

## Entrepreneurship Education: A Tool for Self Reliance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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### Abstract

The paper discussed entrepreneurship education as a tool for self-reliance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Entrepreneurship education deals with the method of learning various vocational skills that will transform learner into becoming self-reliant and also contribute maximally to national development. The paper revealed that the Nigeria government introduced entrepreneurship education as a pathway to stimulate self-sufficiency, self-sustainability and self-support culture in students, this is aimed at ensuring that students take advantages of personal resourcefulness to be self-employed or self-reliant. It also enumerated the importance of entrepreneurship education which includes; imparts basic life skills, creativity is enhanced, enhanced leadership quality, prepares students for an uncertain future, among others. It also highlighted the challenges in the implementation of entrepreneurship education in public senior secondary schools. Thus, it concluded that entrepreneurship education contributes significantly to economic growth through generating numerous job perspectives. The paper suggested that adequate and qualified manpower and facilities should be provided to enhance the achievement of the objectives of entrepreneurship education as stipulated in the curriculum.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurship education, self-reliant, Importance.

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### INTRODUCTION

It is of essence for every Nigerian scholar to have the knowledge that education is not the only tool to secure a job for sustenance and survival. There is need to create the awareness that students can be trained to be self-employed and even become an employer of labour, more so states and nations are usually adjudicated developed when in actual terms, they can boast of citizens with viable skills to sustain their economic and social wellbeing. For this purpose, every developing nation strives for self-reliance so it could confidently be tagged independent. Oloko (2015), asserted that self-reliance must be attained by any nation aspiring for time development and independence which must have the attainment of self-sufficiency as its goal. A nation that depends for the most of its needs on other countries for survival cannot be said to be truly independent. Thus, every citizen young and old has to be adequately sensitized on the need to be productive so as to achieve this goal of self-sufficiency via self-reliance. This lead to the introduction of entrepreneurship education into the secondary schools curriculum and other levels of educational system by the government. The National Education Research & Development Council boss said the nation's curriculum was reviewed to offer pupils and students a well-rounded education in terms of knowledge, skills, techniques and values

needed to produce self-reliant individuals who can compete favourably anywhere in the world Adesulu in Ejims (2019). This means that today's education is saddled with the task of preparing students for success and eventual leadership in the new global market, with its major goal as the preparation of the young ones so that they can serve the needs of the society. More so, at the primary level, vocational education subjects is now taken by pupils while at the secondary level marketing, metal work, technical drawing, wood work, introductory technology, data processing, food and nutrition, computer studies and so many other subjects that can enhance a school leaver to be independent or self-reliant. These entire attempts by the government are gear towards imbining the entrepreneurship skills into the youngster at an early age for personal survival and development after secondary school education.

