

Meeting the Needs of Sustainable Development in Rivers State through Innovations in Secondary Education

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Abstract

This study investigated meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State through innovations in secondary education. The study which adopted descriptive survey research design was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The population consisted of 247 public senior secondary schools and the 8, 234 senior secondary school teachers in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 873 selected through the stratified random sampling technique. A self-designed questionnaire titled, “Meeting the Needs of Sustainable Development in Rivers State through Innovations in Secondary Education Questionnaire (MNSDTISEQ)” was used for data collection. The instrument was validated and its reliability tested using the test retest method and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, $r = 0.78$. Mean, standard deviation, mean set and rank order statistics were used to answer the research questions, while z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant alpha level. It was found that adequate provision of human and material resources, and business incentives are some of the ways of managing entrepreneurship education for the achievement of sustainable development. While adequate remuneration and payment of salaries/allowances, capacity building programmes and enhancing teachers’ professional commitment to their job were some of the ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State: Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made: government should be seriously committed to the successful implementation of entrepreneurship education programme in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Innovations, Entrepreneurship Education and Teacher Quality

INTRODUCTION

One of the characteristics of living things is growth. Growth is desired by every individual. It is the desire of parents that their children should grow and when it is not forthcoming, they are not happy. Societies equally desire to grow; they want to grow from a consuming society to a productive and exporting one. Growth is defined by Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of

Current English (2014) 10th edition, as increase in amount, number or size. This means that we have different types of growth. For example financial growth, population growth or numerical growth, physical growth etc. Growth and development naturally go together. As a society grows, improvements or changes are noticed in different areas such as infrastructure, technology education, standard of living, level of productivity and so on. These show that development is taking place.

Education is a very important instrument that is used to pursue vigorously the growth and development of individuals and societies. Societies do not develop themselves. They are developed by individuals who have been trained in different fields of life through education. Education is very important in the development of human capital that will in turn contribute in the development of their states or societies. This conception accounts for the reason why many nations spend huge amount of their resources on education. They struggle to expand access to education at all levels. Education equally plays significant roles in political development. It enhances rational reasoning and democratic practices among the populace (Okeke, 2007).

There are three levels of education in Nigeria which in one way or the other inter-depend on each other for success and achievement of their goals. These three levels are; the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Secondary education is the level of education, students receive after the completion of primary education. Secondary education is divided into junior secondary and senior secondary education (FRN, 2014). It is the middle level education that prepares people for work and for further studies. It supplies the middle level manpower required in our productive sectors. Secondary education plays a crucial role in our national development hence it always attract the attention of government from time to time.

Secondary education has undergone some reforms and innovations over the years. In education reforms refer to comprehensive innovation made in the field of education. According to Eke (2010) educational reforms are planned and designed changes undertaken to tackle deficiencies and needs with the conviction that substantial progress can be made through these adjustments in education. Innovations are often backed up with policies and legal instruments to make them stand the taste of time. Innovations as perceived by Kanu (2010) are changes which come through purposeful and planned replacement of an existing situation or a way of seeing or doing a given thing. Agabi (2002) did not differ so much from the views of the former, when he defined innovations as the comprehensive, deliberate and healthy or positive change either in content, methods, goals, policies, practices or ideology of education with a view to bringing about a desirable improvement in goal achievement in a given society. Reforms and innovations are carried out based on the developmental needs of the individuals and the society. Sustainable development as a concept refers to a kind of human development in which resource use aims at meeting human needs while preserving the environment so that needs can be met not only now but also in the future. It is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs (Nnaji, 2014). Sustainable development has three components which are: environment, society and economy. The well-being of these three components are intertwined and difficult to separate. For example, a healthy and prosperous society relies on, a healthy environment to provide food and resources, safe drinking water, and clean air for the citizens. To this extent, there are two areas in which education has roles to play:

- Education for sustainable development as a means of transferring the appropriate set of knowledge, attitude, values and behaviour.

