

Evaluation of the Implementation of Entrepreneurship Studies In Ebonyi State Public Secondary School Curriculum

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Abstract

This study titled “Evaluation of the Implementation of Entrepreneurship Studies in Ebonyi State Public Secondary Schools Curriculum” aimed at assessing the effect of teaching entrepreneurship subjects in public secondary schools curriculum in Ebonyi state secondary schools using Ebonyi North education zone with seventy six (76) public secondary schools. It was a descriptive survey research, using Schumpeter (1934) Creation theory as the foundation of the research. Data collated from school principals, teachers, secondary school graduates and their parents were analyzed using descriptive statistics, regression and Pearson correlation coefficient. Findings show that creativity and innovation increased among public secondary school graduates from entrepreneurship subjects taught while they were in school. Self employment and economic activities also increased especially among the rural dwellers in the area studied because of teachings received on entrepreneurship subjects in public secondary school. The study concludes that inclusion of entrepreneurship studies in public secondary school curriculum has increased entrepreneurship activities in Ebonyi state. Implication of the study is that review of entrepreneurship subjects in the curriculum and improvement in the implementation of the programme would improve both people’s quality of life and standard of living. The study recommends that there should be effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the entrepreneurship studies in the curriculum to ensure optimal advantage of the programme.

Key Words: *Entrepreneurship Studies, Creativity, Innovation, Public Secondary Schools*

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I. Background of the study

Nigeria, with its dense population of about 200 million, is the most populous African nation and the seventh largest in the world. Approximately 50% of Nigerians are urban dwellers, with the rate of urbanization being estimated at 4.3% (CIA World Factbook, 2018). One of the reasons for the high rate of rural-urban migration is the general perception of the superiority of white-collar jobs over other means of livelihood and the emphasis laid on formal education as the key to financial stability. Thus, with the teeming number of graduates of the various secondary and tertiary institutions being produced annually and the lack of a sustainable national employment scheme, the Nigeria formal sector is unable to absorb every job-seeker. The current COVID 19 pandemic has made the situation of our youths worse since the employed are even losing their jobs and there don’t appear to be a better hope of reversion.

Consequently, for some decades, Nigeria has been bedevilled with the issue of unemployment, especially among fresh graduates. This situation got worsened by bad governance, corruption, and an incomprehensive educational curriculum in institutions of learning. Currently, Nigeria is among the top countries worldwide with the highest poverty index (World Bank, 2019). This is not far from Okoye and Arimonu (2016) report that Nigeria’s poverty level has increased to about 70% and that many Nigerians now live below one dollar a day. However, economic empowerment of the citizenry is the prime objective of any nation.

In response to the situation, Nigeria through the Federal Ministry of Education introduced Entrepreneurship Studies in the curriculum of Secondary schools in the country. The introduction of Entrepreneurship studies is one of the approaches which the federal government designed and embraced to reduce mass poverty, unemployment and to increase self-reliance among youths. Emenike (2013) noted that entrepreneurship education is the education that aims at helping the students acquire saleable skills which can help them become self-employed and self-reliant, adding that for an individual to be self-reliant, he/she must acquire the right habit, attitudes and skills with which to explore his environment.

Nigeria has witnessed many educational reforms since its independence, with the Universal Basic Education launched in 1999 still in place till date. It is also known as the 9-3-4 education system. This implies 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education (9 years), 3 years of senior secondary education and 4 years of tertiary education.

However, Isyaku, K. (1999) emphasized that the 3 years in the 6 years senior secondary curriculum was designed to equip students with relevant and functional trade and entrepreneurial skills needed in poverty eradication, job creation and wealth generation. The policy aimed at equipping secondary school students well with entrepreneurial skills necessary for self-reliance after graduation. That however depends on the level of implementation of the policy. Thus, there is a need to empirically determine the level of the implementation of the programme and the effect of the programme on Public secondary school graduates in Ebonyi State.

Statement of the Problem

The introduction of Entrepreneurship studies in Public Secondary Schools curriculum in Nigeria was and remains a giant stride towards the eradication or reduction of poverty in the country. It was also aimed at increasing Entrepreneurial skills leading to self independence, self employment, increased quality of lives and increased standard of living. Twenty one years after the introduction, there is a need to evaluate its implementation to know its effect on the key objectives of the programme. The problem facing this study is therefore to empirically determine the effect of Entrepreneurship studies in public secondary schools in Ebonyi state on four major indicators of the programmes' success such as creativity, innovation, economic growth in rural areas, and employment of youths.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to evaluate the implementation of entrepreneurship studies in Ebonyi State public secondary school curriculum. Specifically, the aim at achieving the following objectives:

- i. To determine the functional effect of Entrepreneurship subjects in Ebonyi state public secondary schools
- ii. To determine the creative and innovative effect of entrepreneurship subjects in Ebonyi state public secondary schools.
- iii. To determine the effect of entrepreneurship subjects on economic growth of rural areas
- iv. To determine the effect of entrepreneurship subjects on employment of youths

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Udu, and Udu (2015) defined entrepreneurship as the process that involves the identification, assessment and exploitation of opportunity in order to introduce some new products, processes, services and to work in different markets aimed at satisfying human needs. In relation to this, they further stated that entrepreneurship is combining of resources in some ways and showing some changes in the market place.

