

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AT THE AFE BABALOLA UNIVERSITY ADO-EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

Universities across the world have been converging towards entrepreneurship, by taking a more active role in society and economy, as well as educating students. This article assesses entrepreneurship education in Nigeria in the context of the policies and strategies of the Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti, a private higher education, to generate innovation out of academic knowledge production. The article considers four facilitators of entrepreneurship, namely, incentive structures, supporting infrastructure, management style, and corporate culture, and submits that the University's combination of high academic standards, quality and stability of its leadership, vocational orientation, and significant incentives for good performance are enabling factors stimulating its entrepreneurial developments. The objective of this article is to offer a blueprint for policy makers, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders responsible for developing and implementing entrepreneurship promotion efforts in Nigerian universities.

**Keywords:** Education; Entrepreneur; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship Education; Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Universities across the world have been changing, expanding far and wide in search of revenues and markets, educating and developing students for an entrepreneurial career, and equipping students with the necessary skills and competences to compete in a rapidly internationalising marketplace. Indeed, in both industrialised and industrialising countries, a university is no longer seen as just a centre of learning but, in addition, a training institution whose assets are both intellectual and physical; its balance sheet both intellectual and financial; its language both ideas and management; its returns on investment both ideas and assets. Since the 1980s, entrepreneurship education has been on the increase, to the extent that the value of a university no longer lies on its intrinsic value alone, but also on the value of its physical assets.<sup>1</sup>

While there is a considerable research into entrepreneurship education in higher educational institutions in the USA, Europe, and even Asia, there appears to be very little study about entrepreneurship education in Africa, particularly in the sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria. In Nigerian context, the overall unemployment is currently 23.9 per cent and 38 per cent among the youths (15-35 years) who account for close to 60 per cent of Nigeria's population (164.4 million, 2011, National Bureau of Statistics). In the fast moving environments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what role could entrepreneurial education play then in reducing employment rate in the country?

The purpose of this paper is to assess how a private university in Nigeria, Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD), has worked in partnership with national and international organisations to work out a substantial shift in higher education character in order to become a career-focused university.

This assessment is based on four facilitators of entrepreneurship, namely, incentive structures, supporting infrastructure, management style, and corporate culture. The first part of this paper takes an overview of the ABUAD because the history of a university defines the general ethos of that university. Thereafter, the paper goes on to look at the four facilitators of ABUAD entrepreneurship.

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<sup>1</sup> Gibb, A.A. (1996) "Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management: Can We Afford to Neglect Them in The Twenty-First Century Business School?" *British Journal of Management* 7(4): pp. 309-321.

The paper submits that for a university to become more innovative and achieve greater entrepreneurial culture, the economic and business rationale, which forms part of the internal organisational logic of the entrepreneurial university, will have to be shared by all parts of the institution. This paper is expected to offer a blueprint for policy makers, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders charged with developing and implementing entrepreneurship promotion efforts in Nigerian universities.

## 2. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

In order to put in perspectives key concepts, namely, entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship education, this article will define each of the three terms in this section.

### 2.1 Entrepreneur

According to Hoselitz, the earlier usage of the word ‘entrepreneur’ goes back to the middle ages, when it simply meant someone who was active and gets things done such as “the erection of a building, the furnishing of supplies for the army, or similar tasks.”<sup>2</sup> By Cantillon’s time, it had become an economic matter of investigation by economic theorists who saw the entrepreneur chiefly a risk-bearer who faced the uncertainties of production in anticipation of demand. The entrepreneur was thus, in the position which Cantillon had posited, the person who bore the risks of any enterprise, not merely in the field of public construction, but also in farming or manufacturing, and was used to mean a large scale contractor, particularly a contractor to the state.<sup>3</sup> An economist, Say, on the other hand, stipulated the necessary qualification for the entrepreneur. And, unlike Cantillon’s conception that embraced those who owned capital and those who did not, Say’s stipulation regarded entrepreneur as planner of production, though stressing that the entrepreneur is “fundamentally defined by his confrontation with uncertainty.”<sup>4</sup> Say’s conception envisages entrepreneurial activity as an economic function and not as a social role performed by people, thereby distinguishing the contribution to production made by personal services of businessmen as distinct from services of nonhuman agents of production owned or controlled by them.

