

Implementation of Entrepreneurship Studies in Primary School Curriculum: A Catalyst for Pupils' Creativity and Youth Employability in Lagos State

Adeyemi Ayanyemi Ayanwale, Kudirat Atinuke Aluko & Akeem Akanmu Obalakin

Department of Business Education, Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija – Epe, Lagos State

Department of Business Education, Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin

Planning, Research and Statistics Section, Local Government Education Authority, Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Email: adeyemigosun@yahoo.com; habileem2015@gmail.com; obalakunakeem16@gmail.com

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship studies was introduced into primary school curriculum by the National Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 2013 to create changes by catching the pupils young in an attempt to reduce rate of unemployment in Nigeria. This study examined the implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum as catalyst for pupils' creativity and youth employability in Lagos State. Population of the study consisted of 236 vocational educators made up of 138 from Epe and 97 from Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area of Lagos State, while 94 (55 from Epe and 39 from Ibeju-Lekki) respondents was drawn from the entire population. Structured questionnaire, validated by experts in measurement and evaluation and with the coefficient alpha value of 0.79 was used for data collection. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum would enhance pupils' creativity and youth employability in Lagos State. Based on findings, recommendations were made among others that NERDC should enforce implementation of entrepreneurship studies in Nigerian primary schools.

Keywords: Primary Education, Curriculum, Entrepreneurship Studies, Creativity, Employability.

Introduction

Nigeria is currently undergoing economic turbulence. This is evident in the level of unemployment among Nigerian youths as many of them roaming the street with no hope of survival. Various national (i.e. National Bureau of Statistics) and international bodies (i.e. IMF and World Bank) report and positions on the state of Nigerian economy and its unemployment level underscore the urgency to find lasting solution to Nigerian present predicament. As reported by Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2021) for example, Nigerian unemployment rate increased to as high as 33.3% in the fourth quarter of 2020. The International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2021) stated that the country is at a critical juncture, due to a weak pre-crisis economy that is associated with low per capital income, high inflation rate (2 digit), obvious governance vulnerabilities and limited buffers on accounts of Covid-19 pandemic.

Similarly, World Bank (2020) sees Nigeria as a country that is significantly vulnerable to economic disruption on accounts of Coronavirus and particularly because of sharp reduction in oil prices and spikes in risk aversion in global capital markets. About 83 million people, representing 40% of the masses live below the poverty line while vulnerable people, many of whom could fall into poverty line because of Covid-19 pandemic amounted to 53 million, representing 25% of the populace (World Bank, 2020). Therefore, there is urgent need for reforms and policy adjustment to manage the situation in order to avoid its long-run effect, which could be more disastrous.

According to Ajuluchukwu (2015) as reported in Ayanwale, Adekoya and Obalakin (2020), 'The strategic role of education as means of responding to the global effect of covid-19 pandemic cannot be overemphasized; it is the only means through which the elimination of gender inequality, illiteracy, ignorance, unemployment, poverty and diseases can be facilitated among people'. This is why Christine, Shuaibu and Christiana (2017) suggested that education be highly rated in nations' developmental plans globally.

However, Nigerian educational system at all levels is falling below standard over the years. The system is more of theoretical rather than practical in nature, with resultant effect on lack of creativity among Nigerian youths that is fueling the surging unemployment rate in the land. Creativity refers to the process of generating, developing and transforming ideas into values and has to do with what comes to people's mind when thinking about innovative entrepreneurship. As reported by Christine, Shuaibu and Christiana (2017), creativity in the majority of Nigerian educational curricula is not compulsory in various discipline and subjects. Regrettably, it implies that many students graduate with lack of creativity and consequently making them under-prepared to face the country's socio-economic challenges.

There is need for the review of basic education curriculum to include the teaching of business and entrepreneurship studies that would expose the young children to entrepreneurial skills and enhance their creativity right from primary school level. Udoh and Akpan (2014) opined that school programmes especially the basic education need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive and that interests and abilities should influence pupils' choice in the acquisition of

appropriate skills, abilities and competences needed to live peacefully and contribute meaningfully to the societal growth and development.

