ATTITUDE OF IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS TOWARDS TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL/ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR SELF-EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract
The study was aimed at ascertaining the attitude of in-school adolescents towards technical/vocational/entrepreneurship education for self-employment in Orlu local government area of Imo state. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive research design was adopted. A sample of 120 in-school adolescents was drawn from a population of 2875 students through simple random selection from four schools in Orlu local government area. A twenty six (26) item questionnaire was used as the instrument to collect relevant data. The validity of the instrument was ascertained by experts in Measurement and Evaluation of the department of Educational psychology/Guidance and counselling of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. The instrument was then administered to the subjects of study and retrieved on the spot. Simple percentages were used to analyzed the three research questions. The result of the study has several implications for parents, teachers, in-school adolescents and the government. The results show that the attitude of in-school adolescents towards technical/vocational/entrepreneurship education is still biased and needs vocational re-orientation. Recommendations includes all stake holders should be made to understand that entrepreneurship education is a practically oriented exercise that will lead to self employment and not producing certificate carrying school leavers looking for employment.
Introduction

The major objective of Technical/Vocational/Entrepreneurship Education is to empower individuals to become self-reliant entrepreneurs. Therefore, in this paper, these three terms will be used interchangeably for convenience sake. While the first two had been with us since the colonial period the last one is the most recent in the Nigerian system of education. The general concept of technical, vocational as well as entrepreneurship education has been a negative one. The negative attitude of adolescents towards this type of education is motivated by the general negative attitude of the members of the society. The stakeholders who are supposed to inculcate entrepreneurial skills both informal and formal into the Nigerian youth especially, the home, school, peer group and the government are not forthcoming.

Collaborating, Ugonna, Ugonna and Ugwuadu (2015) note that it is no longer fashionable for parents to take their children to farm and teach them certain crafts that is traditional to our society. The parents fail to introduce their children to entrepreneurial skills early in life because many of them want to answer prestigious names like ‘‘mama’’or ‘‘papa’’ doctor, lawyer or engineer. The school system has not encouraged vocational education too because most of the vocational subjects offered in our schools are theoretically based and lack skill acquisition. Secondly, the educational orientation of Nigerian in-school adolescents is white-collar job directed which is responsible for the unemployment problem in the country. In view of this orientation, Nigerian youth are in love with government employment and as a result look down on entrepreneurship education. Thirdly, there is no effort to change this negative attitude. Attitude plays important role in shaping innovation and behaviour of individuals. Entrepreneurial attitude is simply attitudes towards entrepreneurship. It is about the extent to which people think there are good opportunities for starting a business (Kowalczyk, 2015).

This trend was observed very early in the history of education in Nigeria by National Policy on Education (N.P.E.2004). Collaborating, Akpan and Uwah (2014) observed that education given to our youth since late 1960s is that which leads to producing children who can read and write and pass examinations that qualify them for office job. This situation many years ago still obtains in our present educational system. The only difference is that there are no longer enough office jobs to go round with annual increase in the number of school leavers.

This early education came with elementary craft, that is, primary skill which could not be sustained by classroom teachers who monetised handicraft. They collect money in lieu of handicraft which would have enabled the pupils practise entrepreneurial skills early in life. Friends and play mates also play significant part in career choice of individuals because they give wrong information, attitude, beliefs and values which motivate adolescents’ negative attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Nigerian youth of today are not as fortunate as those of the past as their number continues to soar and the type of education they are exposed to can never equip them with necessary skills to become entrepreneurs. In view of this, Nigerian school leavers have been driven to resentment by the non-empowering and defective Nigerian system of education. Entrepreneurship education has been fingered by many especially Iwuama and

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**Keywords:** Technical/Vocational/Entrepreneurship Education, In-school Adolescents, Self Empowerment
Ugwuegbulam (2009) as important educational innovation that would assist the youth acquire enabling skills that will equip them for self-employment.

The rate of unemployment has reached an alarming proportion in Nigeria. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) state that youth in Nigeria constitute the bulk of the population and form about 60% of the total population of the country. According to them, the statistics from the Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of statistics show that Nigeria has a youth population of about 80 million with 64 million of them unemployed and 1.6 million underemployed. No wonder unemployment became a major issue in the 2014/2015 political campaign by Nigerian politicians. Unemployment is not new in Nigerian history but has reached its peak since the democratic rule of 1999 to date.

