

IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDIES ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENUGU NORTH LGA DURING COVID-19 ERA

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on impact of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu North Local government area during covid-19 era. It was guided by three research questions and one hypothesis. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of 9, 057 senior secondary school students in the 9 public secondary schools in Enugu North LGA of Enugu State. Simple random sampling was also used to select 15 secondary school students from each of the secondary schools, making it a total of 105 students selected as sample. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. It was validated by three experts and pilot study was tested using test-retest method. Alpha Cronbach was used to compute the data on this which yielded a coefficient value of 0.84, 0.79 and 0.86 with a general value of 0.83 respectively. The data collected were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. Findings show that the extent entrepreneurship is taught in secondary schools includes twice a week, three times a week and according to time table schedule. Findings also show that areas learnt by students in entrepreneurship education includes production, sewing, beadwork, cake making, crop production, and ICT. Findings as well revealed that knowledge of engagement into small scale business, use of ICT in online learning, success in crop production, production and marketing of clothing and bags were the impacts of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu North during the covid-9 era.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship studies, academic performance, Covid-19 era.

Introduction

Societies from one generation to another had depended solely on education for survival. This makes education an important instrument for change and development in the world today. Since education focuses on societal development, the need to educate individuals mainly in educational institutions becomes a desideratum. Little wonder formal schools are erected for the purpose of teaching and learning; this is what education represents. Once a child is born, his learning begins in earnest (Obidike and Onwuka, 2012). It begins

informally at home and continues formally in school. The school remains an academic environment that makes formal learning available to learners. It is also an academic institution where teaching and learning formally takes place. Roser and Ortiz-Ospina (2019) said that a school is an educational institution designed to provide learning spaces and learning environment for the teaching of students under the direction of teachers. In Nigeria, schools are organized into three different levels namely; primary, secondary and tertiary. The primary level is meant for children prior to their entry into secondary schools; while the tertiary level is meant for students who have successfully completed secondary schools.

Secondary school is that level of education a child is enrolled prior to his entry into tertiary schools. Ige (2013) defined secondary school education as the next phase of education after primary school education. According to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013), secondary school is the form of education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. Ogbonnaya (2016) stated that secondary school is that form of education which children receive automatically after they have received primary school education. He further said that secondary education constitutes post primary education and serves as a link between primary and university education. Secondary education in Nigeria is a six year programme, comprising of the junior secondary and senior secondary. Each level is of the three years programme. Ige (2013) said that the aim of secondary education is developing a child better than the primary level, because it is obvious that primary education is insufficient for children to acquire literacy, numeracy, and communication skills.

The objectives of secondary school education as stipulated by the National Policy of Education (2013) is to; provide an increasing number of primary school pupils with the opportunity for education of a higher quality, irrespective of sex, or social, religious and ethnic background; diversify its curriculum to cater for the differences in talents opportunities and roles possessed by or open to students after their secondary school course; equip students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology; develop and project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as the world's cultural heritage; raise generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour and appreciate those values specified under our broad national aims and live as good citizens; foster Nigerian unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity and inspire students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and in later life.

Students in Nigeria secondary schools come across different learning experiences embedded in the curriculum and presented to them through different school subjects. Ige, (2013) enumerated that subjects offered in secondary schools include English language,

Mathematics, Literature in English, Biology, Accounting, Economics, Geography, Physics, Agricultural science, Chemistry and host of others including Entrepreneurship studies.

The journey of entrepreneurship studies in the Nigerian education curriculum is historical. According to Dike and Effanga (2020), the history of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria started in the 1960s. This is seen from the various government programmes such as the Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC), Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS), etc. As promising as they sound, these programmes were short lived. The reason for the short life span of these programmes is not far-fetched. It is simply because they were not inculcated into the educational system.

Consequently, even before the introduction of entrepreneurship studies, Nigeria has been bedeviled with the issue of unemployment, especially among fresh graduates. This situation got worsened by bad governance, corruption, and an incomprehensive educational curriculum in institutions of learning. Currently, Nigeria is among the top countries worldwide with the highest poverty index (World Bank, 2019). This is not far from Okoye and Arimonu as cited in Odey, Udu and Odoh (2021) reported that Nigeria's poverty level has increased to about 70% and that many Nigerians now live below one dollar a day. However, economic empowerment of the citizenry is the prime objective of any nation.

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

Entrepreneurship studies or entrepreneurship education is a well skilled packaged learning experiences made available to students for the acquisition of knowledge, experiences and skills needed in societies. Unesco (2008) said that entrepreneurship studies is made of all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. It goes beyond business creation. It is about increasing students' ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes. It is also seen by UNESCO as education and training which allows students to develop and use their creativity and to take initiative, responsibilities and risks. Njoku and Nwosu (2010) stated that entrepreneurship education deals with the acquisition of right habits, attitudes, and the skills as well as means of surviving in the face of unemployment. Similarly, Okeke and Edikpa (2014) said that entrepreneurship studies is aimed at equipping the students with academic knowledge, requisite skills of creativity, innovative and risk taking, ability to

turn ideas into action and capacities needed in the world of work, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. Entrepreneurship studies develops in the learners the mindsets, generic attributes and skills that are the foundations of entrepreneurship. An education of such quality helps young people realize their full human potentials and take their place in society as productive, responsible and democratic citizens.

Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education

The objectives of entrepreneurship education according to Jimah and Unigbokhia (2011) in Adenike (2016) are to:

1. Offer functional education for youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant.
2. Provide the graduate youths with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
3. Serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
4. Reduce high rate of unemployment, under employment and poverty among graduate youths.
5. Reduce the rural-urban migration of graduate youths.
6. Provide the graduate youths with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium scale businesses (p. 210).

When secondary school students are well taught entrepreneurship studies, they are likely to perform academically better in this subject discipline.

Academic performance means student's educational outcome after a short period of learning engagement. It is also regarded as students' success in a short term learning activity. Bossart, Doumen, Buyse and Verschuere (2011), refers to academic performance as students success in meeting short or long term goals in education. Duruji, Azuh, and Oviasogie (2014) posited that academic performance is the degree of a student's accomplishment of his or her task and studies. Academic performance also means the extent to which a student has attained his short or long term educational goals.

Observation shows that secondary school students in Enugu North, LGA has been learning entrepreneurship studies in their various schools even before the covid-19 era. However, the researcher is not aware about the academic performance of these students during the covid-19 era and this becomes a gap in this study. Another issue in this study is that the researcher has not come across studies or literature that discussed entrepreneurship studies and students academic performance in Enugu North during the covid-19 era and with this, the researcher became worried about what their performances could be. To fill these gaps, the researcher saw the need for a study of this kind.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu North E.G.A during the Covid-19 era. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent entrepreneurship studies is taught in secondary schools in Enugu North L.G.A.
2. Find out the areas of entrepreneurship learnt by secondary school students, in Enugu North L.G.A.
3. Find out the impact of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of students during covid.1-19 era

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent is entrepreneurship studies taught in secondary schools in Enugu North L.G.A?
2. What areas of entrepreneurship are learnt by secondary school students in Enugu North L.G.A?
3. What are the impacts of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students during covid-19 era?

Hypothesis

There is no significant impact of entrepreneurship on the academic performance of male and female secondary school students in Enugu North L.G.A during Covid-19 era

Methods

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of 9, 057 senior secondary school students in the 9 publicsecondary schools in Enugu North LGA of Enugu State. Through simple random sampling, 7 secondary schools were selected for the study. Simple random sampling was also used to select 15 secondary school students from each of the secondary schools, making it a total of 108 students selected as sample. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire drafted by the researcher. It was validated by three experts and was subjected to pilot test on 20 secondary school students from Oji River L.G.A using test-retest method.

Alpha Cronbach was used to compute the data on this which yielded a coefficient value of 0.84, 0.79 and 0.86 respectively. The data collected were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent is entrepreneurship studies taught at secondary schools in Enugu North L.G.A?

Table 1: Extent entrepreneurship studies is taught in secondary schools

S/N	To an extent, entrepreneurship is taught	X	SD	Decision
1	Once a week	2.08	2.41	Disagree
2	Twice a week	2.93	2.70	Agree
3	Three times a week	2.90	3.03	Agree
4	According to time table schedules	3.12	2.69	Agree
5	As extra-curricular activity	1.07	2.36	Disagree

Analysis in table 1 shows that the mean scores of items 1-5 were 2.41, 2.70, 3.03, 2.69 and 2.36 respectively. Item 2, 3 and 4 were agree because their mean score were 2.50 and above. Other items were disagreed because their mean score were below 2.50.

Research Question 2: What areas of entrepreneurship are learnt by secondary school students in Enugu North L.G.A?

Table 2: Areas of entrepreneurship which are learnt by secondary school students

S/N	Areas of entrepreneurship studies includes	X	SO	Decision
6	Shoe production	0.39	1.24	Disagree
7	Garment production	1.12	2.56	Disagree
8	Bags production	2.73	2.27	Agree
9	Sewing	2.65	2.44	Agree
10	Bead work	2.81	3.01	Agree
11	Embroidery work	1.27	1.66	Disagree
12	Cake making	3.10	2.91	Agree
13	Crop production	2.95	2.69	Agree
14	Animal production	2.21	2.11	Disagree
15	Recharge card production	1.18	2.34	Disagree
16	Business	2.02	2.18	Disagree
17	ICT	2.84	3.01	Agree

Analysis in table 2 shows that the mean scores of items 6-17 were 0.39, 1.12, 2.73, 2.65, 2.81, 1.27, 3.10, 2.95, 2.21, 1.18, 2.02 and 2.84 respectively. Item 6, 7, 11, 14, 15 and 16 were disagreed because their mean scores were below 2.50. Other items were agreed because their mean scores were 2.50 and above.

