directed all universities to establish branches of the network on their campuses [source 5].

Mitra's research has also influenced the development of an entrepreneurship curriculum and the establishment of the first Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa. The Acting Director of their Business School has noted that 'Professor Jay Mitra's work on entrepreneurship, innovation and economic development has had an important impact on the development of strategy for now and in the future'. The Acting Director cites Mitra (2011) as particularly influential, and notes that 'the particular need to develop a holistic perspective for entrepreneurship education and research...is an original concept which resonates very well in the context of our work here in South Africa' [source 6].

OECD

In addition to the impact in Africa, Mitra's work has been used on numerous occasions by the OECD's Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Programme to inform its internal policy forums, ministerial meetings, and member country deliberations. His work has informed their discussions of entrepreneurship education, universities and policy development, innovation and economic development, small and medium enterprise (SME) strategy and financing, and the training and skills needs of SMEs. Mitra has also influenced the OECD in his role of scientific advisor and head of the scientific committee on entrepreneurship for the OECD Trento Centre on

Impact case study (REF3b)

Entrepreneurship and Regional Development [all OECD impact corroborated by the Director of LEED, source 7].

According to LEED's Director, Mitra's publications in this area have 'provided solid empirical evidence of the value of entrepreneurship, innovation and SMEs to economic and social policy making' [source 7]. His publications on entrepreneurship education (particularly 2009 and 2011) 'have had a direct impact on the shaping and formulation of [LEED's] strategy, plans and recommendations to member countries'. Mitra has contributed to the 'CDRI, the major research and development institution in Taiwan, the UAE, regional economic development policy development in Andalusia in Spain, and all member country policy meetings in Paris'. Specifically, his concept of a holistic approach to entrepreneurship education (2011) has had a substantial influence on LEED's activity.

Mitra's direct and on-going influence on the OECD is also attested by LEED's Director:

We will continue to take an interest in his research and consider ways in which his research in entrepreneurship can have further impact on our work. I confirm that Professor Mitra's work...has had a direct influence on the development of entrepreneurship policy and strategy papers and advice that we offer to member countries of the OECD

Director of OECD's Local Economic and Employment Development Programme

5. Sources to corroborate the impact [All sources saved on file with HEI, available on request]

1. Education Partnerships in Africa, Project Completion Report
2. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (academics), Bayero University
3. Director of the Centre for African Entrepreneurship Research and Training, Bayero University
4. Director of Student Support Services, National Universities Commission, Nigeria
5. Follow up report for Education Partnership for Africa programme
6. Acting Director of the Business School, the University of the Western Cape, Cape town, South Africa
7. Director of OECD's Local Economic and Employment Development Programme