Lower and middle basic education is the education given in institutions for children ages 6–11 plus. The lower and middle basic education is the first six years of the nine years of basic education under the Universal Basic Education (UBE) standard. This stage of education relates to the development of children's cognitive at early age. It is the more basic formal education level, which all other system is built upon and satisfied the key to success or failure of the whole system (FRN, 2012).

According to National Education Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2013), the core compulsory subjects in the lower and middle basic education curriculum includes; English Studies, one major Nigerian Language (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba), Mathematics, basic science and technology, social studies, civic education, cultural and creative arts (CCA), religion studies, physical and health education as well as computer. The curriculum was also design to expose the young children to some sort of learning experiences in vocation and prepare them for the world of business, though, as elective subjects. For example, basic education curriculum according to NERDC (2013) specified the study of home economics and agriculture at the primary education level.

However, the entrepreneurial awareness and orientation of the young children, which could serve as the catalyst for developing creativity skills and provide them with basic tools for preparation for the world of work in trade and commerce is presently missing in the subjects offered in Nigerian primary schools. This has regrettably deprived the young children the right to be provided with basic tools for preparation for the world of work in trades and commerce as well as advancement in entrepreneurial studies as enshrined in the National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013).

Consequently, those who could not continue their education after middle basic education (primary school leavers) in the labour market today feel disappointed with many of them failing to gain employment or ending up with menial jobs as cleaners, gatemen and house maids. This is evident in the rate of unemployment among primary education certificate holders alone in Nigeria as revealed by the National Bureau of Statistics as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Rate of Unemployment among Primary Education Studies Alone in Nigeria

Year	Population	Unemployed Primary School Leavers	Unemployment Rate
2010	16,687,500	811,875	9.2
2011	16,075,500	898,778	9.4
2012	16,466,000	846,546	7.6
2013	16,141,687	959,978	6.8
2014	16,039,000	601,899	4.6
2015	16,688,000	1,115,116	7.8
2016	16,788,000	1,664,177	10.1
2017	17,089,000	2,455,613	16.5
2018	17,689,000	3,183,847	19.5

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2021).

A critical analysis of Table 1 indicates the rate of unemployment among primary school leavers in Nigeria is not only on the rise over the years but also at alarming rate. The National Education Research and Development Council (NERDC), acceding to the quest for qualitative basic education in Nigeria by concerned stakeholders, introduced entrepreneurship studies into senior primary school curriculum (Primaries 4–6) in 2013 with the sole motive of creating changes by catching them young (NERDC, 2014).

However, implementation of entrepreneurship studies is yet to take effect in Nigerian primary schools, including Lagos State. This is irrespective of the fact that implementing entrepreneurship studies in primary school could be crucial to pupils' early exposure to entrepreneurial consciousness. As opined by Abderrahman (2016), teaching entrepreneurship studies at early ages to pupils in primary schools as well as providing them with the adequate exposure to entrepreneurial activities can contribute to instilling the entrepreneurial spirit in them. That is, implementation of the subject could be effective in the enhancement of pupils' creativity and enhancing their entrepreneurial knowledge (Code, 2006). In order to reduce the rate of unemployment, one of the solutions offered is to minimize the rate of unemployment by creating employment opportunities with entrepreneur model that recognizes pupils' exposure to entrepreneurship studies right from an early age (Suryaman & Hari, 2017).

Studying entrepreneurship would provide learners with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Entrepreneurship skills are business skills, which an individual requires personally to function effectively in business as an entrepreneur and be self-reliant (Umunadi, 2014). The skills consist of effective utilization of ideas, information, and facts that help a learner develop competencies, services, or become productive employees of organizations. According to Maryrose and Obiajulu (2020), entrepreneurship education leads to the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for efficient and effective living. It gives the recipients more opportunities to exercise creative freedom, higher self-esteem, and a greater sense of control over their own lives.