Research Question 3: What are the impacts of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students during covid-19 era?

Table 3: impacts of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students during covid-19 era

S/N	Impacts of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students during covid-19 era.	X	SD	Decision
18	Knowledge of engagement in small scale business	2.91	3.06	Agree
19	Utilization of ICT in online learning	2.87	2.99	Agree
20	Success in crop production	2.82	2.47	Agree
21	Success in animal production	1.92	2.21	Disagree
22	Production and marketing of clothing	2.80	3.00	Agree
23	Production and marketing of bags	2.77	2.52	Agree
24	Production and marketing of shoes	1.89	2.10	Disagree
25	Production and sale of recharge cards	0.39	1.09	Disagree

Analysis in table 3 shows that the mean scores of items 18-25 were 3.16, 3.04, 2.82, 1.92, 2.80, 2.77, 1.89 and 0.39 respectively. Item 21, 24 and 25 were disagreed because their mean scores were below 2.50. Other items were agreed because their mean scores were 2.50 and above.

Hypothesis

There is no significant impact of entrepreneurship on the academic performance of male and female secondary school students in Enugu North L.G.A during Covid-19 era.

Table 4

Respondents	N	SD	X	t-cal	Df	a	T-erit	Decision
Female	18	2.59	2.73	0.045	28	.05	2.048	Accept
Male	12	3.01	2.69					Null Hypothesis

On the table 4 above, $t\text{-cal}$ (0.045) is less than $t\text{-crit}$ (2.048). The null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Findings from table one enumerated the extent entrepreneurship is taught in secondary schools which includes twice a week, three times a week and according to time table schedule. These findings are in consonant with Dawson (2017) who noted that entrepreneurship education is taught on weekly basis where students are allowed to explore their creativity, mindset and entrepreneurial world. Zamler (2021) held that teaching of entrepreneurship to kids is twice a week and programme designed to teach children through hands-on -experience that entrepreneurial skills are essential for success in life. Similarly, Institute of Culinary Education (2021) held that some entrepreneurship studies such as cake-baking and other related activities are taught morning, afternoon, evening and weekends based on the time table description.

Findings from table two enumerated areas of entrepreneurship learnt by secondary school students in Enugu North and includes; production, sewing, beadwork, cake making, crop production, and ICT. These findings are similar to Ibeleme (2021) enumerated the areas covered by children exposure to entrepreneurship studies to include music, film making, dry cleaning business, food production/restaurant, tailoring, catering, cake baking, beads business, agricultural business to include; poultry, snail business, and ICT. Similarly, Chidume and Emelue (2021) earlier mentioned textiles and clothing as a particular area of exposure while Institute of Culinary Education (2021) mentioned cake baking and hairstylist as respective areas students are exposed to during entrepreneurship studies

Findings from table three show that knowledge of engagement into small scale business, use of ICT in online learning, success in crop production, production and marketing of clothing and bags were the impacts of entrepreneurship studies on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu North during the covid-19 era. These findings agrees with Okeke and Edikpa (2014) that entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Similarly, Enu (2012) discovered that entrepreneurship studies equipping students with academic knowledge, requisite skills of creativity, innovative and risk taking, ability to turn ideas into action and capacities needed in the world of work. These works as discovered by Ibeleme (2021) includes agricultural production of crops and animals, sewing/tailoring and ICT in entrepreneurship. However, the above findings negates the outcome of the null hypothesis which was rejected.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship meaningfully impacted on secondary school student's academic performance especially during covid-19 era. During this time, a good number of students enrolled into different entrepreneurial skills such as crop production, sewing, beadwork, cake making and ICT. Their engagement in these entrepreneurial exercises kept them busy during the unexpected covid-19 period which in-turn, helped them not only to acquire relevant skills necessary in like but generate funds profitable to themselves and respective families. Educating students about entrepreneurship can help them develop real world skills to lead extraordinary lives in this time paced and fast-changing world. The future is uncertain and every student should be ready to face and conquer. Entrepreneurship help students become independence and channel their creating something of their own during covid-19 era. Studying entrepreneurship enhances student's analytical and logical skills that enable them to solve any problem.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers recommend as follows;

1. Students should be meaningfully engaged in entrepreneurial skills from junior secondary schools to help them gain more skills and experiences before their graduation from secondary schools.
2. Teachers who teach entrepreneurship studies to students should ensure that they are constant in class and that all students should be assigned duties during hands-on-experience.
3. Government should as well, assist secondary schools in providing human and material resources so as to ensure that entrepreneurship activities are effectively implemented in secondary schools.

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