

Policy and Implementation Mismatch: An Evaluation of Nigeria's Compulsory Entrepreneurship Curriculum From Educational Management Perspective

Hafsat Abdullahi Umar

Bayero University Kano, Kano State, Nigeria

In response to the increasing level of unemployment and the recent global trend of shifting individual economy prosperity from jobs to entrepreneurship and in the quest for fulfillment of the national goals of providing effective and self-reliant citizens, the revised National Policy on Education introduced 34 new entrepreneur/vocational subjects from which every student is mandated to pick one subject with the hope that she/he may practically apply as sustainable trade for self-reliance and possible personal economic prosperity. The educational administrators and managers at school level are further mandated to ensure a successful implementation of the curriculum. This study evaluates the curriculum 2007 using a census survey approach. Specifically, the most offered trade/entrepreneurship subjects were identified using a validated researcher made inventory and the questions of whether the subjects are relevant to the students' aspirations, the level of practical application of the trade learnt, and the level of quality of teachers handling the vocational subjects were examined through the administration of the instrument to 4,900 senior secondary school graduates, 1,400 teachers, and 350 principals and directors in North-Western Nigeria. The study found four most prevalent subjects offered to be animal husbandry and fisheries, and it was also found that 71% of the teachers teaching the vocational subjects are not qualified to teach the subjects and the 71% of the students are not willing to practice the vocation learnt as trade. Among other things, complete revisiting of the curriculum 2007 was recommended where the subjects will be reduced from 34 to 10 through merger of many related subjects, and subjects like fisheries and animal husbandry should be merged with agriculture and the subject made compulsory.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, curriculum 2007, curriculum evaluation, curriculum innovation

Introduction

The advent of the 21st century that heralds many abrupt changes in technology, socialization, economy, politics, and diplomacy has become a massive challenge for Africa, to move along with the new developmental trends and massive globalization, post modernism and disruptive technology; the changing focus and theories of epistemology caught especially Nigeria virtually unprepared. The massive unemployment and unemployability of many educated youths, the narrowing down for the need of human labour that is gradually taken over by technology, the multiplication of school enrolment, and the astronomical increase in the number

Hafsat Abdullahi Umar, Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Planning, Department of Education, Bayero University Kano, Kano State, Nigeria.

of graduates by year all indicate a serious dilemma for a nation in need of urgent development. It is in response to this predicament of the nation that the Federal Government of Nigeria relaunched the Universal Basic Education Programme; this led to subsequent revisions of the National Policy on Education and by 2006, the updated policy introduced a new approach to the secondary school curriculum. To be specific, the new policy updated the national goals of education and the specific goals of Education in Nigeria as provided below.

(1) The goals of Education in Nigeria are:

(a) The development of individual into morally sound, patriotic, and effective citizen;

(b) The total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world;

(c) The provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system;

(d) The inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity;

(e) The development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live and contribute positively to the society.

(2) The specific goals of Education in Nigeria are:

(a) To ensure and sustain unfettered access and equity to education for the total development of the individual;

(b) To ensure quality delivery of education at all levels;

(c) To promote functional education for skills acquisition, job creation, and poverty reduction;

(d) To ensure periodic review, effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum at all levels to meet the needs of society and the world of work;

(e) To collaborate with development partners, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local communities to support and fund education;

(f) To promote information technology capability at all levels.

Section 36 (d) of the NPE (National Policy on Education) 2013 further added among others that the main objectives of Post Basic Education in Nigeria is

“To provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job specific skills for self reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development”

Section 36 (d) of the NPE 2013

These provisions were a direct response to the massive deterioration of social order, and the escalating level of redundancy and unemployment among even graduates in the country. Going by statistical presentations in Nigeria, the prevalent rate of graduate joblessness has reached an unprecedented level. For instance, Longe (2017) reviewed submissions by Akintoye (2008) indicating that graduate unemployment as a percentage of total unemployment rose in Nigeria from 1% in 1974 to 4% in 1984. In less than a decade, between 1992 and 1997, it accounted for 32% of the unemployed labour force in the country (Dabalen, Oni, & Adekola, 2000). Conservatively, Eneji, Mai-Laifa, and Weiping (2013) put the rate of unemployed graduates at about 60% of the Nigeria labour supply market. Recent publication supplied by National Bureau of Statistics (2017) indicated that a total of 52 million citizens within the economically active population of Nigeria are jobless and this figure consisted mostly of newly qualified university graduates.

