

Evaluating the Impact of the 9-Year Basic Education Programme on Entrepreneurship Education in Delta State, Nigeria

Dr. Bebenimibo, Job (Ph.D)

Lecturer, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
School of General Education
College of Education, Warri.
Delta State, Nigeria.

Abstract: This study examined the impact of the 9-Year Basic Education Programme on entrepreneurship education in Delta State. The researcher originated and tested three research questions and three null hypotheses to guide the study at the 0.05 significance level. This study employed a descriptive research design and applied purposeful sampling techniques to obtain a sample of 380 JSS III students and 100 junior secondary school teachers. A self-designed research questionnaire titled; Entrepreneurship Education Evaluation Questionnaire (EEEQ) was developed to retrieve data. The content and face validity of the instrument were determined by three experts, while the reliability of the instrument was determined through the test-retest method using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis. A reliability coefficient of 0.79 was obtained. Percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions, while ANOVA and t-test statistics were used to test the hypothesis. The result study demonstrates that entrepreneurship education as pertinent to basic skills acquisitions and future careers development. As a result of these findings, it was recommended that the foundation of entrepreneurship education should not be neglected, but efforts should be intensified by responsible government agencies to ensure its practical application at the basic level of learning.

Keywords: Evaluating, Entrepreneurship Education, Delta State and Impact of 9-Year UBEC programme

Introduction

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is the foundation for entrepreneurship skills development among its graduates in Nigeria. The programme has a package for 9-Year Compulsory Basic Education, terminating with a certificate known as the Junior School Certificate (JSC). Subjects such as Basic Science and Technology, Business Studies, Home Economics, Pre-vocational Studies, and Cultural and Creative Arts were equipped with the required curriculum to create a practical foundation for entrepreneurship education through creative, innovative, and practical instructional techniques. The UBEC programme is designed so that its graduates should have acquired the essential technical skills required for entrepreneurship practice and development. The Universal Basic Education curriculum has three fundamental noteworthy influential concerns to the progress of nations worldwide and determining the acquisition of skills necessary. These concerns are entrepreneurship education, globalization, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This compulsory 9-year Universal Basic Education programme provides the opportunity for Learners at this level of education to obtain basic scientific and technical skills for entrepreneurship activation and subsequent through further studies at the senior secondary school and tertiary institution levels (Onwusa, 2021).

The country's desire to conquer emerging challenges in the educational sector and human capital development has resulted in the quest for academic entrepreneurship development. The New Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) is designed to achieve the foundation of entrepreneurship education in the first nine years of learning. This curriculum aims to establish a contemporary and practical scheme that will guarantee the utmost advancement of the latent abilities of the learners'. The desire for effective entrepreneurship education in the learners and endorsement of a comprehension-motivated humanity that should champion Nigeria's advancement is achievable with the effective implementation of a BEC. The aptitude to obtain and exploit understanding and expertise effectively is vital to the progress and improvement that should boost the nation to become a robust, dynamic, and globally competitive economy by 2050. Hence, this reviewed structure of the New Basic Education Curriculum (BEC), as stated below, was designed to address capable challenges that could hinder the actualization of effective entrepreneurship education that is the foundation for the nation to develop into a globally competitive economy by 2050.

Reviewed Structure of the New Basic Education Curriculum (BEC)

BEC LEVELS	COMPULSORY SUBJECTS	OPTIONAL SUBJECTS
Lower BEC (Primary 1-3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English Studies 2. Mathematics 3. One major Nigeria Language (Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa) 4. Basic science and Technology 5. Religion and value Education 6. Cultural & Creative Arts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arabic 2. Business Studies 3. French

	7. Pre vocational studies	
MIDDLE BEC (Primary 4-6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> English Studies Mathematics One major Nigeria Language (Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa) Basic science and Technology Religion and value Education Cultural & Creative Arts Pre vocational studies French Language 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Arabic Business Studies
UPPER BEC (JSS1-3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> English Studies Mathematics One major Nigeria Language (Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa) Basic science and Technology Religion and value Education Cultural & Creative Arts Pre vocational studies French Language Business studies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Arabic