- Education for sustainable development as a means of developing people’s capacities and that the people themselves can determine alternative ways of living (Adio, 2015).

Recently, some innovations have taken place in the curriculum of secondary schools. According to Federal Government in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (FRN, 2014, p. 38). The curriculum for senior secondary education consist of the following fields of studies:

- Science and mathematics;
- Technology;
- Humanities;
- Business Studies

The cross-cutting compulsory subjects are:

- English language;
- General Mathematics;
- Trade/Entrepreneurship subject
- Civic Education

Another important innovation was the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) education in secondary schools. The main focus of these innovations was to develop the students into active learners with critical thinking skills (Nwideduh, Kpee & Kaegon, 2009). Jason and Gapinathan (2004) were of the opinion that the introduction of ICT in education especially for teaching and learning process will help provide networking to the doorsteps of schools.

Apart from the innovation in the curriculum for secondary education, the teachers need to be of good quality. Federal Government through the NPE (2014, p. 43) ‘recognized the pivotal role of quality teachers in the provision of quality education at all levels hence teacher education shall continue to be emphasized in educational planning and development’. They fixed the minimum entry into teaching profession as Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). It has been observed that in many senior secondary schools the minimum teaching qualification for the teachers is Bachelor’s Degree in Education Achimugu (2002) succinctly acknowledged that teachers are and will always be the essential pillar of education. No matter how good a school system and its curricular may be, the implementation of its programmes is fruitless unless competent teachers handle them. Obanya (2002) remarks that unless, there are adequate quantitative and qualitative teachers in school who are professionally prepared, nothing can be meaningfully achieved in education. He recommended that serious efforts should be made to attract the right type of people into the teaching profession, boost their morale and job satisfaction, strengthen their professional commitments and enhance their working conditions.

There is therefore the need for government to find out ways of motivating teachers so that they can put in their best at all times to maintain the quality standard and meeting the needs for sustainable development. Quality standard in this context implies meeting required specifications. The teacher is the implementer of the curriculum and also the disseminator of knowledge in which the quality, determine, the quality of the learner. To assess a teacher as a quality teacher means that the teacher must be adequately educated, professionally trained and prepared, able to promote teacher-student interaction to maximize learning and well-motivated

through appropriate welfare package and committed to continuous self-improvement towards achieving a self-regenerating education system for the society.

The high rate of unemployment in Nigeria today necessitated the adoption of entrepreneurship education at secondary and tertiary levels of education in Nigeria. It is an innovation that is aimed at offering functional education to the youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant. Ezeani (2012) views entrepreneurship education as teaching students, learners and would be business men, the essential skills required to build viable enterprises, equipping the trainees with skills needed for taking responsibility and developing initiatives of prospective trainees. Entrepreneurship education according to Paul in Ossai and Nwalado (2012) is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- To offer functional education to the youths that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant.
- Provide the young graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities.
- To serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.
- Offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in risk management.
- To reduce high rate of poverty.
- Create employment opportunities.
- Reduce rural-urban migration;
- Provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium scale enterprises;
- To inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the youths and adults which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on;
- Create smooth transition from traditional to modern industrial economy. The role of entrepreneurship education in youth empowerment for sustainable development in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized.

Entrepreneurship education tries to inculcate skills, knowledge, enterprise, attitude and motivation for self-reliance which helps to promote graduates to become employers of labour, the importance of entrepreneurship education towards sustainable development in Nigeria according to Evey, Aklang, Asinde, Ofemi and Donal (2010) include the following:

- Preparation of individuals to meet the manpower needs of relevant occupations through acquisition of useful knowledge, skills and attitudes required in the fieldwork.
- Elimination of poor attitude to work, low performance on the job and lack of job satisfaction as individuals will help to acquire the right attitude to work and respect for dignity of labour.
- Enhancing employment through self-reliance and self-employment as Nigerian youth equip themselves with adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes which make them more productive.
- Reduction in professional and vocational prostitution as unskilled people are prevented from using other vocations as discovery grounds, this will go a long way in promoting a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship for development of the nation.
- Entrepreneurship creates a formal and non-formal capacity and redirection of educational provision towards the world of business by producing skilled citizens.