To effectively respond to these challenges, the NPE introduced 34 trade/entrepreneurship subjects out of which a senior secondary school student is mandated to offer at least one for three years. Entrepreneurship education focuses on development of skills and attributes that enable the realization of opportunity where management education is focused on the best way to operate existing hierarchies. Variations of entrepreneurship education are offered at all levels of schooling from primary or secondary schools through graduate university programme. Both approaches share an interest in achieving “profit” in some forms (non-profit organizations or government can take the form of increased services or decreased cost or increased responsiveness to the customer/citizen/client). Entrepreneurship education can be oriented towards different ways of realizing opportunities. It can be through: regular entrepreneurship—opening a new organization, promoting innovation or introducing new products or services or markets in existing firms, creating charitable organization (or portions of existing charities); and developed as a way of developing skills such as risk-taking, and problem solving. Through the teaching of entrepreneurship skills, it is believed that our senior secondary schools graduates would assume more responsibilities in job creation and giving a sharper focus on the field to the students on graduation to be useful to them and functional to the Nation. Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and innovation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. It is a key driver of our economy.

Five objectives for vocational education in secondary schools as stated in the National Policy on Education by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) are:

- (1) To prepare the learner for entry to employment and advancement in his chosen career;
- (2) To meet the man power needs of the society;
- (3) To increase the options available to each student;
- (4) To enable the learner to wisely select a career;
- (5) To serve as a motivating force to enhance all types of learning.

The policy stated categorically states in the criteria for selection of subjects for the Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations that each student is to take four compulsory cross-cutting subjects and one trade/entrepreneurship subject from the list of the 34 trade/entrepreneurship subjects: auto body repair and spray painting; auto electrical work; auto mechanical work; auto parts merchandising; air conditioning/refrigerator; welding and fabrication/engineering craft practice; electrical installation and maintenance work; radio, TV and electrical work; block laying, brick laying and concrete work; painting and decoration; plumbing and pipe fitting; machine wood working; carpentry and joinery; furniture making; upholstery and catering craft practice. Others are garment making; textile trade; book keeping; tourism; GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) maintenance; mining; photography; animal husbandry; fisheries; marketing; salesmanship; keyboarding; data procession; shorthand; cosmetology; printing and practice; dyeing and bleaching and leather goods manufacturing and repair. Although every secondary school must offer students opportunity to acquire some trade/entrepreneurship skills, the type of trade being made available for learning in schools will depend on equipment and resources available, the need of the host community of the school.

The policy was thereafter cascaded and a curriculum for all the subjects including the newly introduced trade/entrepreneurship subject was designed, and this curriculum is thereafter called curriculum 2007. Principals and other school managers are further mandated to ensure the full implementation and successful goal directed approach to this provision, and their duty of professional leading and managing the human and

material resource for a successful curriculum implementation was multiplied with the introduction of these compulsory courses from which a student has a choice to select any subjects out of the 34 subjects provided. The tasks of the school managers were made more cumbersome due to paucity of qualified teachers to handle most of these subjects in schools and a probable lack of clear-cut policy in training these type of teachers in the Nation's teacher training institutes in the near future.