Source: NERDC (Nigerian Educational Research And Development Council) 2008

A determined and practical educational system can relate to the environmental challenges of the learners and also promote possible solutions to the identified challenges. Teaching and learning activities, as contained in the Universal Basic Education Curriculum (UBEC) in Nigeria, are designed to make education at the primary level to encourage learners to access and acquire basic entrepreneurship orientation and skills that the learners could subsequently develop. It is the intent of the UBEC designer that when students write their final year examination, the pupils should be able to relate their skills to solving societal challenges as graduates of the 9–Year Universal Basic Education Programme. The acquired relevant skills should make them to be self-reliant as desired. Suppose this is carefully considered and implemented as required. In that case, graduates of the UBE programme should have led to the production of several young entrepreneurs and job creators, thereby reducing unemployment and other crimes bedeviling our nation Nigeria. The UBE programme is the foundation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. It requires all the support it can get to be relevant as designed and flourishes in promoting skill acquisition and job creation to place the nation at its desired level come 2050. If entrepreneurship education is not gotten correctly at the UBE level of teaching and learning, striving to get it done at the Senior Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions could be a mirage as being experienced in our nation, Nigeria. As a developing nation, there is a need to get entrepreneurship education right to develop required skills and the nation's self-reliance advancement. The core aim of any well-designed education programme is to ensure appropriate graduates that can utilize acquired skills and comprehension to become self-reliant. The practical implementation of the UBEC should be able to produce graduates in these entrepreneurship skills, including carpentry, plumbing, bricklaying, mechanical device repairs, electrical device repairs, comedy actors, hairdressing, soap and detergent making, candle and match-stick production, and various farming skills among others. Though, they may not have obtained competency status in these skills, the required basic comprehension to ensure their competency status is guaranteed. These are skills desirable in every enterprise, including the oil and gas sector, even now that the nation is looking inward concerning the manufacturing of parts and equipment used in the oil and gas industry. Suppose stakeholders in our UBE sectors, including the governments and non-governmental agencies, decide to focus and implement a functional UBE with the aid of the 9-Year Universal Basic Education Curriculum. In that case, the future of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria will be confident in exhibit the desired outcome.

Literature Review

The New Basic Education Curriculum is a well-considered document in which the curriculum planners have involved all stakeholders as required in its design. However, the challenges of its practical implementation to actualize its intended desire remain the concern of every citizenry due to certain obstacles ranging from insufficient financial support. The UBE Act 2004 provided three means of financial support for the implementation of the Universal Basic Education Curriculum (UBEC), and they include the Federal Government, State Governments, and Local Governments through relevant agencies. Despite these provisions for its funding, its implementation is inadequate in establishing the foundation for entrepreneurship education in the country. This funding issue is a big obstacle because every other challenges depends on fund availability to carry out its participatory role in making the programme a success. The Universal Basic Education Commission policy stated that states should provide a 50% percent counterpart fund to access the UBE corresponding fund. This funding issue has been challenging for certain conditions, either due to a lack of political will or poor budgetary allocation for the educational sector. Consequently, Aboluwodi (2015) stated that insufficient funding

is a significant obstacle bedeviling the efficient implementation of the UBE programme, and Abayomi (2012) observed that Nigeria as a nation is not making provision for adequate funding for education since its budgetary allocation is not commensurate to the 26% advocated by UNESCO.

The issue of undependable and politicization of data for whatever reason has yet to be helpful in the planning and implementation of UBEC to facilitate the promotion of effective entrepreneurship education in the country. According to Yusuf and Alabi, (2013), the observed data gap in the UBE programme is a vital concern as it harms the practical implementation of the scheme. The issue of undependable data resulting majorly from the politicization of educational data through published census figures and technically faulty data collection processes adopted over the years has undoubtedly been dangerous to the efficient planning and implementation of the UBE programme in Nigeria. Centre for Public Impact (2017) observed that the generalization approach to relevant data collection and comprehension for preparation in the nation needs to be revised. Consequently, UNESCO, 2015 in the Education Review of Nigeria, observed this challenge of data generation as one of the main obstacles to achieving progress in the UBE programme as it negatively impacted the foundation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