Furthermore, Udu, Agha, Anele, Onunwor and Nome (2020) opine that entrepreneurship is an aspect of business evaluator in which a person/team starts a new company or business rather than work for a more established organization. It is the art of setting up and running an enterprise profitably and sustainably. That is why the person that sets up and runs this enterprise is the entrepreneur. An entrepreneur is therefore an insatiable person who is never satisfied with the *status quo* but is ready and able to turn new ideas and inventions into a successful goods and services through innovation.

Castling, A. (1996) revealed that professional managers are made through education and training hence vocational aspect of entrepreneurship can be enhanced by education. He further stated that entrepreneurship education can enhance the intention of students to become entrepreneurs. According to him, lack of entrepreneurial skills is the biggest factor in the success or failure of entrepreneurs. Thus, education is a very effective tool to enhance and enrich the managerial capabilities.

Entrepreneurship education is the four pillars of education: learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; and learning to be. It involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude to enable the learner apprehend life challenges in whatever form and take decisive steps to realize new trends and opportunities for meeting those challenges in all aspects of human life. It is the teaching of skills and activation of talents that students need to start their career (Belts 2000).

Entrepreneurship education will first strengthen students' positive attitudes towards entrepreneurial intentions. Secondly, the level of students' reliance on social groups will drop which affords them to take clearer decisions. Thirdly, it will assist students to develop the skills and competence to take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities. There are four basic objectives of entrepreneurship education at the senior secondary school identified as follows:

- a. To offer functional education to the youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant.

- b. To provide the youths with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
- c. To stimulate individual and economic growth of rural and less developed areas, i.e., reduce rural-urban drift.
- d. To provide small and medium business enterprises with opportunities of recruiting graduates who will be trained and tutored in skills relevant to management in the youths which will enable them persist in any business venture they embark on.
- e. To offer graduates adequate training in the acquisition of skills that will enable them meet the manpower needs of the society.
- f. To create employment opportunities for the youths.
- g. To provide youths with training and support that will enable them establish a career in small and medium sized business.

To achieve the above objectives, the Federal Ministry of Education (2009) emphasized that for the objectives of entrepreneurial education to be realized, students need to be exposed to real business situations like field visits to relevant business units and use of instructional materials such as video tapes, audio tapes, physical commodities, and drawing, among others, should be inculcated into the curriculum. Entrepreneurship education should therefore focus less on teaching students in classroom setting but more on learning by doing activities in a group setting, hence the Chinese proverb that states that “I hear and forget; I see and remember; I do and understand”.

Curriculum and its Implementation in Nigeria

FGN National Policy on Education (2004) defined curriculum as a tool in the hands of the artist (teacher) to mould his material (pupil) according to his idea (objects) in his studio (school). It is curriculum through which the general aims of a school education receives concrete expression.

Curriculum is therefore a planned sequence of instructions to ensure change in students' behaviour and experiences. Curriculum implementation is however the putting the curriculum into work for the achievement of goals for which the curriculum is designed. Supporting this, Mkpa (2005) stated that curriculum implementation is the task of translating the curriculum document into the operating curriculum by the combined efforts of the students, teachers and others concerned. Furthermore, Onyenachi (2008) defined curriculum implementation as a process of putting all that has been planned as curriculum document into practice in the classroom and other important places for knowledge and skills acquisition through the combined effort of teachers, learners, school administrators, parents, as well as interaction with physical facilities, instructional materials, psychological and social environment.

In Nigeria, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) developed the new secondary school education curriculum in line with the Universal Basic Education (UBE) goals in 2006 (NERDC 2006). It was duly approved by the National Council on Education (NCE) with the intention to meet the national and global goals. This, according to NERDC, was to bridge the gap in the content and delivery process of the extant curriculum (NERDC 2006). According to NERDC, this curriculum is aimed to ensure that every senior secondary school graduate should have been well-prepared for higher education as well as acquired relevant functional trade/entrepreneurial skills needed for poverty eradication, job creation and wealth generation and in the process, strengthen further foundations for ethical, moral and civic values acquired at the basic education level.

The above assertion is concurrent with what Orji (2004) defined as functional curriculum. He opined that appropriate and functional curriculum leads to achievement of meaningful and sustainable development. It is crucial for human capacity development, wealth creation, employment generation and value re-orientation. According to him, the products of such education are to be effective and functional citizens who are self-reliant, confident, competent and globally competitive.

