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INFLUENCE OF ENTRENEURIAL EDUCATION ON SELF- EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS OF FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ORLU EDUCATIONAL ZONE OF IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to determine the influence of entrepreneurial studies on self-employment prospects of final year students of public secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone of Imo State. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all 13,528 final year students in all the (326) secondary schools in the zone. A sample size of 3,264 final year students was taking through simple random sampling and used for the study. Two research questions guided the study and a structured questionnaire titled 'Influence of Entrepreneurial Education on the Self-Employment Prospects of Final Students' was the instrument used to collect data. The instrument was validated by three experts. The instrument consisted of two clusters: A and B. Cluster A contained (16) items on entrepreneurial knowledge with the coefficient value of 0.78 while cluster B contained (8) items on entrepreneurial skills developed for final year students through entrepreneurial studies with the coefficient of 0.96. The reliability of the instrument was obtained through Cronbach Alpha with a weighted average of 0.84 which was considered high enough for the study. The responses to the instrument were to be in line with Likert four rating scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree as response options. Mean was used to analyze the data. The finding of the study among others was that facilities for entrepreneurship education in the zone are in short supply. It was then recommended among others that government should provide schools in the area with facilities for entrepreneurship education or studies.

Keywords: impact, entrepreneurship studies, self-employment, prospects, public secondary schools.

Introduction

Education is the key to national development. This is because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people, empowers and equips individuals in the society to participate and benefit from their national economy, facilitates economic development and provides the basis for

transformation. Education is the essential tool for sustainability and the present global economic crisis suggests that the entire world is in a war between technical qualitative education and employment dynamics. (Olarinyo, 2015). Entrepreneurial education is the transmission of skills and attitude from one person to another, mainly from teachers to students. Education can be formal and informal but whatever format it takes, it is an avenue to transform the individual from the raw and uninformed person to a prepared human being who adds value to the society.

The academic success of students therefore depends on the quality of education accessible to them and acquired in school. The main purpose of entrepreneurial education is to train and prepare young men and women who will be useful to the society and contribute to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the nation. It is on the basis of this that entrepreneurship education was introduced to the Nigerian education system right from the secondary school level where it is called Introductory Technology to tertiary education level where it is known as entrepreneurship education.

According to Onyilofor (2010), entrepreneurship education is the education that prepares the students as business managers to have great positive self–efficacy and mindset that are creative, productive, and self-reliant and to have sharp focus to earn a living for themselves and assist the society at large. There have always been some people more willing than others to take calculated risks in the expectation of greater profits.

In traditional African societies, entrepreneurship training was always ancillary skill acquisition. Apprentices were trained not only to acquire skills but also to market them. Formal entrepreneurial training is, however, a more recent development, accelerated by the realisation in the wake of the fall of communism, that free enterprise is the only way to national development and individual prosperity.

The challenge of endemic poverty and mass unemployment helped to move many African nations from their pseudo-socialist inclinations, forcing them to accept formal entrepreneurship training as a panacea to the menace of national retro-development and endemic penury. Consequently, the Millennium Development Goals adopted by African leaders in year 2000 recognised entrepreneurship as one of the most potent implements in the struggle for poverty alleviation and national development with the adoption of entrepreneurship education as a national imperative (Hassan, 2013).

In 2006, the Nigerian Federal Government directed that entrepreneurship education should be incorporated into all programmes offered in secondary schools for all students irrespective of their areas of inclination. The aim was to produce graduate entrepreneurs at the secondary education level with the right attitudes and skills to spur them in the path of creativity, innovation and enterprise (Akanmu, 2011). Entrepreneurship education can be conceptualised as a specialised and all round training programme designed by education authorities to change the world view of school leavers from job seekers to job and wealth creators by developing their talents and potentials. It is learning directed towards developing competence, understanding, and attributes which equip them to be innovative, identify, create, and successfully manage personal or community business, and seek opportunities to change society for the better while working for themselves or their organisation. Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare students to be responsible

individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and who contribute to economic development and sustainable communities (Aigboje, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education is not just about teaching someone to run a business. It is also about encouraging, creating, thinking, and promoting a strong sense of self-worth and accountability. Ezeugbo (2019) described entrepreneurship education as that which deals with those attitudes and skills that are necessary for the individual to respond to his environment in the process of conserving, starting, and managing a business enterprise. The researcher's opinion is based on the fact that some basic attitudes and skills are essential for an individual to respond positively to his environment and explore its potential. This implies that entrepreneurship education prepares the individual to be properly equipped to acquire saleable skills that could be used to manage his own business or that of others (Osuwaye, 2015). Entrepreneurial education is therefore education that assists students to develop positive innovative skills for self-confidence and capacities for economic development.

Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities to establish and run an enterprise successfully (Esene, 2015). The entrepreneurial spirit is a prerequisite for entrepreneurial society and culture. The spirit is required for the overall economic growth of any nation, especially Nigeria. Aeurn entrepreneur is simply an individual who undertakes business risks. By risk, one implies a concerned conviction to embark on any self-chosen and styled trade for the purpose of attaining subsistent and sustainable living. It is a process by which resources are mobilised to start trading (production or service).

An entrepreneur can also be someone whose sense of creativity has prompted him to embark on new initiatives (enterprise), nurture the enterprise, and bring it to the point of actualizing its economic benefits by building capital. Entrepreneurship as a term has French origins and was first defined by an Irish economist as the capacity to perceive and undertake business opportunities by taking advantage of scarce resources through optimal utilisation. In its simplest form, entrepreneurship is a direct willingness and the ability to seek out investment opportunities and to run it as an enterprise for profit. In this later perspective, entrepreneurship takes over capital. (Sodipo, 2015). Capital is by such means put into use. Entrepreneurship is more fundamental than capital because capital formation is the result of entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurs are therefore regarded as the central figures in every country's economic development. Their contributions run through labour actions to movement of capital goods, the conversion of raw materials into finished products; and ultimately the effectual distribution of the products to final consumers.

Statement of the Problem

The high rate of unemployment among secondary school leavers and tertiary institution graduates in Nigeria today is alarming. It is because of the problem of the study that the Federal Government, through the National Policy on Education, deemed it fit to introduce entrepreneurship education to secondary school curriculum. Youth unemployment has become one of the major problems confronting the nation today. It is the root cause of poverty, youth restiveness, gangsterism, bank robbery, kidnapping, assassination, lawlessness, and all sorts of deviant behaviours of young Nigerians.

Every year, public secondary schools produce millions of young people who simply end up among the unemployed because their education is incompatible with the jobs that are available. Entrepreneurship education was incorporated into the curriculum of secondary schools in Nigeria to help students develop entrepreneurial knowledge and skills which would enable them become self employed by running their own small scale businesses after school. This program has been in operation for several years but its impact on self-employment prospect of students appears to be unknown. This is because in post-primary schools, there seem to be the dearth of empirical data on the performance of the program especially how it is impacting students with entrepreneurship knowledge and skills which would enhance their self-employment prospects. It was to satisfy the need for empirical data which would guide actions by relevant stakeholders to ensure the effectiveness of the program that this study on impact of entrepreneurship studies on self-employment prospect of final year students of public secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone of Imo State was undertaken.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent has entrepreneurship education programme impacted final year students of secondary schools with entrepreneurial knowledge for self-employment prospects?
2. To what extent has entrepreneurship education programme impacted final year students of public secondary schools with skills for self-employment prospects?

Research Method

The study investigated the influence of entrepreneurship education on the self-employment prospects of final year students of public secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone of Imo State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and two research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprises 3,264 final year students in the zone while the sample size which was obtained through simple random sampling consisted of 528 final year students**.** The instrument that was used to elicit response from the respondents was a structured questionnaire titled: "Influence of Entrepreneurship Education on Students' Self-Employment Prospects (IESSSEP) ". The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and one from the Department of Educational Foundation. The instrument consisted of two clusters. Cluster A dealt with the impact of entrepreneurial knowledge on the students with the coefficient value of 0.78 while section B was concerned with equipping the students with entrepreneurial skills for self-employment with the coefficient value of 0.96 Mean was used to analyze the data and the Likert four rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D) was used to classify the responses.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: To what extent has entrepreneurship education programme impacted on final year students of secondary schools with entrepreneurial knowledge for self-employment prospects?

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings on impact of entrepreneurship studies on the acquisition of relevant entrepreneurial knowledge for self-employment.