Successive governments at all levels in the country may have also constituted an undeniable impediment to the continuity of the UBE programme with varying educational reform programmes. Despite these changing educational reform programmes, the concept of UBE in Nigeria indeed remained sacrosanct, but with no improved implementation policy guidelines to ensure efficient entrepreneurship education in the nation, thereby contributing to the unemployment rate, crime, and other forms of social nuisances. According to the Centre for Public Impact (2017), political will is the sustenance of required enthusiasm by political and administrative stakeholders to devote resources to achieve specific objectives and the ability to implement policies and programmes of government. For example, if political and administrative stakeholders of the UBE programme have followed the likes of Chief Obafemi Owolowo in emphasizing the relevance of primary education, governance, and its actions wouldn't have been an obstacle to the effective implementation of the UBE programme. The observed deficient in the political will as a manifestation of certain governors' negative response to the provision of their counterpart funding to ensure access to the Federal UBE funds meant for their states as an obstacle to the programme and consequently on the foundation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria as contained in the UBE Curriculum.

Every educational system in the world requires the participation of parents or guardians in the provision of specific tools or materials for their wards to learn effectively. The 9-3-4 education system presently practiced in Nigeria does not differ from this process of parent or guardian involvement in ensuring effective learning in the school system. In a situation where the parents' or guardians' socio-economic status prevents them from making such provision for their wards, it will become an impediment to that child's effective learning in school and consequently affect the promotion of entrepreneurship education negatively in the nation. According to Vanguard Newspaper of 21st October 2022, despite stakeholders' efforts, noticeable Nigerian children are plummeting out of school. In harmony with the latest data from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, the number of out-of-school children is about 20 million. This obstacle is due to poverty, among other factors constituting obstacles to the effective implementation of the UBE programme and the foundation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

The lack of relevant subjects' experts is also an alarming obstacle facing the implementation of the UBEC in the nation to the learners. The issue of getting the relevant subjects experts for employment as also remained a challenge, since most recruitment exercise done by the UBE Commission ends up recruiting the unqualified persons for the task. This has unfortunately, affected the smooth implementation of the programme, thereby frustrating governments efforts in getting entrepreneurship education right at the basic education level. The eventual employment of non-subjects experts to instruct subjects that requires expert, will definitely affect the learners acquisition process negatively and contribute to the non-achievement of the programmes objectives as it concerns entrepreneurship education in the nation. Due to the relevance of the UBE programme in building an educational system with little or no school dropout and subsequent advancement of technologically required manpower for nation's building, all components needed for the successful implementation of the programme should be adequately made available and functioning.

The unavailability and poor status of educational resources required for effective teaching and learning are alarming and require urgent intervention for the programme to succeed and ensure effective entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. These are resources designed to provide services in assisting instructors and learners in the UBE programme. They include other classroom and instructional facilities, including desks, tables, blackboard, chalk, marker, pictures, charts, etc., which are inadequate or unavailable to carry out meaningful teaching and learning and are prevalent obstacles hindering the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education at the UBE level.

Entrepreneurship education requires adequate and relevant functional educational infrastructure to accomplish its mandate. In the words of Atakpa, (2016) the deplorable or complete absence of infrastructural facilities has contributed to the poor development of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. The obstacle of inadequate educational facilities for the implementation of functional entrepreneurship education at the UBE level of education in Nigeria is alarming and frustrating the attainment of the mandate of the foundation of entrepreneurship education in the nation. These infrastructures include but are not limited to libraries, school buildings, and laboratories. Providing these in the quality and quantity required has a direct and positive impact on learners' achievement and staff enthusiasm. Humphrey and Crawford (2015) stated that regardless of the enormous amount of money allocated to UBE in Nigeria, the scheme's infrastructure needs to be adequate for most UBE schools. Business Day Nigeria Online (August 30, 2017) expressed grief concerning the days of inadequate investment in the UBE schools' infrastructure, which has resulted in the

affected schools where learners acquire knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship education in a miserable state in Nigeria. The lack of well-equipped workshops and laboratories for teachers and students to utilize is a serious concern that requires urgent attention by all stakeholders. Equally, several other scholars have insisted that inadequate facilities and equipment for teaching and learning in practical-related courses was the reason why entrepreneurship education has not been able to record a significant impact in Nigeria's industrialization drive and reduction of unemployment and its youths and ensure job creation (Amadi & Amakodi, 2019; Offorma, Egbe & Eze, 2012). Hence, effectively tackling the menace of poor educational infrastructure at the UBE level of education will ensure the effective implementation of the UBEC to achieve the mandate of entrepreneurship education in our nation, Nigeria.