NERDC structured the senior secondary education curriculum into three groups, namely:

- A group of 5 (five) compulsory core cross-cutting subjects: English Language, General Mathematics, Computer Studies, ICT, Civic Education, Trade and Entrepreneurship.
- Four distinct fields of studies (Science/Mathematics, Humanities, Technology and Business Studies, and elective subjects).
- A group of 34 Trade/Entrepreneurship subjects which include auto-body spray repairs and spray painting, auto-electrical work, auto mechanical work, auto parts merchandising, air conditioning/refrigerator, welding and fabrication, engineering craft practice, electrical installation and maintenance work, block laying, brick laying and concrete work, painting and joinery, furniture making, upholstery and catering, craft practice. Others are garment making, textile trade, dyeing and bleaching, printing craft practice, cosmetology, leather goods manufacturing and repair, keyboarding, data processing, store keeping, book keeping, GSM maintenance, photography, tourism, mining, animal husbandry, fishery, marketing and salesmanship.

Obioma (2011) noted that these trade/entrepreneurship subjects were introduced as part of the effort to enable the youth acquire concrete skill for survival, reduce poverty, create jobs and position them to compete globally. To achieve these, NERDC stipulated that all senior secondary school students are expected to offer a total of 8 to 9 examinable subjects as follows:

- 5 core compulsory cross-cutting subjects
- 3 to 4 subjects from other fields of specialization
- 1 trade/entrepreneurship subject from the list of 34 trade subjects.
- 1 elective subject outside their field of specialization.

With the curriculum in place, it becomes pertinent to answer this question: how far/well has this curriculum been implemented in our senior secondary schools? This study will attempt to answer the question with reference to public senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on the Human capital theory which emphasizes that education increases productivity and efficiency of man by increasing stock of cognitive stock of economically productive human capability, which is the product of innate abilities and investment in human beings. Human capital is here seen as the stock of habits, knowledge, social and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform tasks. This Theory is relevant to this study because the expected knowledge, skills and stock of education gained from entrepreneurship studies (subjects) taught in secondary school are expected to increase the productivity of secondary school graduates.

II. Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design. 38 of the 76 public secondary schools in Ebonyi North Education zone were studied. Data for the study were obtained from Principals and Teachers of the schools, parents of graduated secondary school students and graduated students themselves. The likert scale model was used in eliciting answered from the respondents. Inferential statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to analyse data obtained.

Analysis of evaluation of the implementation of Entrepreneurship studies in secondary school curriculum

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REGRESSION
/MISSING LISTWISE
/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS CI(95) BCOV R ANOVA COLLIN TOL CHANGE
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
/NOORIGIN
/DEPENDENT Functional
/METHOD=ENTER Creative Economic Employment
/RESIDUALS DURBIN.
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Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Employment, Economic, Creative ^b		Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Functional
 b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				Durbin-Watson	
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2		Sig. F Change
1	.998 ^a	.997	.996	.82409	.997	1313.247	3	12	.000	2.172

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employment, Economic, Creative
 b. Dependent Variable: Functional

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Functional	16	1.00	41.00	21.8750	13.37597
Creative	16	16.00	72.00	49.6875	15.45626
Economic	16	102.00	182.00	143.8750	23.63014

Employment	16	19.00	62.00	35.2500	12.03052
Valid N (listwise)	16				

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2675.600	3	891.867	1313.247	.000 ^b
Residual	8.150	12	.679		
Total	2683.750	15			

a. Dependent Variable: Functional

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employment, Economic, Creative

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
	1 (Constant)	264.756	7.988				33.146	.000	247.352
Creative	-1.096	.054	-.1267	20.418	.000	-1.213	-.979	.066	15.216
Economic	-1.056	.030	-.1866	35.327	.000	-1.121	-.991	.091	11.020
Employment	-1.035	.036	-.930	28.877	.000	-1.113	-.956	.244	4.103

III. Findings

The study made the following findings:

- i. There is a significant increase of creativity and innovation among secondary school graduates as a result of entrepreneurship subjects taught in secondary schools in Ebonyi State Public secondary schools.
- ii. There is a significant increase of economic activities resulting from knowledge gained from entrepreneurship subjects taught in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State.
- iii. There is significant increase in youth self-employment resulting from practicing the entrepreneurship skills gained from entrepreneurship subjects from secondary school.
- iv. There is a relative significant increase in economic growth in the rural areas of Ebonyi State because of the practice of entrepreneurship subjects taught in secondary school.

IV. Conclusions

The study concludes that the effective implementation of the entrepreneurship studies (subjects) in the secondary school curriculum will increase creativity and innovation among secondary. It further concludes that religiously following teaching of the entrepreneurship subjects in the curriculum will also increase youth self-employment, economic activities and economic growth in the areas of study.

V. Recommendations

The study recommends as follow:

- i. The Federal Ministry of Education as Education Policy making body in secondary school through its State Secondary Education Boards should regularly review the curriculum to update it to be time and environmentally friendly.
- ii. Government agencies should monitor and evaluate the implementation of that aspect of the secondary school curriculum and effect relevant updates.
- iii. There should be an actionable plan to assist secondary school graduates who are practicing what they learnt from entrepreneurship subjects while they were in secondary school.

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