More than a decade after the introduction of the subjects, and after the 10th graduating anniversary of the first set of students to offer these subjects, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2019) reported that in Q3 2018, 22.8% of rural residents within the labour force were underemployed (engaged in part-time work for less than 20 hours a week); compared to 13.7% of urban residents within the same period. For the period under review, the unemployment rate for young people (15-35 years) declined to 29.7% in Q3 2018 from 30.50% in Q2 2018. This was however an increase from 13.7% in Q3 2015, 19.1% in Q3 2016, and 25.5% in Q3 2017. Underemployment within the youth population (15-35 years) during the same quarter declined from 27.2% in Q3 2017 to 25.7% in Q3 2018. As of Q3 2018, 55.4% of young people (15-34 years) were either underemployed or unemployed (doing nothing) compared to 52.6% in the same period of the previous year. Generally, the unemployment rate increased from 18.8% in Q3 2017 to 23.1% in Q3 2018. In relation to unemployment, the country is being hacked by increasingly very sophisticated and bolder crimes in the ranges of religious extremism, banditry, kidnapping, political thuggery, and threat of secession and militarism; the milder hearted among the youth turn to sycophancy, begging, and pestering. These persistent challenges cast doubts about the practical relevance of these subjects that are not even accepted by many universities as part of admission requirements. It is in consideration of persistence of the challenges that the curriculum 2007 is meant to address that the objectives of this study are geared towards the determination of:

- (1) The most frequently studied entrepreneurship education subjects among senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria;
- (2) The level of professional expertise of entrepreneurship education teachers in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria;
- (3) The attitude of teachers and students towards entrepreneurship education in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria;
- (4) The level of practical application of entrepreneurship education among senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria;
- (5) The challenges of teaching/learning entrepreneurship education in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were then raised:

- (1) What are the most frequently studied entrepreneurship education subjects among senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria?
- (2) What are the levels of professional expertise of entrepreneurship education teachers in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria?
- (3) What is the attitude of teachers and students towards entrepreneurship education in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria?
- (4) What is the level of practical application of entrepreneurship education among senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria?

(5) What are the challenges of teaching/learning entrepreneurship education in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria?

It is noteworthy that some scholars have tried to investigate the issues relating to these trade/entrepreneurship subjects, Arokoyu and Leonard (2018) conducted a study to examine the level of entrepreneurial education implementation in Nigerian secondary schools, the entrepreneurial skills to be acquired at the secondary schools, and the challenges facing the entrepreneurial education implementation in secondary schools. The study revealed that entrepreneurial education in Nigerian secondary schools is at low level due to a number of challenges such as: school time table which is not adequate, class size, finance, non-inclusion of entrepreneurial skills in the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination, National Examination Council, General Certificate Examination and Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination, wrong use of teaching methods, lack of emphasis on implementation of entrepreneurial education by the Ministry of Education and other government agencies, lack of in-service training and poor condition of service, poor excursion trip to industries and textbooks introduced for instruction. The study also showed the entrepreneurial skills to be acquired at the secondary schools. However, there was no significant difference between the view of private and public chemistry teachers on the challenges facing the implementation of entrepreneurial education. It was recommended that government at all levels should endeavour to provide fund for the implementation of entrepreneurial education and enforce that such funds are not diverted or embezzled.

Ndem, Effiong, and Obot (2018) conducted a study to examine the impact of National Directorate of Employment entrepreneurial development programmes in job creation in Calabar Municipality Council. It was found that these programmes have no significant positive impact on the lives of trainees and trainers in Calabar Municipality. Iheoma and Ngozi (2016) investigated the role of entrepreneurial education on secondary school students' economic development in Imo State of Nigeria. The findings showed that entrepreneurial skills are required for economic development, and that adequate financial management competencies are required by teachers of secondary schools to enable them transfer the correct entrepreneurial skills into the students for economic development. Afolabi (2015) discussed the evolution and current development of principles and practice of entrepreneurship in Nigeria. It also examines the effect of entrepreneurship in fostering economic growth and development with the real GDP growth rate hovering around 7%. It was also found that entrepreneurship can enhance economic growth and development primarily by generating employment and fostering the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria. Funmi (2017) conducted a study to assess the state of entrepreneurship education and the impact on the development of MSMEs in Nigeria. The study observed an insignificant correlation between the existing Nigerian educational system entrepreneurship developments. Akiri, Onoja, and Kunanzang (2016) examined entrepreneurship development in Nigerian precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial era, highlighting some government effort and policies supporting entrepreneurship and job creation. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to compare data on number of entrepreneurs and employment between 2013 and 2010 and the percentage change in each component. The result shows that as entrepreneurs increase so do employment rate. There are certain factors that also serve as impediment to the growth of entrepreneurship such as political instability and insurgency. Hence sustainability of these growths depends on the macro-economic policies and political stability of the country.