Research Problem

The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) in Nigeria faces several challenges in integrating and promoting entrepreneurship education within the 9-year basic education framework. This has seemingly adversely affected the effective implementation the UBE curriculum in ensuring practical skills and knowledge required for entrepreneurship education at the basic level of learning and laying the foundation for entrepreneurship education at higher level of learning. Therefore the problem in which this study seeks to address is: To what extent does the 9-Year Basic Education Programme's curriculum prepare students with the necessary skills and knowledge for entrepreneurship education?

Research Questions

1. What is the impact of the 9-Year Basic Education Programme on students' entrepreneurial knowledge and skills?
2. How do students perceive the role of entrepreneurship education within the 9-Year Basic Education Programme?
3. How does the 9-Year Basic Education Programme influence students' intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities after graduation?

Hypotheses

H01: Students who have completed the 9-Year Basic Education Programme demonstrate significantly higher entrepreneurial knowledge and skills compared to those who have not.

H02: There is a positive correlation between students' perceptions of entrepreneurship education and their intentions to pursue entrepreneurship.

H03: The 9-Year Basic Education Programme positively influences students' intentions to become an entrepreneur after completing their education.

Methodology

A descriptive quantitative research design was applied in this study. It was used to examine the final year students, otherwise known as the Basic 9 (JSS III) students of 9-Year Basic Education Programme in Nigeria. Survey questionnaires were applied to retrieve required data from the students concerning the status of the programme with respect to entrepreneurship education and their intentions on entrepreneurship education in future or higher learning opportunities.

Population and Sampling Technique

The population of this study was the Basic 9 (JSS III) students of public junior secondary schools in Delta State of Nigeria. A purposeful random was utilized to determine the sample of the study. The sample made up of three hundred and two (302) JSS III (Basic 9) students from four (4) public junior secondary schools in Delta South Senatorial District.

Validity and Reliability

The instrument was validated by three experts in science education, technical education, educational psychology, and test and measurement while the reliability of the instrument was determined through a test-retest method. The instrument was administered on a group of 48 JSS III students outside the area of study in Bayelsa state, Nigeria. And the data collected were analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis at 0.05 level of significance and a reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained

Questionnaires Administration Procedure

Five Basic Science and Technology Teachers were used as research assistants, who were trained on the administration of the questionnaires provided for the study. This is to ensure effective distribution and collection of the Entrepreneurship Education Evaluation Questionnaire (EEIQ) to their JSS III students who are the sample of the study. This activity was carried by the research assistants and required data were retrieved from the respondent (JSS III students). The practice of using school teachers as research assistant actually help in a great measure by retrieving 100% of the questionnaires distributed.

The Advancement of UBE and Entrepreneurship Education

The advancement of the UBE programme from its present status and consequently sustaining entrepreneurship education in Nigeria as required must result in addressing the above-identified obstacles in such a way that there could be an effective delivery

of the UBE programme and provides scaffolding impact on the foundation of entrepreneurship education. These obstacles' as identified includes, insufficient financial support, undependable and politicized data, contradictory policies and programmes, parents' socio-economic status, lack of subject experts, lack of relevant educational resources, security, and poor educational infrastructure.

Government stakeholders can efficiently address the obstacle of insufficient financial support to make adequate budgetary provisions in a way that is commensurable to what is being advocated by UNESCO. Administrators of the UBE programme should be equipped with the required knowledge to judiciously utilize available funds to ensure the achievement of the mandate of the UBE programme and guarantee an efficient foundation for entrepreneurship education in the nation.

