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**ENTERPRISE EDUCATION AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY  
CHALLENGE IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This research examines various approaches of empowering secondary school pupils in Rivers State through enterprise education. This study demonstrated how students can become more independent while still in school by employing various entrepreneurial abilities. It also examined elements that can call for empowerment, such as youth restlessness, poverty, unemployment among recent graduates, and other social vices. It was recommended that; secondary school curriculum should be designed based on enterprise education topics that will equip the students with necessary technical knowhow, managerial, creative and social skills. Teachers especially those directly involved in teaching the entrepreneurship contents should be sponsored on training such as workshops/seminars on the inculcation of entrepreneurship zeal and enthusiasm using appropriate methods of teaching among secondary students. Policy makers should prioritize entrepreneurship development and strategize viable means of its enhancement among school leavers.*

*Keywords: Enterprise Education, Secondary School, Curriculum, Empowerment, Students, Socio-Economic Development.*

**Introduction**

Education is meant to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains in students under the auspices of the school. Amie – Ogan & Amie Ogan (2015) described education as a tool for a nation's industrialization and all round development; that aids individuals to become active and useful participants of their society through its rudiments of character molding, training, respect for elders, spatial skills, language skills, vocational skills, psychological, emotional and intellectual development. This suggests that education is a mechanism for all round development of an individual. In the same vein, Farooq (2012) concurs that education is a process in which and by which the knowledge, characters and behavior of human beings are shaped and molded. This view considers education as a source of knowledge and character formation.

Nwosu (2018) asserts that education is the impartation of knowledge from one individual or group of persons to another. This idea confirms that education is an in-depth acquisition and transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. From the views of Onyebueke (2014) education is seen as the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or an adult develops some abilities, form attitudes and other forms of behavior which are of positive value to the society in which he lives. This view describes education as the totality

of what makes an individual to be resourceful in the society. This idea is in line with that of Victor – Ishikaku (2016) who reports that the purpose of education is basically for the upbringing of the young in the society to make them functional and useful to themselves and the society.

Anwa and Saha (2017) declared that education makes man a right thinker and a correct decision maker. This suggests that education exposes an individual to think intensively and critically to meet human needs. This view agrees to the view of Agina – Obu (2016) who asserted that all forms of educational activities are geared towards ensuring the attainment of identified social goals. Anwa and Saha (2017) further pointed out that without proper education, the training of human minds will be incomplete. This means that education is necessary for an individual to function adequately to be useful to himself and active in the labour market. In its right sense, education plays a prominent role in developing human mind and in establishing him properly in the society. Rabidas (2014) sees education as the key instrument in bringing social change in any society all over the world. This suggests that education gives an individual power needed for societal transformation, so it should be given to all the citizenry of the country. It involves instruction and training by which people learn to develop and use their mental, moral and physical developments to become useful to themselves in the society. Agina – Obu (2018) adds that it is the societal instrument for the survival, growth and development of an individual. This view declares that education is a roadmap to the development of individuals and their society. The researcher then sees Education as a preparatory exercise needed to develop oneself and the mind of other individuals to be reasonable and functional in the society.

### **Secondary School**

A secondary school can be described as an institution that provides secondary education usually for secondary school students. Some secondary schools provide both lower secondary education (age 12 to 15) and upper secondary education (age 15 to 18) but these can also be provided in two separate schools. Secondary school education is a continuation from primary school and it prepares students for tertiary education. It is mandatory for students to attend secondary school to acquire the senior secondary school certificate examination result (WAEC) to enable them proceed to tertiary school or engage in one skillful activity in order to earn a living. Therefore enterprise education is necessary for secondary schools students. The organizations, structure and terminology are more or less unique in different country.

### **Curriculum**

According to Stotsky (2012), curriculum is a plan of action that is aimed at achieving desired goals and objectives. Curriculum occupies a central position in education at all levels in the world of education. It is indeed a veritable instrument for possible education. Alade (2005) in his work on Rudiments of curriculum studies defined curriculum as a programme of education prepared for definite group of learners within a time frame in order to achieve the intended outcomes. The curriculum gives direction to all Secondary Schools programmes in Rivers State and in Nigeria in general. To achieve the objective of practice enterprise, the school Curriculum should be adequately planned to reform the educational system at the secondary school level of education in order to accommodate all the necessary skills needed to produce a functional citizen.