## **CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS**

### **Entrepreneurship**

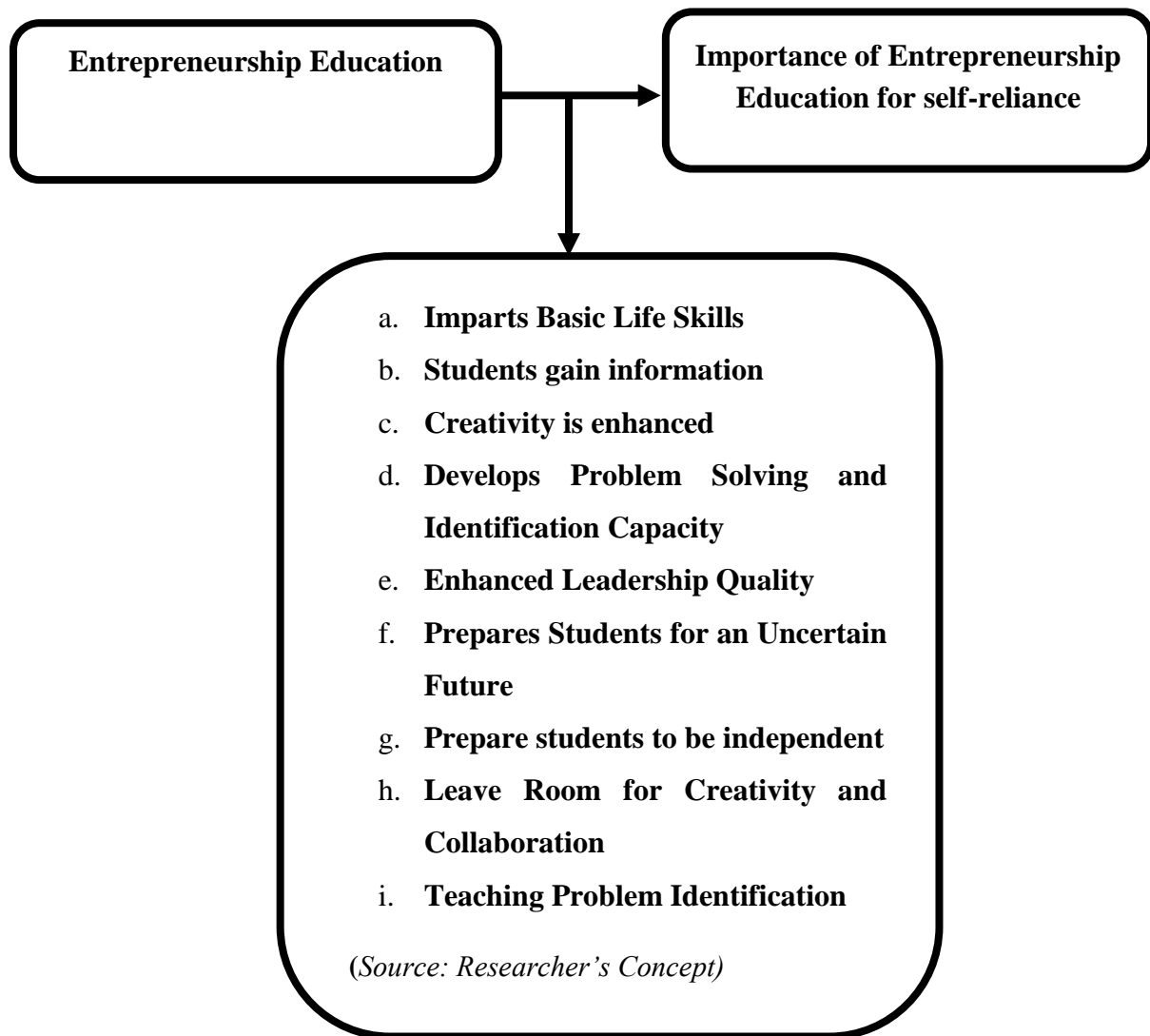
The concept of entrepreneurship has no single universally accepted definition; it is defined differently by persons. Entrepreneurship is derived from a French word 'entre' meaning "between" and 'prendre', meaning "to take". The word was originally used to describe people who "take risk" between buyers and sellers or who "undertake" a task such as starting new venture. Onwugbuta (2017), defined entrepreneurship as the process by which individuals pursue opportunities without regards to resources they currently control. It is also seen as the engine of development and economic emancipation. Onwugbuta (2017), also defined an entrepreneur as an action oriented and highly motivated individual who has the ability to see and evaluate business opportunities, to gather the necessary resources, to take advantage of them, to initiate appropriate actions to ensure success and take risk to achieve the goals. Entrepreneurship as stated above is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic and social risks and receiving the results rewards of monetary, personal satisfaction and independence. An entrepreneur therefore is somebody who creates a business venture to create and sustain wealth from raw materials of his own ideas. (Hisrich & Peters in Ejims 2019) observe that in spite all difficulties faced by entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship is presently the most effective method for bridging the gap between science and market place, creating new enterprises, and bridging new products and services to the market.