Commenting on the rate of increase of school leavers and unemployment, Safyanu and Ali (2001) opine that there are many institutions consisting of eighty-nine universities owned by the government and private organisations, several colleges of education and agriculture as well as mono/polytechnics that produce graduates for the few available jobs. The administration of former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan approved many federal and state higher institutions as well as nine additional private universities in February 2014. These will also contribute in increasing the population of the unemployed in the country.

In 2006, effort was made by the Nigerian government to change student’s orientation by directing that all Nigerian higher institutions should include entrepreneurship education as a compulsory course of study for all students with effect from 2007/2008 academic session (Aliu and Ibe, 2008). Assessing this policy and attitude of in-school adolescents towards entrepreneurship education is the motivation of this study.

**Statement of the Problem**

Civilisation with its globalisation and trade liberalisation has created many challenges for African countries. In Nigeria, the challenges became more intense with Structural Adjustment Programme (S.A.P.) of 1986 which brought about considerable reduction in public sector job placement, thus leading to graduate unemployment with consequent implication on youth restiveness. To equip Nigerian youth to be self-employed vocational/technical/entrepreneurship education has been identified by many especially Akpan and Uwah (2014) as the only type of education that will expose the youth to necessary skills that will empower them.

The government prompted by this need of youth empowerment established various schemes and programmes which cut across almost all the sectors of the economy. Much has not been realised from this effort due to wrong implementation of policies as well as negative attitude of in-school adolescents towards vocational education.

The main question this study seeks to address is how youth empowerment can be enhanced against the backdrop of entrepreneurial challenges in Nigerian schools as in-school adolescents are always exhibiting negative attitude towards vocational/technical/entrepreneurship education.

**Purpose of the Study**

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The purpose of this study is deciphering the attitude of in-school adolescents towards entrepreneurship education. It aims at determining if in-school adolescents consider entrepreneurship education as a good alternative to white-collar job subjects in secondary schools. The study will also investigate if the in-school adolescents relate entrepreneurship education to self-employment.

**Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the attitude of in-school adolescents towards entrepreneurship education?
2. Do in-school adolescents consider entrepreneurship education as a good alternative to white-collar job subjects in the secondary schools?
3. Do in-school adolescents relate entrepreneurship education to self-employment?

**Hypothesis**

One null hypothesis was formulated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between parental and peer factor in influencing in-school adolescents’ attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

**Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive research design that uses a survey strategy for data collection. Descriptive research according to Kowalczyk (2015)is all about describing people who took part in a study so as to provide information about the naturally occurring status, behaviour, attitude or other characteristics of a particular group. Descriptive designs are therefore non experimental and is used to study people’s opinion or attitude towards issues. They are also economical in the sense that they make use of a representative sample from a large population that would have been very expensive to study. The study was carried out in Oru West Municipal located in the South Eastern geographical zone of Nigeria and in the Igbo heartland of Imo State. The population is made up of 2875 in-school adolescents in six (6) schools two (2) female and four (4) c-educational. Through simple balloting three (3) schools, one (1) female and two (2) co-educational were selected. Afterwards, forty adolescents from each of the schools were randomly selected giving a total population of one hundred and twenty (120) adolescents. Twenty-six (26) questionnaire items were used to collect relevant data for answering the three (3) research questions and analysing the one (1) null hypothesis.

The content validity of the items was established by two senior lecturers of the Department of Entrepreneurship Education of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu (COOU), Uli, Igbariam campus who ascertained their relevance to the study. A test-re-test was used in testing the reliability of the instrument. Ten (10) copies of the questionnaire were administered on a face to face basis to ten (10) adolescents outside the local government area of study. Two weeks later, the same but fresh copies of the instrument were given to the students. Results of the test-re-test were analysed using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which yielded a high positive correlation 0.89.

