

# School Curriculum Innovation: Incorporating Entrepreneurial Subjects for Social Security in Secondary Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

*This paper investigated the extent of stakeholders' preparation for and acceptability of the entrepreneurial education in our school system as a step towards school leavers' skill acquisition, productivity, self-reliance and self-sufficiency. A 13-item questionnaire were responded to by 250 students and a 16-item questionnaire by 100 teachers randomly sampled from 10 schools where the programme exists in Lagos State. The analysis of collected data was done using the Simple Percentage and Correlation Co-efficient to test the hypotheses. The result of the data analysis showed that although the entrepreneurial subjects are good alternatives to the reduction of poverty and scarcity of jobs for our youths, however, only a fragment of the schools sampled were adequately prepared for the inherent challenges. It is, therefore, suggested that secondary schools in Lagos State be adequately equipped to meet up with the vision of entrepreneurial skills which in turn will better enhance employment and social security.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Education, Social Security, Productivity, Self-Reliance, Self Sufficiency

## Introduction

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1977) has since been variously reviewed in 1981, 1988, 1998, 2004, 2007, 2013 and 2017 to meet up with the series of challenges in the Nigerian society. Despite all these reviews and with the increased number of school leavers compared to the dawn of independence, it appears that the country is facing different forms of social problems. This is due to the fact that after the successful completion of formal education even at university level, the recipient or graduate is not sure of getting a job. With number of universities in the country, the population of graduates joining the labour market every year far surpasses the limited employment opportunities available at government agencies as well as at corporate organizations and industries. Besides, the global economic crisis which has crippled businesses made it more difficult for people to find employment

In fact, the skyrocketing rate of unemployment in Nigeria is disturbing. In 1992, the World Bank puts the Nigerian unemployment rate at 28%. In April 2009 during the discussion of a panel of experts on youth employment in Washington, the Director of the National Planning Commission of Nigeria put the rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria at between 60 to 70 percent (World Bank, 2009). Omotoso (2009) lamented that only 10 percent of graduates can be absorbed in the Nigerian Labour Market. This is disastrous. There is no gainsaying the fact that high rate of unemployment have contribute in a large extent to the increase wave of crime and corruption which have graduated in the country from socio-political disturbances and armed

robbery attacks, to kidnapping, ritual killing and insurgency. It appears that these unemployed youths are taking it back onto the society that has failed to give them a proper sense of direction through sound and functional education.

Afonja, Zosu, Segbenu & Akudo (2012) maintained that the yardstick for any sustainable rational development is the need for entrepreneurship education. As a result of the economic, political and social consequence of the global economic meltdown, nations have decided to look inward into domestic economics that will be relatively untutored from the financial and economic strangulations that may occur. However, political instability and inconsistencies in the socio-economic policies of successive governments led to the emergence of high rate of unemployment in the country

Nwagwu (2007), therefore, opined that the failure of tertiary education to inculcate entrepreneurial skills in students has led to wastage in terms of both human and natural resources. This is because the youth and graduates of our higher institutions are not equipped with the skills to exploit the natural resources that abound in Nigeria. However, Ayodele (2006) identified inadequate capital as one of the principal factors hindering entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Other problems identified by Ayodele include the irrelevant education, which is bookish, theoretic and white-collar job oriented.

Oduwaiye (2005) therefore, ascribed the need for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria tertiary schools to the dwindling rate of the availability of white-collar jobs. This, compared with the massive turnout of graduates shows a negatively schewed ratio. The available jobs cannot meet the needs of the over

one hundred tertiary schools in Nigeria.

Successive governments in Nigeria however, have introduced palliative measures to curb the problems. For instance in 1976, the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced Operation Feed the Nation (OFN). In 1985, the Federal Government again introduced programmes like Mass Mobilization for Self Reliance and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and the Nigerian Directorate of Employment (NDE) to address the problem of graduate unemployment but succeeded minimally. In more recent time, the government introduced the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). According to Oduwaiye (2005), all these programmes and measures have so far proved to be grossly ineffective. He further claimed that in the light of this, academics and entrepreneurs welcome the development of teaching that develops entrepreneur skills in the minds of both undergraduates and students in the secondary schools.

The consequence of the production of school leavers and youths with lack of functional economic skills is unemployment. Unemployment (a social problem on its own) has the preponderance of evolving other problems like armed robbery, tuggery, ritual killing, kidnapping, cultism, assassination, human trafficking, drug peddling and trafficking, insurgency, public utility vandalisation and a lot of other social vices. These lead to social insecurity, threat to individual's right to life and over straining of the nation's security apparatus.