Okundaye (2003) in his work on curriculum issues in technology education described Curriculum as the inner engine which propels education to achieve desirable learning for both the individual and the society. However the present Secondary School Curriculum puts vocational subjects as optional subjects instead of core subjects. Thus, the acute lack of entrepreneurial consciousness among secondary school leavers originated from the present Secondary School Curriculum. The curriculum planners failed to anticipate that entrepreneurial skill will today become the pivot for Students empowerment for sustainable development and self-reliance. Moreno (2006) in his research work titled the dynamics of curriculum design and development stated that educational reform all over the world is increasingly curriculum based as mounting pressures and demand for change tends to target and focus on both the structure and the contents of school curriculum, the aggregate of courses of study given in a school, college, university, etc. John Dewey defines curriculum as a continuous reconstruction, moving from the learner's present experience. Ralph Tyler (1957) defines it as all the learning experiences planned and directed by the school to attain its educational goals.

### **Enterprise Education**

Enterprise education is the provision of learning opportunities which help students develop the attitude, knowledge and skills of entrepreneur. The enterprising individual both initiates and thrives on change. Enterprise education enables students to develop confidence, self-reliance and a determination to succeed. These abilities will benefit the individual in their future lives as entrepreneurs, employees and citizens of the global community. ([www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)). Enterprise education is enterprise capability supported by better financial capability and economic and business understanding. Enterprise capability includes innovation, creativity, risk management and risk taking, a can-do attitude and the drive to make ideas happen. Enterprise education is based on exposing Students to business ventures, skill acquisition and the understanding of real world of business, through series of experiences that tend to develop Students' latent potentials whereby enhancing creativity in learning. Enterprise education and its application, will promote Students empowerment through exposure to variety of programmes in which they can make choices in life and gain awareness of the implication of such choices, make decisions and accept responsibilities for their actions.

This empowerment oriented education will impact immensely on Students development and production of functional manpower in the labour market. Obviously the importance of enterprise education to the technological development and industrial expansion of a nation cannot be over emphasized. Enterprise education deals with the provision of learning opportunities which will help students to develop the attitude, knowledge and skills of an entrepreneur. The enterprising individual both initiates and thrives for change in the various business ventures in life. Enterprise education enables students to develop confidence, self-reliance and determination to succeed. These abilities will benefit the individual in their future lives as entrepreneurs, employees and functional workforce in the global community.

Enterprise education focuses on helping students to develop entrepreneurial skills and employment oriented abilities which are necessary to prepare them for life beyond school days usually with an emphasis on financial capability, enterprise capability, economic and business understanding. Studying enterprise education courses will provide students

the opportunity to identify, use and develop range of skills and qualities that will generally qualify them to become future functional workforce and as well as being entrepreneurs. Enterprise capability is the ability to handle uncertainty and respond positively to change, to create and implement new ideas and ways of doing things, to make reasonable risk/reward assessment and to act upon them in one's personal life. Financial capability is the ability to manage one's own finance.

### **Merits of Enterprise Education**

Enterprise education encourages students to consider self-employment as a career option and equips them with the skills to become a successful business owner. Enterprise education supports students in developing the skills demanded by employers in an ever increasingly competitive economy. Enterprising students have direction, motivation and determination to achieve their goals. Enterprise education develops in the student skills in personal finance, decision making and creative thinking, enterprising individuals have direction and the determination to make the most of challenging circumstances.

Economic and business understanding is the ability to understand the business contest and make informed choices between alternative uses of scarce resources (A guide to enterprise education DCSF---00282010, page 6 google weblight.com).

### **Objectives of Enterprise/Entrepreneurship Education**

The objectives of enterprise education are set to equip the students with skills, ideas and creative abilities needed for self-reliance and economic development of the nation. According to Olorumolu and Agbede (2012) the objectives of enterprise education are stated as follows:

1. To provide meaningful education for students which could make them self-reliant and subsequently encourage them to derive profit and become self-independent.
2. To provide students with the training and support, necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size business
3. To provide students with training skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society.
4. To provide students with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.
5. To stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed areas
6. To provide students with enough training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities.
7. To provide small and medium size companies with the opportunity to recruit students who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to management of the business centre (Adapted from Olorumolu & Agbede, 2012).

Looking at the aforementioned objectives it can be seen, that entrepreneurship education, if given adequate support, Secondary Schools in Rivers State will produce School Leavers/ students that will promote job and wealth creation and eliminate unemployment and poverty in the state and the nation at large. One of the most important objectives of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is job creation and Entrepreneurship Education is a great avenue to achieve this objective and invariably enhance better standard for living of Citizens of River State.

## **Necessity of Enterprise Education as a Source of Empowerment for Secondary School Students**

Enterprise Education is an empowerment oriented strategy that can lead to economic self-sufficiency and self-reliance for students in secondary schools and the economic development of the country. It seeks to prepare students while in secondary school to become responsible enterprising manpower. The need for Enterprise education as an alternative source of empowerment for students in Nigerian secondary schools have won the support of wide range of scholars following the irresistible Global quest for functional education. Enterprise Education has been recognized as a major source of job and wealth creation and also a means of empowerment for secondary school students. Oloidi (2000) in his work on the Economic History of Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria asserts that absences of functional Enterprise education curriculum is an impediment to sustainable economic development which if not checked or tackled will continue to incite and increase the incident of unemployment in Nigeria. It is therefore necessary to introduce Enterprise education into secondary schools in Nigeria to broaden the student's creative horizon and to enable the instructional Personnel to promptly catch them young and train them specifically on their specialized areas.