With the help of an escort, one hundred and twenty (120) copies of questionnaire were administered by the researchers and were retrieved on the spot. The three (3) research questions were analysed using total scores and simple percentages while the one (1) null hypothesis was tested using chi-square.
Research Question 1
What is the attitude of in-school adolescents towards Entrepreneurship Education?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire Items</th>
<th>Positive response (%)</th>
<th>Negative response + (%)</th>
<th>Total response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you like exploring your entrepreneurial skills?</td>
<td>48(40)</td>
<td>72(60)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do you enjoy skill acquisition?</td>
<td>40(33)</td>
<td>80(67)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you appreciate handicraft?</td>
<td>55(45)</td>
<td>66(55)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Do you enjoy lessons on vocational subjects?</td>
<td>20(17)</td>
<td>100(83)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Do you feel motivated during lessons on vocational subjects?</td>
<td>40(33)</td>
<td>80(67)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Will you enjoy establishing your own enterprise?</td>
<td>50(40)</td>
<td>70(60)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total score and percentage**

|                | 252(35) | 468(65) |

**Mean**

|                | 42      | 78      |

Table 1 above showed the analysis of data collected for research question 1. The total score (468) and percentage (65) revealed adolescents’ negative attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. Item number (4) was top on the list with 100 responses representing 83% of the respondents. Positive attitude totalling 252 score representing 35% was also revealed by the data analysis. Items numbers 5 and 6 revealed lack of exposure to vocational/entrepreneurship education.

From the analysis the respondents were found to display negative attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

Research Question 2
Do in-school adolescents consider vocational/entrepreneurial subjects as good alternative to white collar job subjects?

Table 2
Table 2 presents the data analysis in respect of research question two. The analysis revealed the positive attitude of the adolescents towards vocational subjects with the total score of 283 responses representing 39% of the total score. The analysis on the other hand revealed negative attitude of adolescents towards vocational subjects with total score 437 responses representing 61% of the total respondents.

Items numbers 2 and 4 revealed that many of the respondents were not yet exposed to the subject matter-entrepreneurship and therefore could not understand the relationship between vocational subjects and job creation hence the negative responses of 96 and 110 respectively.

Research Question 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/S</th>
<th>Questionnaire Items</th>
<th>Positive response + (%)</th>
<th>Negative response + (%)</th>
<th>Total response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is entrepreneurship education ideal in secondary schools?</td>
<td>54(45)</td>
<td>66(55)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Is self-employment practicable among adolescents?</td>
<td>24(20)</td>
<td>96(80)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Is it possible to be gainfully self-employed?</td>
<td>60(50)</td>
<td>60(50)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Is it possible for in-school adolescents to create jobs for others?</td>
<td>10(8)</td>
<td>110(92)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Do those who try to be self-employed end up being frustrated?</td>
<td>65(54)</td>
<td>55(46)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Is there motivation for those who seek self-employment?</td>
<td>70(58)</td>
<td>50(42)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total score and percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>283(39)</strong></td>
<td><strong>437(61)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do in-school adolescents relate Entrepreneurship Education to self-employment?

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/S</th>
<th>Questionnaire Items</th>
<th>Positive response + (%)</th>
<th>Negative response + (%)</th>
<th>Total response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship education is closely related to self-employment.</td>
<td>30(25)</td>
<td>90(75)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vocational education will expose in-school adolescents to various skills that will lead to self-employment.</td>
<td>50(40)</td>
<td>70(60)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Financial constraint is a major challenge facing young entrepreneurs.</td>
<td>70(60)</td>
<td>50(40)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Lack of skill acquisition will lead to unemployment.</td>
<td>50(40)</td>
<td>70(60)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship education will promote self-reliance.</td>
<td>90(75)</td>
<td>30(25)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship education should be introduced in your school curriculum.</td>
<td>100(83)</td>
<td>20(17)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total score and percentage 390(54) 330(46)

Table above presents the data analysed in response to research question three. From the analysis the general perception of the respondents shows ignorance about the relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and self-employment as revealed in item one with 90 negative responses and 30 positive responses representing 75% and 25% of respondents respectively.