In a separate move, three contemporary economists, Knight, Schumpeter, and Kirzner opened new vistas in the development of entrepreneurial theory. Although, on the whole, their definitions differ from each other – in that they assimilate the notion of entrepreneurship to exchanges, risk, innovation, and business opportunities – they all complement one another. According to them, entrepreneur is a “someone who is alert to profitable opportunities for exchange. He or she is able to identify suppliers and customers and act as an intermediary. Thus, the entrepreneur tries to discover profit opportunities and helps restore equilibrium on the market by acting on these opportunities (entrepreneurial alertness). These definitions highlight the relationship between entrepreneurship and growth, where the entrepreneur is the main mechanism.”<sup>5</sup> Although, the problem of defining the word entrepreneur has remained unsolved amongst the economic theorists,<sup>6</sup> for the purposes of this article, we describe an entrepreneur as a person who demonstrates creativity, innovation, risk taking as well as planning to achieve intended goals. In short, an entrepreneur is someone who perceives an opportunity and creates an organization to pursue it by bringing production and service ideas into practice.

### 2.2 Entrepreneurship

The field of entrepreneurship, unlike the concept of entrepreneur, developed very recently following perhaps the work of the Austrian born economist Joseph Schumpeter in 1934, still regarded today as the guiding spirit of entrepreneurship education. Schumpeter had conceived of the entrepreneurial venture as “the fundamental engine that sets and keeps the capitalist engine in motion”<sup>7</sup> by creating new goods, inventing new methods of production, devising new business models, and opening new markets. The core of Schumpeter’s definition of entrepreneurship is innovation which can manifest in different ways, including the following five forms:

- A new good or a new quality of a good;
- A new method of production not previously tested, that does not need to be founded upon scientific discovery;
- Opening of a new market, that is, a market that a firm has not previously entered, whether or not this market has existed before;
- A new source of supply of raw materials, irrespective of whether this source already exists or has to be created first; and
- The carrying out of new organization.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Hoselitz, B. (1960) “The Early History of Entrepreneurial Theory.” In Bert Hoselitz et al (eds.) *Theories of Economic Growth* (Glencoe Ill.: The Free Press), p. 235

<sup>3</sup> Cantillon, R. (2010) *Essay on Economic Theory* trans. Chantal Saucier (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute)

<sup>4</sup> Hollander, S. (2005) *Jean-Baptiste Say and the Classical Canon in Economics: The British Connection in French Classicism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge), p. 21

<sup>5</sup> Knight, F.H. (1921) *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit* (New York: Houghton Mifflin); Schumpeter, J.A. (1934) *The Theory Of Economic Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press); Kirzner, I.M. (1973) *Competition and Entrepreneurship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

<sup>6</sup> Bruyat, C. A. and P. A. Julien (2001) “Defining the Field of Research in Entrepreneurship,” *Journal of Business Venturing*, 16(2): p. 166.

<sup>7</sup> Schumpeter, J. A. (1942) *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper Brothers), pp. 82-83.

<sup>8</sup> Carsrud, A. L. & Brannback, M. E. (2007) *Entrepreneurship* (London: Greenwood Press), p. 7.

Thus, entrepreneurship means the processes of starting and continuing to expand new businesses. However, entrepreneurship encompasses a variety of disciplines and professions, including economics, geography, history, law, management, psychology, and sociology, and political science. In this respect, it may not have come as a startling surprise when Hindle proclaimed that: “There is no single, universally correct disciplinary location for entrepreneurship education. Within the university, entrepreneurship belongs wherever you want to put it so long as the key condition of imaginative transcendence of the immediately vocational is met.”<sup>9</sup>

However, a common theme amongst the economist theorists has been that entrepreneurship is an “art” that will always defy any attempts to categorise it.<sup>10</sup> For example, while Audretsch is of the view that the determinants of entrepreneurship are shaped by a number of forces and factors, including legal, institutional and social factors,<sup>11</sup> Gartner takes a behavioral approach rendering entrepreneurship as “a role that individuals undertake to create organizations.”<sup>12</sup>

For the purposes of this article, entrepreneurship may be described the process of turning new ideas into action such as starting and expanding new business opportunities. The main idea underlying this description is that when, therefore, a person manages to apply a new idea or invention to satisfy markets successfully, the person is involved in entrepreneurship.