The undependable and politicization of data for whatever reason has yet to be helpful in the planning and implementing UBEC to promote effective entrepreneurship education in the country, and stakeholders should avoid it. Henceforth, stakeholders and administrators of the UBE programme should carry out thorough research to retrieve correct data from communities where the UBE schools are located and not to rely on published census figures that have already been politicized and undependable. This approach is likely to result in dependable data for effective planning and execution of UBEC to achieve progress in the UBE programme and the foundation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

Successive governments at all levels should ensure the continuity of measures that are impactful to the implementation of the UBE programme positively. Educational reform programmes, should not result from regime issues but should be championed towards programme or project delivery in Nigeria. There should not be an alteration of the existing educational programme just to be identified with the political regime. Stakeholders and administrators' of the UBE programme should imbibe the culture of emphasizing the relevance of UBE and ensure its efficient implementation to achieve entrepreneurship education in the country.

As a nation, the UBE Act of 2014 has made it mandatory for every child of school age to receive the 9-year compulsory education terminating with the award of a Junior School Certificate (JSC). Governments at all levels should live up to the expectations of the act to avoid placing any form of the financial burden on parents or guardians to prevent their status from becoming an obstacle to the efficient implementation of the UBE programme. Parents and guardians must ensure their school-aged children are not allowed to be perambulating the streets or working as child labour, especially during school hours. This measure could address the issue of out-of-school drastically and have a positive impact on the practical implementation of the UBE programme and the foundation of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

The minimum qualification of NCE holders to be recruited as subject teachers should be strictly followed. Performance at recruitment aptitude and subsequent interview panel should decide the employment of subject expert for the programme. The issue of subject expert engagement should not be used for political settlement whereby only applicants with access to political actors would be employed, undermining an efficient recruitment process that will ensure UBE administrators hire the best hands for the job. Administrators of the UBE programme can liaise with respective colleges of Education and Faculties of Education in respective universities in the country to get graduating subject experts for employment to achieve the successful implementation of the programme and efficient entrepreneurship education.

Administrators of the UBE programme should be veteran educationists capable of identifying and providing efficient educational resources required for effective teaching and learning. The administrators should provide these resources as the UBEC stipulates to facilitate teaching and learning as designed. Administrators should avoid at all times the issue of inadequacy or non-availability of the educational resources necessary to carry out meaningful teaching and learning and ensure the effective implementation of entrepreneurship education at the UBE level.

Governments at all levels should work in effective modalities with the various security agencies in the country to ensure an effective security system that will provide the safety of lives and properties in Nigeria. The security votes usually made available should be judiciously used to equip the security agencies with modern security apparatus to effectively carry out their duties and provide adequate security for the UBE schools. It is not out of place for governments at all levels to investigate the real cause of prevailing insurgent groups, address the root cause of insecurity, and find a lasting solution to this menace bedeviling the nation's educational sector and, by extension, its economy.

It is the duty of governments at all levels to provide relevant educational infrastructure to support the efficient implementation of entrepreneurship education as stipulated in the UBE Act of 2014. There shouldn't be any deplorable or complete absence of infrastructural facilities to facilitate efficient entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. The UBE schools should be well equipped with modern workshops, libraries and laboratories for teachers and students to utilize to acquire the required knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship education development. Stakeholders of the UBE programme should ensure that the poor educational infrastructure at the UBE level of education is a thing of the past for the effective implementation of the UBEC to achieve the mandate of entrepreneurship education in our nation, Nigeria.

Conclusion

The UBE programme, as being implemented in Nigeria, is observed to be far from achieving its mandatory objective of removing school-age children from the streets to the classroom, thereby reducing the number of school children in the nation. Governments at all levels are exercising lip services to implement the UBE programme in UBEC effectively and consequently frustrating efficient entrepreneurship education in the country. Certain obstacles were pragmatic to the poor implementation of the 9-year UBE programme, and these obstacles' includes insufficient financial support, undependable and politicized data, contradictory policies

and programmes, parents' socio-economic status, lack of subject experts, lack of relevant educational resources, security, and poor educational infrastructure. The paper has equally advocated specific measures that should be required to address the identified obstacles and advance the UBE programme as stipulated in UBEC to provide efficient entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

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