Aladekomo (2009) maintained that sound education which equips students to challenge the status quo and proffer better alternatives is the way out of the present economic quagmire. In this regard, Omotoso (2009) reported that among the strategies being adopted by Nigeria to redress the ugly situation is the reformation of the education sector. However, mere reformation of the education sector cannot result in job creation. Therefore, Matthew (2011) opined that the curriculum of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should be more flexible and adaptive in order to curb the up-surgings in political corruption in the country. The orientation should be towards entrepreneurial education. The mainstream of the tertiary institution should be geared towards producing graduates that are relevant to their economy.

Entrepreneurial Education is still less catered for in Nigerian tertiary institutions. That explains

why the bulk of Nigerian graduates are currently seeking jobs in the organized sector. Therefore, Entrepreneurial Education needs to be well entrenched in the educational programmes in Nigeria. There should be a link between the tertiary institutions and the labour market to know the challenges of graduates after leaving the school. Obanya (2009) opined that the solution is not increased vocalization of education as is wrongly being canvassed, but a return to the basics. This means returning to real goals of education, which are the cultivation of human talent and creative/imaginative potentials through all round development

A sound foundation for successful acquisition of entrepreneurial skills could be laid right from the secondary education level. This is because one of the broad twin goals of the Nigerian secondary education, as stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) is to prepare the individual for useful living within the society. This, in essence, means to prepare the potential secondary school graduates to become productive, self-reliant and self-sufficient after secondary education. It is on this basis therefore, that this study determines the preparation for, and acceptability of the entrepreneurial education innovation in the Nigerian secondary education system

### **Statement of the Problem**

Evidence abounds on the state of unemployment and consequent inevitability of social vices in the Nigerian society. Several programmes introduced to salvage these unpalatable situations by different political administrations ranging from Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) to the present National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP) either proved abortive or had made little or no impact in the entire citizenry of the country. The fact remains that these programmes were introduced without the adequate preparation of necessary machineries. The preparation required by these machineries as suggested by Ivowi (1997) is the stimulation and enhancement of creativity in the citizenry which bring about functional living in the society.

The big questions to ask then are: Are the implementers of the Nigerian school curriculum prepared for the introduction of entrepreneur education into the school curriculum? Are they ready for the inherent challenges? and what are the societal views and interest in the innovation?' These and many more are the questions answered in the study.

In the light of the various plights that bedeviled the country, this paper seeks to explore the preferential

interest of the secondary school students upon the introduction of the entrepreneurial skills as subjects in the newly designed school curriculum, the readiness of the implementers of the innovation and its acceptability by the larger Nigerian society.

### Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following questions:

- 1 How interested are students in Entrepreneur Education?
- 2 What are the students' preferential choices on entrepreneurial subjects?
- 3 Does gender / sex play any major role in the students' entrepreneurial choice?
- 4 Is there any relationship between the students' entrepreneurial choices and their academe subjects?
- 5 How prepared are teachers for implementing the entrepreneurial education curriculum?

### Methodology

The study is a survey of students' and teachers' opinions on the acceptability of, and preparedness for the entrepreneurial education program in

secondary schools Three hundred and fifty respondents were sampled from ten schools in Education District V of Lagos State. These consisted of two hundred and fifty SS 2 students and one hundred teachers. The purposive sampling technique was adopted for selecting only the schools that have entrepreneurial subjects in their school programmes. The student and teacher respondents were selected through the incidental sampling technique where students and teachers that were available during the administration of instrument were served copies of the questionnaire.

A self-designed questionnaire and personal observations were the instruments used for collecting data. The instrument was peer validated by lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Lagos State University. The study adopted the simple percentage and the Pearson product moment correlation statistics in answering the postulated research questions.

### Results

#### Research Question 1:

How interested are students in Entrepreneur Education? The analysis is presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Analysis of students' interest in entrepreneurial subjects

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL
		Freq	%	Freq	%	
1	I feel lively when I am in the entrepreneur/trade class	177	70.8	73	29.3	250
2	Entrepreneur / trade subjects will help my focus in the future	186	74.4	64	25.6	250
3	The entrepreneurial subjects really have pronounced impact on my academic focus.	185	74.0	65	26.0	250
4	Entrepreneurial studies should be more emphasized in schools	190	76.0	60	24.0	250
5	Students should be encouraged to take more entrepreneurial subjects in order to prepare them for life	21	8.4	229	91.6	250
<b>Total</b>		<b>759</b>	<b>60.72%</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>39.28%</b>	<b>1250</b>

The analysis in table 1 gives 60.72% positive opinions of students to the various items indicating their interest in the entrepreneurial education while 39.28% were of negative opinions. The analysis therefore shows that students were interested in, hopeful and thirsty for more of entrepreneurial

subjects on the school timetable.