### 2.3 Entrepreneurship Education

According to *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, ‘education’ has the following meaning, amongst others: “The process of nourishing or rearing ... [or] the whole course of scholastic instruction which a person has received ... Hence, culture or development of powers, formation of character.”<sup>13</sup> This means that education is meant to involve the “experiences that influence the way people perceive themselves in relation to their social, cultural, and physical environments; a complex and purposeful process for expediting learning.”<sup>14</sup>

Entrepreneurship education, on the other hand, is defined as “the whole set of education and training activities - within the educational system ... that try to develop ... some of the elements that affect that intention, such as entrepreneurial knowledge, desirability of the entrepreneurial activity, or its feasibility.”<sup>15</sup> This definition involves the transmission of knowledge and skills to encourage entrepreneurial activities.

Based on this definition, there is a distinction between general education and entrepreneurship education; the latter is, unlike the former, concerned with knowledge, ability and willingness of an individual to turn ideas into action, exploring novel opportunities to be able to start an own business. In other words, entrepreneurship education is geared towards the promotion of entrepreneurship and stimulating entrepreneurial skills for an enterprising career in starting and leading a business and achieving self-employment.

Aff & Geissler identify a four-level model of entrepreneurship education:

- **Transmission of knowledge and skills**  
The objective here is to transmit important knowledge and skills to start a company or business, and to promote professional autonomy.
- **Promotion of economic education**  
Entrepreneurship education is meant to embed itself into the social/economic framework which can take very different economic and democratic/political forms.
- **Promotion of civil society**  
Entrepreneurship education is meant to produce innovative individuals who intervene in society on their own initiative, proposing business ideas and establishing business outfits that can help ease the social and ecological problems in the society.
- **Promotion an “entrepreneurial spirit**

<sup>9</sup> Hindle, K. (2007) “Teaching Entrepreneurship at University: From the Wrong Building to the Right Philosophy.” In Alain Fayolle (ed.) *Handbook of Research in Entrepreneurship Education* Vol. 1 (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar), p. 113. See also, Hart, D.M. (2003) *The Emergence of Entrepreneurship Policy: Governance, Start-Ups, and Growth in the U.S. Knowledge Economy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press), p. 5 (“A number of disciplines, each with its own distinctive history, style, and language, have now converged on it, and their interaction promises to add momentum to all.”)

<sup>10</sup> Thore, S. & Ronstadt, R. (2005) “The Growth of Commercialization – Facilitating Organizations and Practices: A Schumpeterian Perspective.” In Uwe C., Elias D., & Robert F.L., (eds.) *Entrepreneurship, the New Economy and Public Policy: Schumpeterian Perspectives* (New York: Springer), p. 132

<sup>11</sup> Audretsch, D. B. (2007) “Entrepreneurship Capital and Economic Growth,” *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 23(1): pp. 63–78

<sup>12</sup> Gartner, W. B. (1988): “Who is an entrepreneur? Is the wrong question,” *American Journal of Small Business*, 12(4): p. 28. For a response to Gartner’s critique of entrepreneurship definitions, see Carland, J.W.; Hoy, F.; Carland, J.C. (1988) “Who is an Entrepreneur?” Is a Question Worth Asking,” *American Journal of Small Business*, 12(4): pp. 33-39.

<sup>13</sup> Little, William (1933) *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 584-585.

<sup>14</sup> Modeste, N. N., & Tamayose, T. S. (2004) *Dictionary of Public Health and Education: Terms and Concepts* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass), p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> Weber, R. (2012) *Evaluating Entrepreneurship Education* (Munich, Germany: Gabler Verlag), p. 14.

Entrepreneurship education is meant to emphasise the importance of promoting attitudes such as personal responsibility, motivation, a spirit of innovation, curiosity, taking responsibility for society.<sup>16</sup>

The four-level model of entrepreneurship education relates to the direct outcomes and impact of entrepreneurship education in terms of promoting economic efficiency, firm creation and job creation, well-being and poverty reduction, entrepreneurial attitudes, and growth. Thus, compared to general education, entrepreneurship education requires the development of missions and functions by the university with respect to teaching and research as well as the development of entrepreneurial activities where new ventures and other innovative activities can develop within that University.