Obanya (2009) in his research work titled; Dreaming, leaving and doing education opined that the solution to unemployment is not increased vocalization of education as wrongly being canvassed, but a return to the basis. This means returning to the goals of education, as it aims at cultivating human talent and his imaginative potentials. Halfdan (2002) in his work on integrating Enterprise education in Botswana informed that involving the Secondary School Students in Enterprise education will motivate them into planning and cultivating ideas on how to start business of their own. Uwameiye and Aduwa-Ogiegbaen (2006) in their research work titled Developing Enterprise culture among young people in Nigeria stressed that inculcating the enterprise spirit in young people is a precondition to achieving progress in employment. This will go a long way to surmount the gap created by unemployment in the country. Mkpa and Izuagba (2012) in their work titled Curriculum studies & innovation further outlined the following points based on the overall need for enterprise education as it affects the society;

1. Enterprise education is focused on the development of individual's potential or abilities while in school in order to become functional to himself and the society.
2. It makes students to have interest in starting and operating business as a career option while in school.
3. It helps secondary school students to develop personal financial capabilities which will be a source of sustenance to them.
4. It creates room for development of skills which will make them better employees.
5. It helps students to develop high self-esteem and become positive contributors to the society.
6. Enterprise education will help students to develop enterprising behavior and emphasize on job and wealth creation.
7. It will help to equip the 21<sup>st</sup> century students with skillful mindset and ability to improve the world of work.

### **Application of Enterprise Education**

1. Unemployment will be reduced and more goods and services will be produced.
2. Crime rate will be much reduced as many hands will be fully and meaningfully be engaged.
3. The economy will be revived and will boom.

**Reasons for Enterprise Education in Secondary School include:**

- Enterprise education will provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to start a business, if they choose that route in the future, whilst also promoting this as an acceptable and alternative career option.
- In addition to entrepreneurial skills, the aim is also to ensure that those who do choose to enter the workforce through more traditional paths are equipped with skills employers are seeking for.
- Students will gain new creative skill, knowledge and other qualities needed to confidently navigate into the adult world.
- Enterprise education courses will be beneficial to students who are poor in cognitive comprehension in academic work or those who don't intend to pursue further study at tertiary level.
- Enterprise Education will showcase an alternative learning model and the chance to lay hands-on skills to build the right workforce for the nation. Unlike normal academic learning, enterprise education does not focus more on excellent academic performance but on the development of psychomotor domain.
- Enterprise education will provide an avenue for students and their teachers to work in synergy to produce local goods and promote the economy of the nation.
- Enterprise education will help pupils and students to develop enterprising abilities and become resourceful citizens.

**Categories of Enterprise Education**

<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Technology</b>	<b>Business</b>
Fish farming	Technical drawing	Accounting
Animal husbandry /Poultry /Piggery	General metal work	Store management
	Basic electricity	Office practice
Crop farming/Non crop farming e.g. Snail, Rabbit and Bee farming.	Auto mechanics	Commerce
	Building construction	Salesmanship
	Wood work	Tourism
	Home- management	Leather Manufacturing and Repairs of leather materials
	Food and nutrition	
	Mining, Photograph,	Marketing
	GSM maintenance, Data processing/ Key boarding	Block laying
		Plumbing
	Cosmetology	
	Air conditioning	
	Refrigerator	
	Welding and fabrication engineering	

**Source: Emesiobi, Patience 2022.**

### **Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, emphasis has been placed on paper qualification and less regard for skill acquisition. Com (2006) in his research work titled fostering entrepreneurial mindset through Education stressed that there is a positive correlation between entrepreneurship Education and Economic growth of a Country. It is therefore a serious concern for Nigerian parents, teachers and stake holders to realize the importance of Entrepreneurship Education and redirect their views and ideas towards it, since it is a reliable source of gaining economic emancipation and self-reliance for secondary school leavers and other students in the society.