ThankGod (2017) another authority saw entrepreneurship as a concept that entails certain potentials as: readiness to take known risks in terms of time, equities, profession, the capability to evolve a formidable organizational group or team, the constructive ability to generate needed resources and necessary skills for developing viable business plans and the foresight to detect a business opportunity that others are oblivious of. It can be construed from the above assertion that entrepreneurship is an active practice and not a redundant state which features plans that are not carried out. Put another way, it can be inferred that entrepreneurship is the ability of an individual to disentangle his or herself from the employment waiting list or pull self out of what may be called "exploitative disposition of an employer" by metamorphosing a viable business that employs him and others through a conscientious ability to identify margin after over-coming initial odds, including financial risk of all kind and magnitude. The two types of entrepreneurship discovered by Moshood (2005) are very much in place. The two types are: opportunity-based entrepreneurship, which he observed as a situation where an entrepreneur discovers a business opportunity and decided to rigorously pursue it as a chosen career. The other is necessity-based entrepreneurship which he said is the emergence of an entrepreneur because there is no alternative means of livelihood.

Many youths exhibit interest in various activities like political, economic and technical etc. There active indulgence in entrepreneurial ventures can bring out the ingenuity in them as far as their

various areas of interest are concerned. Most of them go into these activities as hobby, done to while away time. Hence entrepreneurship education is recommended and made compulsory for the youths. Undie, Nkama and Ememe (2010) also posited that entrepreneurship is the creation of wealth by individuals who get involved in bearing and such wealth are increased incrementally. The intricacies involved in such adventures, call for conscientious entrepreneurship education to ensure that youths do not garbage in and out of profitable entrepreneurial activities that should have sustained them for life because of inadequate orientation. Entrepreneurship education therefore, is the sum total of induction, orientation and all other forms of teaching given to the youth to inculcate in them the potentials of profitable adventure, which enables them to produce needed goods and services and be self-reliant in life through risk taking.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



#### Entrepreneurship Education

Johnnie (2020) asserts that entrepreneurial education programme are subjects and learning activities that are not just concerned with teaching someone to run a business but also encourages creative thinking and at the same time, promotes a strong sense of self-worth and accountability. She further

stressed that entrepreneurial education help capacity and exerts a lot of advantages through innovating product development and competitiveness globally. Entrepreneurship education involves a formal method of teaching and learning vocational skills that will transform the learner into the world of economic productivity. Vocational education according to the National Policy on Education (N.P.E, 2004) is the acquisition of skills and techniques in a chosen occupation or profession to enable an individual earn a living. The training and skill acquisition are aimed at the production of practically oriented personal that will feet into the world of work. Abubakar, Ajinuhi, Hassan and Imufutau (2019).

### **Self-Reliance**

Self-reliance is synonymous with self-sufficiency. It means doing things for ourselves rather than having things done for us. Self-reliance is the personal initiative in the ability and effort to identify, harness and manage effectively and efficiently the personal and collective resources, human or natural in the immediate surroundings in order to uplift one's or a people's life quality, standard and condition of existence (Olayiwola, in Evans-Obinna, 2016). He noted that self-reliance cautions against dependency-syndrome on the government as the monopoly of development. Self-reliance and its kin-terms accentuates people's primary role as principal agents of development and self-determination both on the individual and collective levels. Self-reliant helps the recipient discover who they really are, the unique gifts they possess and the ability to reach full potentials. It also the ability to take control of over one's life, being motivated from within, and being able to take care of oneself. Ghandhi in Adebola (2014) asserted that self-reliance is the capacity to stand on one's legs without anybody's help. Hence, it does not mean indifference to, or rejection of the outside help but the capacity to be at peace with oneself, to preserve one's self-respect when outside help is not forth coming. Nuhu (2014) added that self-reliance is an ability to rely on one's own efforts and abilities. A self—reliant person is one who possesses great creative ability, one who is functional, one who has acquired some values and skills to improve not just himself, but people around him/her; a resourceful individual. Self-reliance is also the control over decision making, it enable individual think independently that is the ability to think autonomously. Ebo and Ukpong in Nuhu (2014), added that self-reliant citizens breed self-reliant nation.