#### Research Question 2:

What are the students' preferential choices on entrepreneurial subjects? The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Trend of students' preferential choice of entrepreneurial skills

S/N	Skill	Frequency	Percentage
1	Catering and Craft Practice	43	17.2
2	Book Keeping	39	15.6
3	Machine Woodworking	22	8.8
4	Furniture Making	20	8.0
5	Garment Making	20	8.0
6	Painting and Decoration	14	5.6
7	Dying and Bleaching	13	5.2
8	Upholstery	12	4.8
9	Data Processing	11	4.4
10	Store keeping	10	4.0
11	Marketing	8	3.2
12	Textile Trade	7	2.8
13	Printing Craft Practice	7	2.8
14	Plumbing and pipe fitting	6	2.4
15	Fisheries	4	1.6
16	Auto Electrical work	2	0.8
17	Auto Mechanical work	2	0.8
18	Auto parts merchandising	2	0.8
19	Radio, TV and electrical work	2	0.8
20	Carpentry and Joinery	2	0.8
21	Keyboarding	2	0.8
22	Air Conditioning/Refrigerator	1	0.4
23	Photography	1	0.4
24	Auto Body repair and spray painting	-	-
25	Welding and fabrication Engineering Craft Practice	-	-
26	Electrical Installation and Maintenance work	-	-
27	Block laying, Brick Laying and Concrete work	-	-
28	Cosmetology	-	-
29	Leather Goods manufacturing and repair	-	-
30	GSM Maintenance	-	-
31	Tourism	-	-
32	Mining	-	-
33	Animal Husbandry	-	-
34	Salesmanship	-	-

From table 2, one could deduce the first ten subjects that were more preferred by the students, the fairly preferred ones and the last eleven that were not chosen at all. One major noticeable reason behind the loss of interest in items 24 – 34 could be traced to the lack of teachers in these subject areas especially in

the public schools.

**Research Question 3:**

Does gender/sex play any major role in the students' entrepreneurial choice? The result is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Students' Choice of Entrepreneurial Skills based on Gender

S/N	Skill	Male		Female		Total
		F	%	F	%	F
1	Catering and Practice	15	34.9	28	65.1	43
2	Book keeping	16	41.0	23	59.0	39
3	Machine woodworking	22	100	-	-	22
4	Furniture making	20	100	-	-	20
5	Garment making	5	25	15	75	20
6	Painting and Decoration	6	42.9	8	57.1	14
7	Dying and Bleaching	11	84.6	2	15.4	13
8	Upholstery	12	100	-	-	12
9	Data Processing	11	100	-	-	11
10	Store keeping	3	30	7	70	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>50.32%</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>40.68%</b>	<b>204</b>

The analysis in table 3 shows that 34.9% of students that opted for Catering and Craft Practice were male students while 65.1% were female students. For Book Keeping, 41% of those that opted for it were male students while female students formed 59%. In Machine and Wood Work, male students formed all the 100% that chose it likewise Furniture Making, Upholstery and Data Processing. Garment Making has 25% male students and 75% female students respectively. For painting and decoration, male student recorded 42.9% while female students recorded 57.1%. In dyeing and bleaching however, male students made up 84.6% while their female counterparts made up 15.4% that opted for it and for Store Keeping, the male students formed 305 while

the female students had 70%. From the analysis shown above, it could be deduced that in the first ten ranked subjects the male students had higher frequency (50.32%) than their female counterparts (who formed 40.68%).

Although, in subjects like Catering and Craft Practice, Garment Making, Painting and Decoration and Store Keeping, the female students had higher percentage than their male counterparts

**Research Question 4**

Is there any relationship between the students' entrepreneurial choice and their academic subjects? The result is presented in table 4 below.

Table 4: Relationship between Chosen Entrepreneurial Skills and Academic Subject

Item	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Relevance of skills to Academic Interest	185	74.0	65	26.0	250	100

Table 4 revealed that 74% of the respondents agreed that the entrepreneurial subjects they had chosen really had relevance to their academic focus while 26% indicated that the entrepreneurial skills did not have any significant semblance to their area of academic focus.