However, in recent times, tertiary institutions in Nigeria started paying serious attention to enterprise education. This became necessary due to economic stagnation and School leaver/graduate unemployment which resulted to high level of poverty and students restiveness in Rivers State and the Country at large. This is clear evidence that Nigerian Students were deficient of skills, attributes and competencies needed to make them gain employment and emancipate them from the yoke of financial crisis. This means that enterprise education will boost and strengthen the economy of the state and that of the country. The researcher adds that acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of enterprise education will make the students to be self-dependent and not the accumulation of theoretical knowledge alone. However, Obunadike (2011) in his work on Identification and Motivation of Potential Entrepreneurs informs that in Nigeria, the level of awareness of entrepreneurship education seems to be very low. Ojeife (2012) supports the view as he reported in his hand book on Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria that there are no tools and benchmark for assessing the quality of enterprise education programmes offered in Nigerian schools. This, he attributed to lack of entrepreneurial courses/subjects in Nigerian secondary schools which is one of the major factors that has led to unemployment among school leavers and students in River State and the country at large.

Omoniye (2006) in his research work titled Entrepreneurship Development Prospects for Modern Secretary informs that the orientation of Nigerians need to be refocused by enriching the secondary school curricular with courses in enterprise education. The researcher sees enterprise education in Nigeria as a phenomenon that seeks to provide Nigerian students with skills, knowledge, and motivations to encourage entrepreneurial success in variety of ventures. Furthermore, Onyeachu (2009) in his work on Refurbishing Tertiary Education in Nigeria towards Entrepreneurship Education asserts that bringing entrepreneurship education into Nigerian secondary schools is a way of putting her educational system on the desired pedestal for efficiency and functionality to meet the challenges of national and global competitiveness in the 21st century. The progress of Secondary Students in Rivers State depends largely on their focus on entrepreneurial courses as it has been on record that enterprise education in other countries like United States of America, Demark and Canada has been effectively practiced and known as the economic force that transformed these countries into the most powerful economies in the world.

Generally, throughout the world, enterprise education has become a viable phenomenon. The researcher advocates for the extension to Secondary and Primary Schools to enable the teachers to identify the potent skills in the children and provide means of developing them early. Enterprise education is seen as a master key to economic development of the state and country at large. Olorumolu and Agbede (2012) in their work

on Quality Enterprise Education: a Panacea for Job Creation stressed that Nigeria and other countries of the world are seeking to increase the entrepreneurship capacities of their citizens with the understanding that it will contribute to economic growth and development of the country. Enterprise Education is in line with one of the objectives of National Policy on Education (2014) which is focused on technical and vocational Education. The gap emanating from unemployment is making serious demand for effective integration of enterprise education into Nigerian Secondary Schools as this has been a thorny issue in the Nigeria Educational System.

### **Summary**

This study assessed the importance of enterprise education for student's empowerment and overall economic development of the nation. The work has made efforts at defining enterprise education in relation to its long established reliability in the promotion of economic activities. It unfolds the potential benefits and advocates for its introduction to Nigerian secondary schools as a way of cushioning the gap created by unskillful courses and consequently arrests the economic monster called unemployment. This will no doubt reduce the level of unemployment induced crime in our country. Based on the reliability of these findings it has become necessary that government through its' educational policies make it mandatory for Nigerian schools at all levels to embrace enterprise education. Finally the work seeks to recommend that government at all tiers should establish, adequately equip and staff more enterprise schools across the nation and parents need to encourage their children and wards towards acquiring practical skills to enable them become economically functional in the society.

### **Conclusion**

Nigeria recognizes that knowledge and ideas are the engines that drive economic growth. It has therefore been stressed that 50% percent of tertiary education students acquire skills and knowledge to be self-employed and wealth creators (NEEDS, 2005). Adequate enterprise education development courses backed up by adequate facilities on ground can expose students to ways of converting their education to intellectually productive ventures that can help curb graduate's unemployment and alleviate poverty of over half of 140 million populace that are wallowing in poverty.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the results of these findings and conclusion reached in this work, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

- Federal government should put in place more financial institutions such as national poverty eradication programme (NAPEP) to support enterprise education and aid different levels of enterprises, e.g. small and medium entrepreneurs.
- Tertiary institutions should fashion out adequate entrepreneurship development courses that will equip the undergraduate with necessary technical, business, agricultural and managerial skills.
- Teachers, especially those directly involved in teaching the enterprise education courses should be sponsored by the government on trainings such as workshops/seminars, conferences on the inculcation of entrepreneurship spirit and enthusiasm using appropriate methods of teaching among secondary school students.



- Policy makers should prioritize entrepreneurship development and strategize viable means of its enhancement among school leavers.
- Government should cut down on imported goods and services and encourage the use of local products to promote small and medium entrepreneurs.
- Institutions should devise a strategy to assist the secondary school students that indicated their intention to set up an enterprise while in school and after graduation through incubator programme. This will help to encourage more students to be serious with their intention to be entrepreneurs.
- Government should make enterprise education a compulsory course in Nigerian schools (primary, secondary and tertiary institutions). This will help to influence pupils and students attitude towards entrepreneurship development.

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