Umunadi in Maryrose and Obiajulu (2020) identified many categories of competencies or skills needed for success in entrepreneurship such as managerial, accounting and financial competencies, marketing and sales skills, and general business skills with the belief that teaching entrepreneurship studies at the basic level could instill in the children the

right mindset, the ability to be creative, and innovative, and potentially be able to create job out of their prospective career.

In a study conducted by Maria, Maria, Lorena and Elvia (2017) on developing entrepreneurship in primary schools, using the Mexican experience of 'My first enterprise: Entrepreneurship by playing', the study revealed a significant improvement in pupils' entrepreneurial skills and reinforcement of business values. Being an agent of change and implementer of curriculum, the views and opinions of vocational educators on teaching method and activities required on how implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school could affect unemployment rate in Lagos State as well as creativity of primary school leavers is thereby required.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective is to examine implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum as a catalyst for pupils' creativity and youth employability in Lagos State. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Examine how implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum would enhance creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State.
2. Examine how implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum would aid youth employability in Lagos State.

Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance, in line with the objectives.

Research Questions

1. Would implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum enhance creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State?
2. Would implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum aid youth employability in Lagos State?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers on implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers on implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and youth employability in Lagos State.

Methodology

Non-experimental design involving descriptive research type was employed for this study. Population consisted of 236 vocational educators made up of 138 from Epe and 97 from Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area of Lagos State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 94 (55 from Epe and 39 from Ibeju-Lekki) respondents representing 40% of the entire population. The choice of vocational educators is because of their exposure to entrepreneurship tenets.

Instrument

Structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and validated by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering 10 sets of questionnaires to 10 vocational teachers, who were not part of the main study. Their responses were analysed using Cronbach alpha to establish the reliability level and yielded the coefficient alpha value of 0.79. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researchers, with the help of one trained research assistant for a period of two weeks. Out of the total questionnaires distributed, 91 vocational educators responded and returned their instruments representing 97% of the sample size. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while t-test statistical technique was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

The decision rule for answering the research questions was based on any calculated mean scores equal to, or greater than 2.50 was regarded as agreed, while any calculated mean scores less than 2.50 was regarded as disagreed. Furthermore, the t-value was used in taking the decisions on the hypotheses. If the t-value is less than or equal to the t-calculated, the null hypothesis is rejected, but if the t-value is greater than t-calculated, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Results

Research Question 1

Would implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum enhance creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State?

Table 2: Mean Responses of Vocational Educators on Implementation of Entrepreneurship Studies in Primary School Curriculum and Creativity of Primary School Leavers in Lagos State

S/N	Item	Mean	Remark
1	Teaching entrepreneurship studies in primary schools could enhance pupils' creative thinking.	3.00	Agree
2	Learning entrepreneurship studies could enable pupils to conceive innovative ideas.	3.07	Agree
3	Entrepreneurship studies in primary schools could make pupils generate innovative ideas.	3.16	Agree
4	Teaching entrepreneurship studies could enhance pupils' entrepreneurial knowledge.	3.04	Agree
5	Implementation of entrepreneurship studies could enhance pupils' creativity and prepare them for the world of work.	3.02	Agree

Note: The SA/A/D/SD response-count cells in the supplied photograph are too blurred for reliable transcription and are therefore omitted rather than guessed.

Table 2 reveals that 91 respondents agreed that teaching of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools would enhance pupils' creative thinking with mean rating of 3.00. Also, the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship studies could be a source of ideas and could enhance pupils' creativity and entrepreneurial knowledge. The table generally indicates that respondents agreed that implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum would enhance creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State.

Research Question 2

Would implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum aid youth employability in Lagos State?

Table 3: Mean Responses of Vocational Educators on Implementation of Entrepreneurship Studies in Primary School Curriculum and Youth Employability in Lagos State

S/N	Item	Mean	Remark
1	Teaching entrepreneurship studies in primary schools could make pupils self-reliant in the future.	3.02	Agree
2	Implementation of entrepreneurship studies could enable pupils to acquire useful skills for the world of work.	3.05	Agree
3	Teaching entrepreneurship studies could prepare pupils ahead for employment and enterprise.	2.78	Agree
4	Pupils could acquire skills that would make them employable and self-reliant.	3.00	Agree
5	Implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools could reduce youth unemployment in Nigeria.	3.02	Agree

Note: The SA/A/D/SD response-count cells in the supplied photograph are too blurred for reliable transcription and are therefore omitted rather than guessed.