S/N	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	SA	A	D	SD	N	X	Remarks
	I have knowledge of the following:							
1.	Business environment	260	60	25	15	360	3.4	Agreed
2.	Nature of Business	268	62	18	22	360	3.3	Agreed
3.	Types of Businesses	240	70	31	19	360	3.5	Agreed
4.	Benefits of Entrepreneurship	245	65	29	21	360	3.5	Agreed
5.	Challenges of Entrepreneurship	244	61	38	17	360	3.4	Agreed
6.	Qualities of an entrepreneur	260	75	15	10	360	3.6	Agreed
7.	Business Management	240	85	20	15	360	3.5	Agreed
8.	Entrepreneurial Regulations	205	95	36	24	360	3.3	Agreed
9.	Support institution Entrepreneurs	239	90	30	1	360	4.1	Agreed
10.	Portfolio management	275	25	29	31	360	3.5	Agreed
11.	Generating Business ideas	265	40	31	24	360	3.5	Agreed
12.	Identifying Business resources	260	60	20	20	360	3.7	Agreed
13.	Identify Business opportunity	258	62	18	22	360	3.5	Agreed
14.	Economic Indicator	240	70	31	19	360	3.4	Agreed
15.	Starting an enterprise	245	65	29	31	360	4.2	Agreed
16.	Evaluating Business	244	61	38	17	360	3.2	Agreed

From table 1 above, items 1-9 and 11 - 16 have mean responses of 3.4, 3.3, 3.5, 3.5, 3.4, 3.4, 3.6, 3.5, 3.3, 4.1 and 3.5, 3.5, 3.7, 3.5, 3.4, 4.2, and 3.4 respectively. This shows the respondents of the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurship knowledge which are cut-off points and are all accepted. This indicates that these items are the areas of entrepreneurship education from where final students can develop entrepreneurial skills for self- employment.

Research Question 2: To what extent has entrepreneurship education programme impacted on final year students of secondary schools with entrepreneurial Skills and attitudes for self-employment?

Table 2 Mean responses of the Respondents on the Influence of Entrepreneurship Education on Acquisition of Entrepreneurship skills on final year students for self-employment

S/N	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	SA	A	D	SD	N	X	Remarks
	I have acquired the following:							
17.	Technical skills in specific business	260	60	40	10	360	3.6	Agreed
18.	Marketing skills	225	110	15	10	360	3.5	Agreed
19.	Leadership skills	240	104	12	6	360	3.6	Agreed
20.	Financial management skills	271	60	19	10	360	3.6	Agreed
21.	Planning skills	260	55	25	20	360	3.4	Agreed
22.	Man management skills	271	55	14	20	360	3.5	Agreed
23.	Time management skills	245	80	25	10	360	3.6	Agreed
24.	Communication skills	240	55	25	40	360	3.4	Agreed

In table 2 above, items 17 to 24 have mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.5. This means that they were all accepted as the influence of entrepreneurship education on the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills and attributes by final year students in the schools in the study area.

Discussion of Findings

The study found out that the extent to which entrepreneurship education has impacted on the final year students'

entrepreneurship knowledge showed that secondary school entrepreneurship programmes are meeting the entrepreneurship education objectives as stated by the government (Hassan, 2013). This means that entrepreneurial knowledge and skills acquired by the students should be able to meet the demands of employers of labour. This finding supports the work of Akanmu (2011) who viewed entrepreneurship education as the gateway to job opportunities and job creation which will enhance self-reliance and self-employment among final year students.

The finding of the study also showed that final year students in secondary schools have been impacted with skills which they can use to start their own businesses after leaving school. This is in line with the works of Emenyeonu and Okoro (2012) who stated that entrepreneurial education is a tool for self-employment in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study showed that entrepreneurship education has been very well received by Nigerian students. If free enterprise is the wave of the future, then youths with entrepreneurship education are being prepared to participate in that future as they grow to be equal partakers in the business of wealth creation. This is a promising development as it is an important step towards a great and prosperous future. It should not only be encouraged, it should be provided with adequate support structures for optimal result.

Recommendations

In view of the above discussion and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should improve the prospects for entrepreneurship in Nigeria by granting secondary schools technical support, credit facilities and grants.
2. School authorities should provide adequate facilities for effective teaching of entrepreneurship education.

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