The analysis revealed 60% awareness of financial constraint as a major problem facing young entrepreneurs as shown in item 3. The analysis also revealed general consensus that Entrepreneurship Education if incorporated fully in school curriculum will help adolescents attain self-reliance as shown in item 6 with 100 (83%) positive responses and 20(11%) negative responses.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between parental and peer factor influencing in-school adolescents’ attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>+ Positive (%)</th>
<th>- Negative (%)</th>
<th>Total(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>40(67)</td>
<td>20(33)</td>
<td>60(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td>35(58)</td>
<td>25(42)</td>
<td>60(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75(62)</td>
<td>45(38)</td>
<td>120(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X² calculated = 9
X² table value =3.841
Degree of freedom df = 1
Level of significance = 0.05

\[ X^2_c > X^2_t \]
\[ 9 > 3.841 \]

From table 4 above, it can be observed that \((X^2)\) calculated (9) is greater than \(X^2\) table value of 3.841, the null (Hn) hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between parental and peer factor in influencing in-school adolescents’ attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education.

Discussion of Findings

In response to research question one, table 1, the analysis of the data revealed that the general attitude of in-school adolescents towards Entrepreneurship Education is negative. Collaborating, Ugonna, Ugonna and Ugwuadu (2015) noted that it is no longer fashionable for parents to take their children to farm and teach them certain crafts that are traditional to our society. The inability of the parents to introduce their children to entrepreneurial skills early in life formed the basis for this negative attitude. Secondly, the attitude of the Nigerian school system towards Entrepreneurship Education has always been a negative one too. The educational orientation given to in-school adolescents is white-collar job directed and has contributed to this negative attitude. This prompted Akpan and Uwah (2014) to submit that education given to our youth since late 1960s is that which leads to produce children who can read, write and pass examination that qualify them for office job.

In response to research question two, table 2, the analysis of data revealed that the respondents indicated negative attitude towards vocational subjects. The outcome also revealed that the respondents due to lack of exposure could not understand the relationship between vocational subjects and self employment. This negative attitude towards vocational subjects could be attributed to the activities of the classroom teachers in the primary stage. The type of education introduced by the colonial masters came with primary skills associated with handicrafts that could not be sustained by the classroom teachers who monetized handicrafts at the expense of pupil’s creativity.

Recognising the importance of exposing students to Entrepreneurship Education early in life Iwuama and Ugwuegbulam (2009) stated that this type of education would assist the youth acquire enabling skills that will equip them for self employment. This general negative attitude can be said to be responsible for mass production of school leavers who are incapable of being self sufficient. This of course, resulted in mass unemployment of out of school adolescents. In view of this, Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) citing Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of Statistics noted that Nigeria has a youth population of about 80 million with 64 million of them unemployed and 1.6 million under employed.

The analysis of research question three, table 3 revealed that majority of the respondents never associated Entrepreneurship Education with self employment. This ignorance no doubt resulted in the rate of increase in out of school unemployment as most students prefer white-collar job subjects.

The ignorance of in-school adolescents as regards this relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and self employment prompted Mapfaira and Setibi (2014) to argue that meaningful Entrepreneurship Education is an attempt at fostering entrepreneurial awareness as a career option through the enhancement of the understanding of the process of initiating and managing a business. The researchers also noted that exposure to Entrepreneurship Education will help in-school adolescents to appreciate the
importance of self employment as represented by 100(83%) responses. This finding was collaborated by Zain, Akra and Ghani (2010) when they found that more than 50% of students had an intention to become entrepreneurs after going through Entrepreneurship Education programme.

The above is confirmed by Mapfaira, et al (2014) which indicated a higher percentage of 73 and Kabui and Maalu (2012) which found that most students who had gone through entrepreneurship course had positive perception of entrepreneurship as a future career. However, the same result also showed that factors that included fear of failure and lack of sufficient capital were some of the major barriers to the students’ intent to start their own businesses. However, the analysis of the study manifested total ignorance of adolescents about the relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and self employment.

Hypothesis
Table 4 sought to determine whether there is any significant relationship between parental and peer factor in influencing in-school adolescents’ attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. The findings show significant relationship, the null (Hn) hypothesis was therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted.

Peer group plays important role in influencing in-school adolescents’ attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. Olayinka and Omoegun (2001) agreed with the findings by stating that peer factor is a powerful force in setting standard of behaviour towards various problems of adolescents. Similarly, Ugonna et al (2015) emphasises the role of parents in influencing adolescents’ attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. They state that parents fail to introduce their children to entrepreneuria
tal skills early in life because many of them want to answer prestigious names like ‘’mama’’ or ‘’papa’’ doctor, lawyer or engineer.