With the concepts of entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship education defined, the next section now looks at the four facilitators of Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti entrepreneurship, namely, incentive structures, supporting infrastructure, management style, and corporate culture. In doing so, the section starts with an overview of the University itself.

### 3. FACILITATORS OF ABUAD ENTREPRENEURSHIP – A DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 A Synopsis of ABUAD

ABUAD is a career-focused not-for-profit private university founded being sustained by funds solely from Aare Afe Babalola (SAN), who is an eponymy and benefactor of the institution. ABUAD is built on a corporate culture with stable environment of funding and regulation; this means more than just educating students about entrepreneurship and enterprise but rather for entrepreneurship. Established in 2010 on 130 hectares land located at an altitude of over 1500 ft. above sea level in a sleepy capital city of Ado Ekiti, Western Nigeria, ABUAD immediately stood out and matched the clout of first generation universities in Nigeria such as Ibadan and Ife established in the late forties and early sixties, in magnificent college buildings, student hostels, staff quarters and well equipped modern teaching facilities, including e-learning platform and electronic boards.

Although barely able to muster 240 students into its three pioneering colleges, namely the College of Law, College of Social and Management Sciences and College of Sciences at inception, ABUAD decisively claimed and started to develop a distinctive corporate character, one that would later attract students and staff, and then mark the institution out for efficiency of management and governance. The efficiency of management, it should be noted, relates to the speed and unanimity of decision-making. In ABUAD context, this is evident by the fact that all the physical facilities needed for the take-off of the university were in place within eight months after construction work began at the university permanent site. In fact ABUAD, vis-à-vis other private universities, as well as older and more traditional universities, is reputed to be the first university in Nigeria to receive a certificate of operation when the permanent site had been fully developed—a feat not yet equalled by any public or private institution in the country.

In making its educational services relevant for the global age, ABUAD's academic programmes are delivered using blended learning approaches that involve lectures, tutorials and the use of online learning. There are also project-based teachings, i.e., concrete simulated scenarios which are based on collaborative and individual learning, resonating to teaching teams. The teaching staff are not only strongly multidisciplinary but consist of a large proportion of entrepreneurs previously or concurrently to their teaching. The community engagement programme involves training and entrepreneurial activities that underpin the importance of community development and community cohesion. Studies have shown that entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial tendency and behaviour.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, such engagement programme that stimulates entrepreneurial skills and knowledge will make the students self-employed in different kinds of work and in different conditions of economic well-being and social standing, thereby earning a living by working on their own.

The creative and entrepreneurial culture of ABUAD is reflected in its choice governance. The University places a greater emphasis on academic research, cost-efficiency and preparing students for the job market. The efficiency of the term governance in any organisation suggests having a small governing body to make decisions faster and with less dissent. Considering this point of view, governance in ABUAD was (and is) determined by a Board of Trustees made up of the President Emeritus and Founder of the institution, Aare Afe Babalola, SAN, CON, as the chairman and with ten eminent professors, educationists and industrialists spread across Nigeria. The trustees' role is to turn the University into engines of economic development and improve its position as centre of scholarship. The trustees, together had pioneered, in the first instance, the setting up the institution as a world-class tertiary centre of excellence for educating and training students for the workplace rather than for job-hunting.

Thus the University Board of Trustees formulates strategies, sets objectives for the future and allocates responsibilities and makes campus-wide budget decisions according to a rational calculation between costs and benefits.

<sup>16</sup> Aff, J. & Geissler, G. (2014) "Entrepreneurship Education: A Gramscian Approach." In S. Weber et al., (eds.), *Becoming an Entrepreneur* (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers), 17–33.

<sup>17</sup> Kolvereid, L., & Moen, Ø. (1997) "Entrepreneurship among Business Graduates: Does a Major in Entrepreneurship Make a Difference?" *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 21(4): pp.154–160; Lüthje, C., & Franke, N. (2002) "Fostering Entrepreneurship through University Education and Training: Lessons from Massachusetts Institute of Technology," *EURAM (European Academy of Management) Stockholm, 2nd Annual Conference, Stockholm, Sweden, May 9 – 11*.