Table 3 reveals that 91 respondents agreed that teaching of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools could enhance youth employability in various ways. Respondents agreed that pupils could become self-reliant, acquire useful skills, and be better prepared for the world of work. The pattern of responses indicates that implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum would have a long-term effect on youth employability in Lagos State.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers on implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State.

Table 4: T-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Vocational Teachers by Gender

Variables	Mean	SD	n	Df	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Male	16.9	0.45	42	89	-2.218	1.990	Reject
Female	17.2	0.580	49				

Table 4 indicated that the t-table value of 1.990 at 0.05 level with degree of freedom of 89 is greater than the calculated value of -2.218. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers on implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and creativity of primary school leavers in Lagos State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers on implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and youth employability in Lagos State.

Table 5: T-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Vocational Teachers by Gender

Variables	Mean	SD	n	Df	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Male	14.6	0.45	42	89	-0.078	1.990	Do not reject
Female	15.1	0.36	49				

Table 5 indicated that the t-table value of 1.990 at 0.05 level with degree of freedom of 89 is greater than the calculated value of 0.078. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers on implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and youth employability in Lagos State.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools would enhance the creativity of primary school pupils in Lagos State. This is evident in the responses of vocational educators as revealed in Table 2 that teaching of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools would enhance pupils' creative thinking, enable them to conceive innovative ideas and make them generate innovative ideas among others. This finding agreed with Abderrahman (2016) who opined that exposing primary school pupils to entrepreneurship studies at early age as well as providing them with adequate exposure to entrepreneurial activities can contribute to instilling the entrepreneurial spirit in them. This finding is also in tandem with Code (2006) who argued that implementation of entrepreneurship studies could be effective in the enhancement of pupils' creativity and enhancing their entrepreneurial knowledge.

The finding of the study also revealed that implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools would have a long-term effect on youth employability in Lagos State. This is evident in Table 3 where the respondents agreed to all the listed items. This implies that implementing the subject in primary schools in Lagos State will enable the pupils to acquire skills that could make them self-reliant in the future and prepare them ahead of the world of work. This finding aligns with Suryaman and Hari (2017) who opined that minimizing the rate of unemployment through the creation of employment opportunities with entrepreneur model that recognizes pupils' exposure to entrepreneurship studies right from an early age is the best solution. This finding also corroborates Maria, Maria, Lorena and Elvia (2017) who jointly found a significant impact of teaching entrepreneurship in primary schools on improvement of pupils' entrepreneurial skills and reinforcement of business values.

Finally, the finding of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female vocational teachers as regards implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school curriculum and pupils' creativity as well as youth employability in Lagos State.

Conclusion

That implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary school would affect pupils' creativity and youth employability is understatement. Based on the findings of this study, teaching of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools would instill creative thinking in the children at early age, expose them to innovative ideas at young age and prepare them ahead to face the challenges of the world of work. Conclusively, it could be deduced that implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools is a catalyst for pupils' creativity and youth employability in Lagos State. Therefore, all hands must be on deck towards effective implementation of entrepreneurship studies in primary schools as a way of catching them young, if the persistent problem of lack of creativity and unemployment among the youths were to be alleviated.

Recommendations

1. Government should enforce implementation of entrepreneurship studies in Nigerian primary schools.
2. The responsibilities of implementing entrepreneurship studies in primary schools should be vested on vocational education experts (i.e. business education, agricultural education and home economics education graduates) in order to inculcate the right entrepreneurial skills in the children.
3. Government should employ more vocational educators as teachers in primary schools in Lagos State in order to make implementation of entrepreneurship studies effective.

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