Summary of Findings
From the findings of this study the respondents were generally found to display unfavourable disposition towards Entrepreneurship Education due to ignorance having manifested interest in incorporating the subject in their school curriculum. The analysis revealed adolescents’ growing need for Entrepreneurship Education. The adolescents also manifested independence to set themselves free from parents and other authority figures and act in conformity with mates and friends. The analysis equally revealed a 50% 50% positive and negative response in being gainfully self employed. This simply shows that with proper orientation the in-school adolescents will have a right disposition towards Entrepreneurship Education.

The data analysis also revealed that majority of the respondents never associated Entrepreneurship Education with self employment. According to the findings many of them are aware of the dangers of unemployment but could not understand how their studying vocational subjects could help solve the problem.

The findings show significant relationship between parental and peer factor in influencing in-school adolescents’ attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. From the hypothesis test, it was observed that both parents and peer factors influence the adolescents’ attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. The adolescents’ vocational behaviour is determined by what their peer feel and the choice of their parents. This problem will be addressed when Entrepreneurship Education is incorporated in their school curriculum. The study has
succeeded in creating awareness for the in-school adolescents as regards the need for Entrepreneurship Education for self actualization through self employment.

**Conclusion**

The attitude of in-school adolescents in Nigeria has been a negative one. There is also general negative attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education by the members of the society especially the parents. Ignorance of the relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and self employment is majorly responsible for the negative attitude. The stakeholders who are supposed to enlighten these adolescents as regards the importance of entrepreneurial skills are not forthcoming as they exhibit general negative attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education. Both parental and peer factors influence attitude of in-school adolescents. This type of education is a major tool for achieving youth empowerment. It is therefore believed that if in-school adolescents are properly motivated and exposed to appropriate entrepreneurial skills through Entrepreneurship Education, they will definitely engage in worthwhile enterprises that will enable them become self employed.

**Recommendation**

Based on the above conclusion, the following recommendations are made;

All stakeholders should be made to understand that Entrepreneurship Education is a practically oriented excise that will lead to self employment and not producing certificate carrying school leavers seeking for employment.

Entrepreneurship Education should be encouraged by parents very early in their children’s lives by exposing them to handicraft at home as well as in farm work.

Entrepreneurship Education should be seen by all as a life-long learning process that should start from home to primary school and progresses through all levels of education including adult education.

The government should actively recruit rising youth from all junior secondary schools and give them opportunity to participate in entrepreneurship programme. This can be done through application and interview process annually and it should not be dominated by “man know man” which has almost removed merit from the Nigerian system.

The ministry of education should introduce Entrepreneurship Education in all secondary schools while handicraft should be repositioned in primary schools to catch the children young in entrepreneurial skills. The government should ensure provision of adequate infrastructure, support services and facilities for effective delivery of Entrepreneurship Education.

The schools should provide appropriate instructional materials with local examples to ensure relevance to Nigerian job situation. Career day/week for Nigerian secondary school students should de-emphasise white-collar jobs such as Medicine, Law, Engineering et cetera and emphasise entrepreneurial occupations that are traditional to our society.

The Vocational and Technical Education that prepares individuals for gainful employment by providing skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for effective employment in specific occupations should be given special attention by the schools.

The society should endeavour to foster robust entrepreneurial culture which will maximise individual and collective economic and social success on local, national and global scale. The immediate community of the adolescents should inspire and equip them in local community to learn the traditional crafts of the community and succeed through available enterprises (Ugonna et al, 2015).
In support of local effort, Akpan and Uwah (2014) opined that one place to foster interest in entrepreneurial skill development is the recognition and encouragement of outstanding entrepreneurial efforts. They recommended baseline data for Entrepreneurship Education to be sustained. The data according to them, should identify the need areas, available opportunities, peculiar challenges, available trends and innovation over time.

One of the most important need areas of the adolescents is competence in leadership skills. Leadership skill is very essential in entrepreneurship. Therefore all stakeholders should endeavour to enhance this quality in prospective entrepreneurs.
References