However, ABUAD is adequately equipped to facilitate student start-ups. At inception, the University's mission vigorously asserted a result-oriented institution aimed at producing highly skilled, self-reliant and socially relevant graduates – an idea that became an embracing culture of the institution. The aim is that by including enterprise and entrepreneurship within the University curriculum, the number of graduate enterprises will increase, and given the intellectual capital of graduates, the quality of their ventures should be correspondingly high. Research shows that investment in the development of entrepreneurship education within the higher education sector is most likely to deliver long-term returns.<sup>18</sup> Besides, "it is only when ideas are commercialised that jobs and wealth are created."<sup>19</sup>

In this respect, vigorous efforts was put into strengthening both the academic and administrative core of the university at the top by employing quality personnel, and then offering sufficient staff development programmes to maximise staff input and retention; income from medium and large-size businesses was vigorously pursued through the establishment of ABUAD Bakery, ABUAD Printing Press, ABUAD Water Factory, ABUAD Laundry, the state-of-the-art cafeterias, ABUAD Farm and Fisheries, and ABUAD Guest House.

It can also be said that there is a positive relationship between student participation in entrepreneurship-specific education and high intensity of entrepreneurial mind-set. Indeed, studies have shown that the acquisition of work-related generic skills is essential for creating a more "flexible" and multi-skilled work force.<sup>20</sup> This means that entrepreneurship education influences students' entrepreneurial tendency and behaviour. Thus, University currently runs community engagement programme involves training and entrepreneurial activities that underpin the importance of community development and community cohesion. by engaging our students in entrepreneurial activities on campus, this will not only stimulate entrepreneurial skills and knowledge in them, but will also make the students self-employed in different kinds of work and in different conditions of economic well-being and social standing when they graduate, thereby earning a living by working on their own.

There is a high degree of competition among the university five colleges with respect to generating revenue through grants-contracts made by private sector organisations, and through donations obtained through fund-raising efforts. ABUAD Integrated Resources Centre under the College of Social and Management Sciences, for example, is deeply involved in raising and spending its own income. Also the Centre of Excellence in Cyber security Science and Research under the College of Sciences employs a dynamic and flexible approach to external activities and third-party relationships. In short, all Colleges actively engage in as much profit-making activity as they can identify, through the entrepreneurial development or sale of research, through distance education, and through the licensing of the university's good name.

Some workshops are self-managed by students, teaching staff being there only to guide and to answer questions from students. In October 2013, the Centre hosted a cyber-security workshop the proceedings of which attracted quite a number of top Nigerian government officials, the security agencies including the Army, the Police, and Road Safety Corps among others, to the launching of the formal commencement of activities at the Centre on December 5, 2013.

External co-operation is an intrinsic feature of a university that is entrepreneurial. In this respect, ABUAD recognised early enough that entrepreneurial ideas had to be commercially viable, and hence it decided early to co-operate externally with the governments (Federal and state) as well as other organisations. For example, the outreach capacity of ABUAD units, both in mainstream academic and specialist fields, became a highly visible component that attracted considerable attention from the Federal Government of Nigeria who later declared its interest in entering into partnership with the ABUAD in the area of agriculture and food security, and from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) for collaboration on mechanised farming. On the international scene, ABUAD has also entered (and is proposing to enter) into a memorandum of understanding with overseas universities and organisations in Europe, North America and Africa, as well supra-national organisations such UNESCO and World Bank for collaboration in the areas of training, research, and student and staff exchanges.

In January 2014, at the invitation of the University of Strathclyde, ABUAD had a meeting with University of Strathclyde Law School in Glasgow, for possible academic collaboration in areas of Environmental, Energy and Climate Change Law, Crime and Security, Human Rights Law, IT and Cybersecurity. A formal MOU is expected to be signed by both institutions after the return visit of the University of Strathclyde in the Summer this year.

On Tuesday 4th March 2014 UNESCO and ABUAD commenced the discussion on the establishment of UNESCO Category II Centre and UNESCO Chair in Entrepreneurship & Agriculture for Eradication of Poverty on the University campus. This was sequel to UNESCO's invitation to ABUAD for collaboration on educational programmes, particularly on the UNESCO Flagship Programme 2 for Africa: "Strengthening education systems for sustainable development in Africa: improving equity, quality and relevance."