There is the need to implement these innovations appropriately in a way that the needs for sustainable development could be met.

Statement of the Problem

The society looks at the education sector to provide solutions to most of the problems it faces. The quest for a functional educational system often results to reforms and innovations in some areas that are no longer relevant to the needs of the individual and the society, or the introduction of new practices which are in line with the direction of technology and economic activities world over. The persistent increase in the rate of unemployment in Nigeria has resulted to innovations in secondary education curriculum and teacher quality demand in Nigeria. The issue on ground now is the determination of how these innovations can be managed to meet the needs of sustainable development in Rivers state. Therefore, the problem of this study is to find out how the teaching of entrepreneurship education and teacher quality demand could be effectively implemented in other to enhance meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed at investigating meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State through innovations in secondary education. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- Determine the ways entrepreneurship education as an innovation in secondary education can be managed for meeting the needs for sustainable development in Rivers State.
- Identify how teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions provided guidance for the study:

- What are the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers state?
- What are the ways teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following two hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 alpha significant level.

- There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers on the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on ways teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The 247 public senior secondary schools with their 247 principals and 8,234 teachers constituted the population. A sample of 50 principals (22 male and 28 female) and 823 teachers (367 male and 456 female) which represented 20% of the principals and 10% of the teachers was drawn through the stratified random sampling technique from the 23 L.G.A in Rivers State. A researcher designed questionnaire entitled, ‘Meeting the Needs of Sustainable Development in Rivers State through Innovations in Secondary Education Questionnaire (MNSDTISEQ)’ was used for data collection. The instrument which had 16 items was adequately validated and a pilot study using the test retest approach and Pearson Product Moment Correlation yielded a reliability index of 0.78. Mean scores, standard deviation and rank order were used to answer the research questions while z-test will be used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha significant level.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean scores, standard deviation and rank order analysis of the opinion of male and female teachers on ways entrepreneurship education can be managed for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

S/N	Ways entrepreneurship education can be managed for meeting the needs of sustainable development.	Male Teachers N= 367		Female Teachers N= 456		Mean	Rank order	Decision
		\bar{M}_1	SD ₁	\bar{M}_2	SD ₂			
1.	There should be adequate provision of human resources especially technical instructors.	3.50	0.82	3.38	0.79	3.44	5 th	Agreed
2.	There should be adequate provision of infrastructure/necessary teaching materials.	3.46	0.81	3.46	0.76	3.46	4 th	Agreed
3.	There should be adequate supervision/monitoring of the programme by government agencies.	3.38	0.79	3.40	0.83	3.39	7 th	Agreed
4.	Sustainable capacity building programmes should be provided for the instructors.	3.44	0.84	3.42	0.81	3.43	6 th	Agreed
5.	Provision of access to adequate resources to graduating students to enable them start their own businesses.	3.54	0.78	3.5	0.82	3.53	1 st	Agreed
6.	Adequate enlightenment on the need to patronize locally made goods.	3.48	0.76	3.46	0.78	3.47	3 rd	Agreed
7.	Provision of financial incentives through fiscal policies for young entrepreneurs	3.52	0.80	3.48	0.84	3.50	2 nd	Agreed
8.	Collaborating with different industries for proper exposure/training/skill acquisition.	3.34	0.86	3.38	0.75	3.36	8 th	Agreed
Aggregate mean and standard deviation		3.46	0.81	3.44	0.79	3.45		

Table 1 shows that all the items have weighted mean scores which are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 following the rank order ranging from 1st to 8th. The mean responses of the male and female teachers showed that they agreed on all the items in the table. The aggregate mean of 3.45 which is higher than the criterion mean shows that both the male and the female teachers unanimously agreed on the items in the table. Therefore, the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed for meeting the needs of sustainable development are: provision of access to adequate resources to graduating students to enable them start their own business; provision of financial incentives for young entrepreneurs through fiscal policies; adequate enlightenment on the need to patronize made in Nigeria goods; adequate provision of infrastructure/necessary teaching materials; adequate provision of human resources; provision of capacity building programmes to instructors on sustainable basis; adequate supervision/monitoring of the programme and collaborating with different industries for proper exposure/training/skills acquisition.