### **Education as a Tool for Self-Reliance**

The call for the introduction of Entrepreneurship education in secondary schools in Rivers state is actually a direct response to the changing socio-economic and political conditions in the world and Nigeria in particular which had resulted into high levels of unemployment of school leavers. It is an indication of its importance in economic empowerment and job creation in particular. This education has become necessary as the state continues to produce graduates that are hardly self-reliant but solely dependent on white collar jobs. Self-reliance is a vital key to self-actualization, better human relationship, and national efficiency as well as social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress. Thus entrepreneurship education could enhance self-reliance in the following ways:

1. The knowledge of Entrepreneurship education helps the students to gain information that will help to boost teaching and learning that will lead to self-reliance. (Agoha, 2011). He further stressed that entrepreneurship education builds the spirit of being entrepreneurs in the minds of the students.
2. Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people particularly the youths to be responsible, enterprising individual who became entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by immersing them in real life learning experience whereby they can take risks, manage result and learn from the outcome.

3. Self-reliance will help students learn to make wise business decisions as they start and grow a business, key business skills such as identifying customer needs, finding customers, and keeping good business records. Nwiyi (2019)
4. Self-reliance help the students discover who they are; the unique gifts embedded in them and it also enable the students reach full potentials.
5. Self-reliance enhances the students control over decision making, it help them think independently.
6. Entrepreneurship education breeds self-reliant students that are action oriented such that they learn practical skills such as managing personal finances, finding a better job, increasing education it help this students identify opportunities, network, present themselves professionally, set goals for themselves for contacts, help those students that would want better control over their finances learn how to eliminate debt, protect against financial hardship, and invest in the future it enable them create a financial plan and follow a budget.
7. Entrepreneurship education helps students who need additional training enlarge their capacity to be self-reliant.
8. Entrepreneurship education is teaching people that they can either take or create a job. This will enable them to be self-employed and not relying on other job security. Suleiman in Beetseh and Ahima (2012).
9. Entrepreneurship education programme can equip students with entrepreneurial skills that will enable them create and develop enterprises in various areas. The emphasis here is that the programmes have a way of shifting the focus of students from paid employment to self-employment. Ewubare in Nuhu (2014). During the colonial era, people were trained to work for the colonial masters and as such, their education was patterned towards such. Immediately after independence the emphases of our education system was after paid employment. Entrepreneurship education has the tendency of equipping and making students experts in the production of certain items. The curriculum framework of this programme has been designed such that individuals will be able to channel their creative abilities and skills to an area or areas of interest. The interest area may be hair dressing, sewing, soap making, farming etc. (Agoha, 2011).
10. Entrepreneurship education enhances self-reliant through problem identification. Students need to learn how to identify problems before they learn how to solve them. Problem-solving has been taught in schools for decades-but the same cannot be said for problem identification. Traditionally, problem-solving is solved by presenting students with issues that are already clearly defined by someone else. In the real world, problems can only be solved when they have been properly identified and described. Entrepreneurship education teaches children to identify problems they have never encountered before- a skill that will be very useful in tomorrow's world making them independent.
11. Making the world a better place through entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs seek to solve problems, meet needs, and ease pain with the help of their products and services. They are hard-wired to make a difference and make the world a better place by participating in entrepreneurship programmes, students don't just become ready to create their own future they become ready to change the world and become self-reliant.

Osuala (2010) opined that entrepreneurship education is a programme or part of a programme that prepares individuals to undertake the formation and or operate small business enterprises which also includes franchise operations for the purpose of performing all business functions relating to a

product or service with emphasis on social responsibilities, legal requirement and risks for the sake of profit involved in the conduct of private business enterprises. From the foregoing, it is evident that entrepreneurship education could turn around the economic fortune of students in public secondary schools in Rivers state by creating opportunity for the students to become self-reliant and reduce the poverty level. It could also help an individual to identify investment opportunities and help them to harness untapped natural resources in the state in order to produce the goods and services needed in the state. These will no doubt reduce or alleviate poverty and help to increase per capital income in the state.