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<sup>18</sup> Hegarty, C., & Jones, C. (2008) "Graduate Entrepreneurship: More than Child's Play," *Education and Training* 50(7): pp. 626–637; Galloway, L., & Brown, W. (2002) "Entrepreneurship Education at University: A Driver in the Creation of High Growth Firms?" *Education and Training* 44(8/9); pp. 398–405.

<sup>19</sup> DTI (2000/2001) *Strategic Framework* (London: HMSO).

<sup>20</sup> Claire, J., Duncan, A. & Niamh, C. (2014) "Innovation and Skills: Implications for the Agri-Food Sector," *Education + Training*, 56(4): pp. 271 – 286.

Ambition is a necessary antecedent for the achievement of competitive success. For a corporate body, competitive success could be achieved through sustained efforts, consistent towards the adoption and implementation of competitive strategies capable of leading the organisation to achieve a better competitive position on the relevant task. In the ABUAD context, there is ongoing exploratory talk with UNESCO for the establishment of an Institute called, “High-Powered Institute for Structural and Infrastructural Development in Educational Policy in Africa” as a UNESCO ‘Category I Institute’ on the University campus at Ado-Ekiti. The Institute is expected to offer critical understanding of education in an African context, with specific focus on the relevance of culture for quality education and quality life in Nigeria as well as in geopolitical areas of Africa. The Institute is also expected to valorise the African people’s considerable educational philosophies and practices and overcome the neo-colonial cultural and educational hegemony, thereby providing theoretical, empirical and policy recommendations for the benefits of educationists, researchers and policy-makers in Africa and beyond. We strongly believe that the Institute will serve as place of excellence and expertise in the area of specialisation to African states and will contribute to UNESCO’s programmes, objectives and strategies.

It may be argued that strong dependence on entrepreneurial activities and too strong an influence on economic interests by a university could undermine traditional academic values—scholarship, truth and freedom. While such notion have been, at least since the 1980s, effectively challenged in light of the potential benefits of enterprise within the modern economy,<sup>21</sup> universities now face competition for revenue, for students’ enrolment, for students’ employability, and so on and so forth.

The provision of higher education, unlike running a company, is labour intensive and, hence, even unit costs are rising for public universities that depend on public funding—how much more for private universities that depend largely on tuition fees for their incomes. To thrive, universities need financial support, not least, for fee discounts for undergraduates, especially from low-income families. Hence there has to be a trade-off between scholarship and revenue for any university that wants to stay afloat of the current stormy academic revolution. Even so, it must be borne in mind that entrepreneurial universities are not typical firms in the sense of distributing their profits to shareholders, or to any stakeholders. Instead they are, presumably, revenue maximisers, and not profit maximisers.

To that extent, ABUAD’s history of being entrepreneurial means, therefore, that the university is geared towards focusing on the learning experiences and the development of competences, skills, aptitudes and values. Indeed, ABUAD offers flexible hiring policies that relatively provide income insurance to the academic personnel so that they can be more willing to specialise. The University also provides undergraduate courses in soft managerial skills, teamwork skills and entrepreneurial skills such as Introduction to Entrepreneurship (GST 116), Introduction to Entrepreneurial Skill (GST 212) and Practical Entrepreneurship Skills (GST 301) to help student inventors get their ideas into the marketplace.

The whole idea ABUAD entrepreneurship educational programmes is to educate students as responsible entrepreneurs and business professionals, to enhance their career prospects and employability, enable them to create their own employment as self-employed persons, and promote change in civil society. Nevertheless, there are four facilitators of entrepreneurial activities that underpin the entrepreneurial culture of ABUAD. These facilitators, namely, incentive structures, supporting infrastructure, management style, and corporate culture, are, therefore, expounded below.

### 3.2 Incentive Structures

ABUAD has a variety of incentive structures to promote a multidisciplinary approach to research and learning, as well as community-based participatory research (CBPR). This is evidenced by the performance of the university’s high-profile multidisciplinary institutes that are helping to break down traditional academic silos and hence create incentives for new areas of research, seed new courses of study and multi-disciplinary degree programmes. The university’s Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGEEES Institute), domiciled in the College of Law has, since 2012, focused on sustainable development programmes that encourage respect and concern for the use of natural resources in a sustainable manner for the protection of the environment. Similarly, the university Centre of Excellence in Cybersecurity, Science and Research is manned by eminent researchers who are conducting research in Cybersecurity and working to develop solutions to everyday incidents of small and large scale cybercrime based on new understanding and technologies, such as developing many key security algorithms for encrypting confidential data exchange and online transactions at internationally inter-operable cryptography standards.