Research Question 2: What are the ways teacher quality can be managed for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean scores, standard deviation and rank order analysis of the opinion of principals and teachers on ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

S/N	Ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development	Principals N= 50		Teachers N= 823		Mean	Rank order	Decision
		\bar{M}_1	SD ₁	\bar{M}_2	SD ₂			
1.	Proper remuneration of teachers.	3.24	0.92	3.32	0.96	3.28	2 nd	Agreed
2.	Prompt payment of salaries/allowances	3.40	0.89	3.28	0.93	3.34	1 st	Agreed
3.	Provision of relevant capacity building programmes.	3.12	0.94	3.20	0.95	3.17	5 th	Agreed
4.	Provision of accommodation to the teachers	3.18	0.87	3.22	0.90	3.20	4 th	Agreed
5.	Proper supervision/monitoring of the teachers	3.25	0.88	3.29	0.89	3.27	3 rd	Agreed
6.	Boosting their morale by enhancing their working conditions	3.10	0.93	3.08	0.86	3.09	8 th	Agreed
7.	Enhancing their professional commitment to their job	3.14	0.91	3.16	0.87	3.15	6 th	Agreed
8.	Presentation of annual awards to outstanding teachers	3.08	0.86	3.12	0.88	3.10	7 th	Agreed
Aggregate mean and standard deviation		3.19	0.90	3.21	0.91	3.20		

Data in table 2 showed the mean and rank order scores of principals and teachers on the ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State. Their mean responses showed that they all agreed on the items in table with mean scores greater than the criterion mean score of 2.50 following the rank order ranging from 1st to 8th. The aggregate mean set score of 3.20 shows that the principals and the teachers shared a common opinion on

the ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

Therefore, ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State include: prompt payment of salaries/allowances; proper remuneration of teachers; proper supervision/monitoring; provision of adequate accommodation; provision of relevant capacity building programmes; enhancing teachers' professional commitment to their job; presentation of annual awards to outstanding teachers and boosting teachers' morale by enhancing their working conditions.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers on the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education, for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

Table 3: z-test analysis of difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers on the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State

Category	N	\bar{M}	SD	Df	z-cal	z-critical	Decision
Male teachers	367	3.46	0.81	821	1.43	± 1.96	Not significant
Female teachers	456	3.44	0.79				Accepted

Data in table 3 showed the z-test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers on the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education, for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State. The result showed that the z-calculated value of 1.43 is less than the critical z-value of ± 1.96 at 0.05, alpha level of significance and 821 degree of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained or accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers on the ways entrepreneurship education can be managed as an innovation in secondary education, for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on ways teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education, for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test analysis of difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on ways teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education, for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State

Status	N	\bar{M}	SD	Df	z-cal	z-critical	Decision
Principals	50	3.19	0.90				Not significant
Teachers	823	3.21	0.91	871	1.28	± 1.96	Accepted

Data in table 4 showed the z-test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on ways teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education, for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State. The result showed that the z-calculated value of 1.28 is less than the critical z-value of ± 1.96 at 0.05 level of confidence and 871 degree of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained or accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on ways teacher quality can be managed as an innovation in secondary education for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurship education has the capacity to reduce the level of unemployment in Rivers State if it is properly implemented. It is an innovation in the right direction. If it is well implemented, graduates of secondary schools will be equipped with skills that can enable them to become self-reliant, independent and a business proprietor. The way the programme is managed will determine what will come out of it. For a programme like this that is critical to the future of Nigerian youths, sustainable development of the country and peaceful co-existence of one another, government should do everything that is necessary to ensure that it is successful.