### **Entrepreneurship Education in Senior Secondary Schools**

It is paramount to note that entrepreneurship education has not been achieved as spelt out by the national policy on education (NPE) 2014. Today's education is saddled with the task of preparing students for success and eventual leadership in the new global market, with its major goal as the preparation of the young ones so that they can serve the needs of the society. Dike and Effanga (2020). The concept of entrepreneurship has long been deliberated upon and used in various ways. Arukoyu and Nwafor (2014). The question then is what is entrepreneurship education? Entrepreneurship education is seen as teaching students, learners and would be businessmen, the essential skills required to build viable enterprises, equipping the trainee with skills needed for taking responsibility and developing initiatives of prospective trainees. In the view of Ibara (2017), entrepreneurial education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. This equally implies that entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people especially youths to be responsible and enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs. Ibara (2017) added that entrepreneurship education is an employment creation strategy. This means that entrepreneurship education helps students to be creative, acquire skills to be independent and also help others. Atakpa (2011) asserts that entrepreneurship education is an aspect of education which equips an individual and creates in the person the mindset to undertake the risk of venturing into something new by applying the knowledge and skills acquired in school. In the same vein, Abefe-Balogun (2012), entrepreneurship education involves a dynamic process of creating wealth through the process of creating something new and in the process assumes both attendant risk and rewards. Entrepreneurship education has been acknowledged worldwide as a potent and viable tool for self-empowerment, job and wealth creation Okereke and Okorafor (2011). Suleiman (2010) believes that entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people particularly the youths to be responsible, enterprising individual who became entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers by immersing them in real life learning experience whereby they can take risks, manage result and learn from the outcome. Entrepreneurship education entails teaching people that they can either take or create a job. This will enable them to be self-employed and not relying on other job security. Often, it creates new job for others at the same time. Ememe (2010) noted that entrepreneurship education enables youths to seek for success in ventures through one's effort. Thus, the overall objectives of entrepreneurship education are to develop expertise as an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship Education necessitates the use of active learning method that places the student at the center of educational process and enables them to take responsibility for their own learning to experiment and learn about themselves. Entrepreneurship education as it is being offered in the senior secondary school comes under the newly introduced core and cross-cutting course known as trade and entrepreneurship studies (T.E.S). This core compulsory course at the senior secondary school education level is made up of 34 distinct trade subjects in which students are expected to pick one or two to be trained in and in the process 'acquire the relevant entrepreneurial skills associated with that particular vocation.

The prospects of acquiring trade and entrepreneurship education should amongst others ensure that each student is properly educated to acquire at least, one of the vocational skills for life,

becomes empowered, self-reliant and able to create employment for himself/herself and for others it should also lead to wealth creation. Generally, learning through work for life, the entrepreneur remains useful now and in the future. (Afolabi, Omoluwa & Oyetayo; Omosewo, Akanmu & Asebiomo in Ejims 2019).

### **Importance of Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education has emerged out as demanding subject to be mastered by young students, with each passing day, as the jobs are getting limited owing to numerous reasons such as technological advancements and population growth, entrepreneurship option can be seen as a significant career option among the current generation. Contributing significantly to the economic growth, entrepreneurship also generates numerous job perspectives as a result of which, it has been encouraged by intellectuals to motivate the young mind to start a business of their own. To make the students aware of the possible benefits of being an entrepreneur, a basic entrepreneurship programme should be incorporated in the regular curriculum as a mandatory subject. In support of this opinion, Ibara (2011) opined that entrepreneurship introduces a market oriented approach to education thinking and provides relevant training experience to students, and more importantly it strengthens links with partners in business and industry. This initiative will not only boost the interest of the students to go for personal business. Still in this vein, Ololube (2014), submitted that entrepreneurship education is a means to pass on society's legacy from one generation to another and the process of bringing a relatively permanent change in human economic and social responsibilities. Thus, entrepreneurship education helps to promote an innovative and entrepreneurship culture among students for effective functionalism in the society. The basic education will not only help them embracing any upcoming opportunities to be successful entrepreneurs but also tackle the adversities successfully in the future. The following are the basic importance of entrepreneurship education in student's life as highlighted by Panigrahi (2021); Dike and Effanga (2020).