Research Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive research design of survey type. This type of design allows the researcher to use a subset of a population as sample. It also allows the use of questionnaire for collection of data from respondents and attempts to describe all aspects of respondents' perception and opinion. A researcher made instrument titled Entrepreneurship Education Assessment Checklist for Northern Nigeria was used, and the instrument is consisted of 25 checklists with five sub-domains. Respondents were asked to tick one item in each domain but in order of priority. The instrument was validated using Lawshe Validity Ratio and a 0.88 reliability index was found after a test-retest procedure using a pilot of 400 (350 students/50 teachers) from Ningi Local Government, Bauchi State. In the course of the study, a letter of introduction was designed, in which the researcher was introduced and the purpose of the research work was clearly stated. Also the respondents were assured of the confidentiality in treatment of their responses. Face-to-face delivery method by the researcher and some three research assistants was employed in the administration and collection of the instruments. The data collected by the researcher was analyzed using descriptive statistics to test the research questions in order to analyze the outcome of the findings.

Presentation of Findings

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents and the findings that eventually answer the research questions for eventual achievement of the objectives guiding the study through the following tables.

Table 1

Frequency Count of the Respondents

Respondents	Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Status	Principals	350	5
	Teachers	1,400	21
	Students	4,900	74
	Total	6,650	100
Years of experience (teachers and principals)	1-5 years	321	18
	6-10 years	877	50
	11-15 years	397	23
	16 and above years	155	9
	Total	1,750	100

It can be deduced from Table 1 that 74% of the respondents are students to whom the curriculum 2007 is targeted, and half of the teachers (including the principals) are of between 6-10 years experience meaning that they either started their teaching career simultaneously with the curriculum 2007 or the curriculum preceded them. This set of respondents provided answers to our research question upon which the findings and conclusions are based for the attainment of the research objectives.

Analysis of Findings

The finding are presented as answers to the research questions provided in the following format.

Research question 1: What are the most frequently studied entrepreneurship education subjects among senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria?

Table 2

Most Frequently Studied Trade/Entrepreneurship Education Subject

Item	Fishery	Animal husbandry	Leather work	others
Which trade/entrepreneurship education course do you study/teach	39%	32%	18%	11%

Table 2 indicates a dominance of fisheries and animal husbandry with a total of 71% as the most offered trade/entrepreneurship education subjects in North Western Nigeria.

Research question 2: What are the levels of professional expertise of trade/entrepreneurship education teachers in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria?

Table 3

Professional Expertise of Trade/Entrepreneurship Education Teachers

SN	Professional expertise	No. of teachers	Percentage (%)
1	B.A. (Ed) in related trade/entrepreneurship subject	22	2
2	B.Sc. (Ed) in related trade/entrepreneurship subject	211	15
3	B.A. in related trade/entrepreneurship subject	21	2
4	B.Sc. in related trade/entrepreneurship subject	107	7
5	NCE in related trade/entrepreneurship subject	172	12
6	Other non-related qualifications	867	62
	Total	1,400	100

Table 3 presented a vivid description of the qualification of teachers handling the subjects in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria with a total of B.A. (Ed), B.Sc. (Ed), and NCE teachers with related academic and professional expertise and therefore qualified to teach the subjects being 2%, 15%, and 12% respectively; this is a total of 29% of qualified teachers while a combination of teachers teaching trade/entrepreneurship subjects with totally unrelated academic and professional background constitute 62%; combining with non-education B.Sc., B.A. teachers, the percentage of unqualified teachers handling these subjects is 71%.

Research question 3: What is the attitude of teachers and students towards entrepreneurship education in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria?