According to Onwuzo and Okpala (2011), entrepreneurship education raises productivity through technical and other forms of innovations; it is a powerful tool for job creation; it facilitates the transfer of technology; it plays a strategic role in commercializing new inventions and products; it plays a critical role in restructuring and transformation of economies; it makes markets more competitive and thereby reduce market inefficiencies; it improves the social welfare of a nation by harnessing dormant, previously overlooked talents; it creates new market and facilitates expansion into international markets. The realization of these benefits through the implementation of entrepreneurship education squarely lies on ability of government to provide enough human and material resources, enough infrastructure and adequate provision of business incentives to young entrepreneurs. The programme should be supervised and monitored effectively. Nigerians should patronize locally made goods in other to encourage young entrepreneurs to continue in business.

These findings agreed with the view of Ocho (2006) who said that, the training of the youths who can function effectively in the society requires special attention as the system is deliberately set to concentrate on the development of sound human capital required for sustainable national development. The success of entrepreneurship education at the informal sector is a clear evidence that if it is seriously and honestly formalized and made to be part of our curriculum at all levels of education, we shall be on the lane of creating industrialists, business magnets and employers of labour. There is the need for secondary schools to collaborate with industries around them for proper training of their students in terms of skills acquisition and business exposures. All these will help in meeting the needs for sustainable development in Rivers State if they are adequately carried out.

The study equally revealed that ways of managing teacher quality for meeting the needs of sustainable development in Rivers State include: prompt payment of salaries/allowances, proper remuneration of teachers; proper supervision/monitoring of the teachers' provision of adequate accommodation; provision of relevant capacity building programmes; enhancing teachers professional commitment to their job; presentation of annual merit awards to outstanding teachers and boosting teachers moral by enhancing their working conditions.

Teachers are nation builders. They are knowledge creators and knowledge implementers. No meaningful sustainable development can take place in any society without the total commitment of the teachers. The importance of teachers in nation building calls way adequate and conscious ways of managing teacher quality to ensure their total commitment to their jobs. This observations agreed with the views of Obanya (2002) who stated that unless there are adequate quantitative and qualitative teachers in schools who are professionally prepared, nothing can be meaningfully achieved in education. This necessitates the need for serious attention on how to attract and retain the right caliber of teachers in the teaching job, boost their morale and job satisfaction, strengthen their professional commitment and enhance their working conditions (Obanya, 2002).

It is not enough for government to state and enforce the minimum qualification for entering into the teaching profession. This is a step in the right direction of restricting unqualified people from coming into the teaching profession. Adequate management plan should be drawn by government on how to manage valued and qualified teachers in other to give them a sense of belonging, recognition and total commitment to their profession. Presently, teachers are poorly managed in Rivers State and adequate attention is not paid to their welfare. This has adversely affected secondary education in the state. The morale of the teachers is very low, a lot of them do not have two square meals on their tables, they cannot adequately earlier for their children and they are looked down in the society. The government therefore, needs to revive the morale of the teachers in Rivers State by enhancing their working conditions, remunerations and allowances. This will help to strengthen their professional commitment to their job without which meeting the needs for sustainable development will be a mirage.

CONCLUSION

Innovations are constant and inevitable in every society including the education sector. The study has identified two recent innovations that have taken place in secondary schools. They are the introduction of entrepreneurship education and the fixing of basic qualification for entry into the teaching profession in Nigeria with the basic teaching qualification in secondary schools as Bachelor of Education or Bachelor of Science and Post Graduate Diploma in Education. These innovations are good and will fulfill the purpose for which they were made if government is seriously committed to its success and adequate ways of managing them are adopted.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Entrepreneurship education has the potentials of meeting the needs for sustainable development in Rivers State. Therefore, government should be seriously committed to the successful implementation of this innovative programme.
- Teachers are at the center of the success of any innovation in the education sector. Therefore government should be seriously committed to their welfare and conditions of service.

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