#### Research Question 5

How prepared are teachers for implementing the Entrepreneurial Education curriculum in schools? The result is presented in the table below.

Table 5: Relationship between Teachers' Qualifications and Entrepreneurial Skills Taught.

S/N	Qualification	Specialization	No of teachers		Entrepreneur subject taught
			F	%	
1	HND	Food and Nutrition	8	8	Catering and craft practice
2	B/ EDUC	Bus. Education	8	8	Accounting
3	B.SC/EDU	Computer. SC	18	18	Data processing
4	B.SC/SC	Food Tech	15	15	Catering and craft practice
5	B.SC	Insurance and Marketing	18	18	Marketing
6	B.SC/Edu.	Music & creative arts	13	13	Dying and bleaching
7	B. Sc	Industrial technology	12	12	Machine & woodwork, furniture, plumbing, and pipe fitting
8	B. Sc..Agric	Agric	8	8	Fisheries
<b>Total</b>			<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

From table 5, it could be deduced that in the areas of Entrepreneur education, areas of specialization of teachers currently handling the Entrepreneurial subjects as listed above are relevant to the areas they are handling. However, more teachers are required to meet up with the task of handling the other entrepreneurial subjects.

#### Discussion

The paper determines the extent of stakeholders' preparation for and acceptability of Entrepreneurial Education in our school system as a step towards school learners' skill acquisition, productivity, self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The analysis showed the respondents' acceptance and readiness for the innovation. This is an indication that Entrepreneurial Education is a sure hope in the reduction of poverty and security of jobs for our youths. In line with the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013) which stresses the preparation of individual for useful living, Iykepolor (2007) established that entrepreneurship is the goal of

education. This assertion is attainable, if one considers the data generated on students' interest and acceptability of entrepreneurial education. To support this, the analysis on students' interest in entrepreneurial skills (table 1) showed that students felt lively in entrepreneurial classes, they were hopeful with entrepreneurial skills they were acquiring and were still thirsty for more. This implies that the students are favorably disposed to the entrepreneurial subjects introduced to schools. Students will however, give listening ears when they are allowed to choose entrepreneurial subject(s) of their interest rather than being imposed on them.

The above finding is in line with Matthew (2011) whose opinion stressed flexibility in the adaptation of curriculum in order to curb the up-surging problems of job scarcity in the country. Hence, school administrators should allow students to choose freely on their own after proper guidance and counseling. Following the line of the findings, it was observed from table 2 that students' interest goes with the first ten ranked skill areas than the others. The last eleven areas

were not reckoned with at all. The reason for the lack of recognition accorded the last eleven areas could be traced to the fact that most of the schools lack teachers in those areas and moreover, some of them are blue collar jobs

Another seemingly interesting finding from the study is the preponderance of gender on entrepreneurial choices by students. From the analysis in table 3, it was shown that male students tend to enroll for entrepreneurial subjects more than their female counterparts. However, female students were involved more in Catering and Craft Practices. The influx of the female students into these areas could be traced to the simplicity of the entrepreneurial skills and the gender acceptability.

In Table 4, the responses of the students showed that there was a relationship between the students' entrepreneurial choices and their academic subjects. This could account for appropriate guidance and counseling before such choices were made. The analysis in table 5 however revealed that teachers, though with relevant qualifications needed to impart the knowledge were too few in terms of the number required. Obanya (2008) insisted that for Nigeria to respond to the changing needs of the world of work (not necessarily the world of direct paid employment), formal and non-formal education in the country should be geared towards inculcating in learners, the generic skills of knowledge, communication, adaptability, creativity, team spirit, literacy, information and communication technology (ICT), fluency and life-long learning. These generic skills are necessary for survival in the present ICT - driven world. Their acquisition calls for the type of general education found in entrepreneurship, that is, the education that equips the learners with the knowledge and skills to desire, seek, recognize and utilize available opportunities to do something new to create wealth for self and others and, consequently to contribute effectively to the society in this era of global economic crisis

In the same vein, Innocent-Ene (2008), reporting the Department for International Development (DFID, 2000) stated that privatization, a key aspect of the government's reform programme should project greater efficiency into the productive sectors and release fund for higher priority programmes to combat poverty. He added that the foundation that can sustain all other reforms, be it in politics or economy, is the integration of entrepreneurial training into the school curriculum. The idea of establishing the National Directorate of