Table 4

Attitudes of Teachers and Students Towards Trade/Entrepreneurship Subjects

Why do you teach/study the trade/entrepreneurship subject?	No. of teachers and students	Percentage (%)
I like it, personally interested	773	12
Because it is made compulsory	4,585	69
It will add practical value to my life	1,001	15
Other reasons	291	4
Total	6,650	100

In Table 4, as presented, a combination of 4,585 teachers and students, 69% of the respondents declared that they teach/study the trade/entrepreneurship subjects because they are made compulsory; only 12% declared positive attitude of likeness or personal interest towards the study of the subjects.

Research question 4: What is the level of practical application of entrepreneurship education among senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria?

Table 5

Practical Application of Trade/Entrepreneurship Subjects

I will practically engage in the trade I learnt after graduation			
SN	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	762	16
2	No	3,487	71
3	Undecided	651	13
	Total	4,900	100

Table 5 presented responses of 4,900 senior secondary school students on their willingness to practice/engage in the trade/entrepreneurship subjects; 71% of the respondents reported that they are not willing to engage in the trade for commercial purposes. On the affirmative, only 16% intend to practice the trade as a commercial venture after graduation.

Research question 5: What are the challenges of teaching/learning entrepreneurship education in senior secondary schools in North Western Nigeria?

Table 6

Challenges of Teaching/Learning Entrepreneurship Education

SN	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Inappropriate fixing of the subjects in the time table	448	7
2	Most of the subjects are mere handwork not big business ideas	1,431	21
3	Inadequate practical instructional material and resources	1,440	22
4	Refusal of some universities to accept the subjects among admission requirements	437	7
5	Paucity of qualified and enthusiastic teachers for the subjects	2,894	43
	Total	6,650	100

In Table 6, item no. 5 on the paucity of qualified and enthusiastic teachers for the subjects appears to be the most dominant challenge as per 2,894 respondents representing 43% followed by inadequate practical instructional material and resources with 22%. Inappropriate fixing of the subjects in the time table and refusal of some universities to accept the subjects among admission requirements are 7% each on the challenges facing teaching/learning process of trade/entrepreneurship subjects.

Summary of Findings

Findings of the study are hereby summarized as follows:

Fisheries and animal husbandry are most frequently studied trade/entrepreneurship education subjects in North Western Nigeria.

The 71% of the teachers handling trade/entrepreneurship education subjects in North Western Nigeria are not qualified to teach the subjects.

The 69% of teachers and students expressed negative attitudes to the trade/entrepreneurship education subjects in North Western Nigeria; they offer or teach the subjects just because they are compulsory.

The 71% of the students are not willing or interested to practically engage in the trade learnt after graduation in North Western Nigeria.

Paucity of qualified and enthusiastic teachers for the subjects is the major challenge of teaching/learning process and for the attainment of the goals for trade/entrepreneurship education subjects in North Western Nigeria.

Discussions and Recommendations

The study investigates the policy implementation issues in respect of the Nigerian Policy on Education for the attainment of self-reliance and goals of economic prosperity. The implementation roadmap curriculum 2007 which introduced the 34 trade/entrepreneurship subjects was investigated. The findings revealed serious management lapses and issues from the side of policy makers, general governmental supports, and a considerable students' apathy coupled with dominance of unqualified and under qualified teachers responsible for handling the subjects. There is also high students' apathy towards the subjects as many universities are refusing to accept a credit in any of the subjects to be included in the required credits for admission. The findings of this research revealed an alarming scenario where a well orchestrated and highly visionary policy is made a mockery of its self. The findings elaborate and re-echoed calls from many quarters for the re-evaluation of the innovative trade/entrepreneurship subjects in a more scientific approach. It is upon this assertion that the following recommendations are hereby made:

The duo of animal husbandry and fisheries, the dominant subjects offered by senior secondary school students in North Western Nigeria should be merged with agricultural science and the subject of agricultural science should be made compulsory for every senior secondary school student.

A massive retraining of teachers should be carried out through motivating teachers to learn the trades even if informally; departments of science and technology education should introduce courses to cater for the Nation's need of qualified teachers of the trade/entrepreneurship subjects.

School guidance and counseling officers should keep motivating students on the necessity of learning a trade or vocation.

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