To underline the cross-disciplinary expertise of the University workforce and its departure from the traditional, discipline-driven research, the College of Law currently pursues the ICT and Cybersecurity studies in two different areas of research. The first area covers teaching, research and analysis of national policies, laws and regulations, as well as regional and international regulatory regimes governing the provision of telecoms (or electronic communications) equipment, network infrastructure, computing devices and services (e.g. the carriage of voice and data traffic). The second area covers teaching and analysis of issues having to do with themes such as information transmitted and/or stored in the cyber environment, intellectual property (which includes copyright, patents designs and trade marks), electronic contracts and torts, criminal law (crime in cyberspace) and data protection law, apart from legal dimension of the ICT and Cybersecurity studies.

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<sup>21</sup> Gibb, A.A. (1993) “The Enterprise Culture and Education: Understanding Enterprise Education and its Links with Small Business, Entrepreneurship and Wider Entrepreneurial Goals,” *International Small Business Journal*, 11(3): pp. 11-34.

### 3.3 Supporting Infrastructure

To the extent that ABUAD entrepreneurial culture seeks to become incubator that provides support for the creation and spin-off of new businesses, and seeks to aid its academics in the commercialization of their research ABUAD's physical and immediate work environment is a delight for the staff. The University boasts large bits of kit (science labs, engineering workshops, computer training centres, agricultural centres). In particular, ABUAD College of Law, domiciled in a magnificent building within a serene environment, has in place air-conditioned lecture theatres and classrooms for automated research and interactive teaching and learning, with a wide range of A/V (audio/visual) equipment that ranges from TVs and VCR (Video Cassette Recorders) to Data projectors for PowerPoint presentations and networked computer units for access to scholarly databases. The College also has a state of the art and well-equipped library of both electronic and print national and international resources. The College is composed of leading lawyers and academics with professional and intellectual influence, as well as a staff/students ratio of 1/16.

ABUAD institutional structure and research infrastructure have helped nurture successful ideas and creativity within the University, ensuring that students get the fullest possible value from their education. For example, building on a growing pool of academic research, the University sustainability in agriculture already presents an industrial-scale production of animal feeds, moringa products (e.g., moringa capsules, powder and oil) from moringa leaves and seeds cultivated from the university farms; industry-based raising of chickens, turkeys, guinea fowl, quail and other poultry for meat; and, industry-based aquaculture production and processing of fishery products. The university also has a humane chicken-processing unit to strengthen local community food system. The university has also engaged in crop diversification of, e.g., teak, gmelina, mango, vegetable, soya beans, maize, mango, moringa, for higher growth rate in agricultural sector based on recent advances in the science of ecology, in addition to promoting post-harvest management of these crops. Indeed, the University has won several national and international awards, including "Socrates Award for the Best Enterprise in Africa" presented by the European Business Assembly, in Oxford, in, 2012 at Pall Mall, London, United Kingdom.

### 3.4 Management Style

In keeping with its entrepreneurial culture, ABUAD operates a business inspired decentralised management practices covering research and teaching processes, monitoring (performance measurement), targets and use of incentives (recruitment, retention, and promotion). The University decision-making system, of course, allows participation of the staff into its decision making process, incorporating integration system to manage interdependent activities, measuring and distributing workload, and maintaining schedule. The ABUAD's less bureaucratic management style and good practice with respect to recruitment, retention and promotion have helped improved its rankings. The overall quality of education provided by ABUAD has been high by world standards, and there have been no scandals involving the University. In fact, the University, when it was only three half years old, was rated second (2nd) best private university in Nigeria and number thirteen (13th) in the Index of 56 and 105 private and public universities in Nigeria respectively by the Global University Webometric. The University recently secured 100 per cent accreditation in all the programmes presented to National Universities Commission and other regulatory professional bodies, for accreditation in 2013.