Employment (NDE) originated from the unbearable unemployment situation. A large sum of money has been spent by government to stimulate self-reliance in the form of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. This is to tackle graduate unemployment and reduce the tendencies of graduates opting for white collar jobs

Lewy (1991) observed that in the view of the teething problems of unemployment, there is the need for re-assessment of the curriculum of the school system. To him, the schools are producing mass graduates that companies are not willing to engage. Lewy (1991) further postulated that the problem is that most students in Nigeria enter the university to study courses they had no aptitude for or courses suggested to them after being frustrated as a result of taking Joint Admission Matriculation Examination (JAMB) examinations several times.

In the light of the above, several perspectives were given on the economic importance of entrepreneurial education. Therefore, when analyzing the role of entrepreneurship in economic development, Schumpeter (1974) attributed innovation to the entrepreneur. He argued that to study entrepreneur is to study the central figure in modern economic history.

As mentioned earlier by Schumpeter (1974),

the entrepreneur is the center of an integrated model of economic development... an inventor, one who carries a combination of a new products, opens a new market, conquers a new source of materials and organizes new a industry.

Entrepreneurs are seen as the key-stone to free-market economies. They are responsible for the introduction of many innovative products into the market and hence, the collapse of markets for those products that become obsolete. Entrepreneurs help keep the markets competitive and help keep prices near costs. Entrepreneurship is a key driver of our economy and wealth and a high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneurially minded individuals, many of whom go on to create big businesses. People exposed to entrepreneurship frequently express that they have more opportunity to exercise creative freedom, higher self-esteem and an overall greater sense of control over their own lives. As a result, many experienced business people, political leaders, economists and educators believe that fostering a robust entrepreneurial culture will maximize individual and collective economic and social success on a local, national and global scale. It is

with this in mind that the national standards for entrepreneurship education were developed to prepare youths and adults to succeed in an entrepreneurial economy

The importance of entrepreneurship to any economy could not be over-emphasized. Entrepreneurship activities and the resultant financial gains are always of benefit to the country. Ivowi (1997) said that the basic philosophical issue in Nigeria education should be to emphasize the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and providing equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the nation at primary through secondary to tertiary level. He therefore summed up the essential ingredients of school education thus:

The Senior Secondary Education Curriculum was developed to further consolidate the educational gains of the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum as well as ensure the actualization of Government's Transformation Agenda and other national developmental aspirations. The prime objective of senior secondary education is to ensure that every Senior Secondary School graduate is well prepared for useful living in the society. This could be attained through the acquisition of relevant functional trade/entrepreneurship skills. Thus, the curricular focus is on value reorientation, job creation, wealth generation and poverty eradication.

The Philosophy of the new Senior Secondary School Education Curriculum (SSEC) is that on completion of the 3 years of senior secondary education, every graduate/recipient should have been well prepared for higher education as well as acquired relevant functional trade, entrepreneurship skills needed for poverty eradication, job creation and wealth generation and in the process strengthened further the foundation for ethical, moral and civic values acquired at the Basic Education level.

In alleviating problems in the society, every social institution tends to look inward. In the education institution, therefore, this study emphasizes that the introduction of entrepreneurship education into the school curriculum will help to reduce or totally curb the menace of unemployment and other evolving social problems, thereby ensuring social security in the Nigerian society.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that the inclusion of entrepreneurial subjects into the secondary school curriculum is a welcome idea to stakeholders; there is also preferential choice of the entrepreneurial skills among students. However, male students are more interested in the entrepreneurial education than their female counterparts.

Although the available teachers are well prepared for the implementation of the innovation, nevertheless, there is need for more teachers if other areas of entrepreneurial subjects will be attended to. Moreover, if entrepreneurial subjects are well entrenched in the school curriculum, the problem of job scarcity will be drastically cubed in the society.

## Recommendations

The study hereby recommends that:

- ❖ Public enlightenment on the positive impacts of entrepreneurial education should be organised in schools periodically
- ❖ Schools that are currently offering entrepreneurial education should be fully equipped for successful implementation of the programme.
- ❖ There should be a link between the schools and specialist artisans so as to continuously engage the students during and even after the completion of their education programme.
- ❖ Also, for the success of entrepreneurial education innovation, training and retraining programmes should be organised by the government for teachers at all levels in order to prepare them for the task ahead.

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