The former Director-General of the Council for Legal Education, Dr Tahir Mamman, even urged Nigerian university law colleges/faculties due for accreditation of their law programme to first visit Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) College of Law, apparently, as a pre-condition for getting a date for an accreditation visitation by the Council to their institutions. This is not just rhetoric. As a response to the Council's recommendation the Faculties of Law at Adeleke University and Benson Idahosa University recently visited the College and both referred to the directives of the Council requesting them to first pay a visit to ABUAD College of Law before they could secure a law programme accreditation visitation. ABUAD College of Law has created high standards of learning, equity of opportunity, tremendous achievement and promises to help this recognition by the Director-General become reality.

### 3.5 Corporate Culture

In transform its entrepreneurial structures to better respond and adapt to the external environment, ABUAD offers education in career training under the purview of Career Services Unit. The University course in career training runs through academic sessions beginning from the first year in the university and end at senior year. The course entails getting students to decide what job they want — and teaching them how to thoroughly research the industries and jobs that utilize their talents, get internships and conduct a job search for a full-time position. The Career Services Unit, on the other hand, prepares students for life post-graduation by arranging series of one-on-one informational interviews with contacts generated by the Unit. In these interviews students learn if the jobs they are pursuing are right for them, and learn how to make contacts to help them eventually land a good job after graduation.

Knowledge and innovation are crucial key drivers for the academic firm ABUAD has a well-developed corporate ethos that values straight talk and rewards integrity. Focuses on encouraging, supporting, and advancing knowledge production (research, research and experimental development, R&D) and knowledge application (innovation) The University, through conferences, workshop and other academic activities, encourages academic personnel to speak their minds and take action. In February 2014 the University organised a Certificate Programme in Social Justice sponsored by the Nigerian Ministry of Police Affairs, from February 10-14, 2014. The Programme articulated, explained, and laid out the grounds for a particular conception of social justice that can address social injustice, poverty and inequality, and considers the extent to which it influences the review of laws that will better enable Nigerians exercise their human right to basic necessities of life; addresses institutional and individual conflicts over resources, governance and ethnic rivalries; and ushers in a more effective policing in our community and work place.

The University Handbook of Operation protects intellectual freedom in colleges and universities, including in particular the freedom to express socially or politically unpopular views. This Handbook contains performance-related rewards (additional pay, promotion, recognition, and privileges) to augment the efficiency of academic personnel's work and strengthen incentives to produce high-quality research and teaching in the university. Consequently, the University has attracted some of the most motivated and gifted individuals in Nigeria and overseas. "Academic freedom," as Jaspers explains, "is a privilege which entails the obligation to teach truth, in defiance of anyone outside or inside the university who wishes to curtail it."<sup>22</sup> To the extent of promoting academic freedom on the campus, ABUAD is composed of a community of scholars and highly skilled workforce for a globally competitive economy, including leading academics and policy-oriented researchers, as well as individuals with professional and intellectual influence, from a wide array of disciplines, including law, computer engineering, information technology, medicine, political science, psychology, statistics, economics, chemistry, forensics, medicine, science and geography.

True enough, the University Handbook also contains specific procedures for the evaluation of University Colleges to enhance and improve their academic programmes, as well as publicising the university's activities to assure the quality of international validity. These procedures have both internal and external dimensions to assure the quality of the university academic degrees, as well as its professional qualifications. The internal dimension is a periodic self-evaluation process that takes account of the framework of current developments in higher education across the world. The external dimension involves the participation of independent external evaluation bodies to foster, develop and solidify the university evaluation in the global education market, comparative to other higher institutions within Nigeria and overseas.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The paper has looked at the entrepreneurial culture of Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria, based on four facilitators of entrepreneurship, namely, incentive structures, supporting infrastructure, management style, and corporate culture. It has shown that logic and time horizon of academic and market-oriented activities are not mutually exclusive. As the case study on ABUAD has shown, entrepreneurial universities operating in complex environments require complex differentiated solutions such as: stable environment of funding and regulation for long-term strategic interdisciplinary connections to thrive; the autonomy to operate effectively and form link between university knowledge and community knowledge; incentive schemes to encourage academics to take risk (without risking their jobs or reputation) and hence initiate new practices, strive for excellence by promoting culture of free discussion and inter-disciplinarity in research and teaching.

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<sup>22</sup> Jaspers, K. (1960) *The Idea of the University* 1<sup>st</sup> Ed., trans. H. A. T. Reiche & H. F. Vanderschmidt (Boston: Beacon Press), p. 1.



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