#### **Imparts Basic Life Skills**

Entrepreneurship education teaches essential life skills such as a problem, resolve real world problems, collaboration and working with a team, and many more. All these life skills which define the personality of an individual can never be learned through traditional book and classroom studies.

#### **Develops Problem Solving and Identification Capacity**

Problem solving and problem identification are two separate things. Students through years of practice may develop their problem solving skills but to identify the problem much before its arrival and taking necessary precautions to tackle it differentiates a successful entrepreneur from the mass.

#### **Enhanced Leadership Quality**

The world is always in need of a good leader for guidance. The students who are interested to make a difference will certainly succeed in paving a different pathway, while learning about entrepreneurship skills at a younger age, the students tend to incorporate new skills and start thinking like a leader. Beneficial specifically for women entrepreneurs, the leadership skills will compel them to create their own identity by mitigating the existing gender gap in the corporate world. Others include, preparing Students for an uncertain future and leave room for creativity and collaboration.

#### **Challenges in the Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education in Public Secondary Schools**

It is however observed that the students do not take this course serious majorly because they feel that they would be considered as local, looked down on and not valued. The wrong mind set of the nation that is undue emphasis on certificate rather than on experience through practical. The curriculum used by the Centre for Entrepreneur Development. From observations and findings through

interviews, it was discovered that it is theory based and white-washed with group practical – only end products are delivered to the Centre, the knowledge of the processes are ignored. As such, students capitalize on it and just pay money to the group leader to get the product done, submit their names and get their scores. For students who are interested, there is the fear of start-up capital. It was discovered that what is taught is starting a business and not the spirit of entrepreneurship which is innovations based on identified needs in our immediate environment.

It has however been observed that the government most times prepare this curriculum without actually following up to ensure the implementation of this curriculum. As such the attainment of goals at any level of education depends largely on effective implementation of its planned programme. Onyeachu in ThankGod (2017) observed that no matter how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designed and documented, implementation is important. This is because the problem of most programmes stems from the implementation stage. In their opinion, Babalola in Dike and Effanga (2020), stated that, it is at the implementation stage that many excellent curriculum plans and other educational policies are marred without any trace. Hence, for the innovation in secondary school curriculum to be effective in carrying out its proposed goals, the challenges as highlighted by Dike and Effanga (2020); Unachukwu in Abubakar; Hassan and Imufutau (2019), should be taken into consideration.

### **Inadequate Instructional Facilities**

Instructional facilities refer to the basic structures and facilities necessary for effective teaching and learning in the school. Facilities are plants, equipment, buildings, furniture which enable teachers to deliver effective teaching thereby leading to attainment of behavioural objectives. What is found in most secondary schools in Nigeria are dilapidated buildings, leaking roofs, lack of chairs and desks for students and teachers to use. This has negative effect on effective implementation of new secondary school curriculum.

### **Finance/ Poor Funding Syndrome**

There is need for substantial funds for teachings in practical terms for entrepreneurial education; financing start-ups and expansion of business ventures in order to produce successful entrepreneurs. These funds could come from internal sources like personal savings, traditional cooperative groups and societies or externally from institutions like banks government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

### **Inadequate Equipment and Technology**

The cost of equipment is quite exorbitant and cannot be afforded by most Nigerians especially young graduates. This makes for difficulty in development of entrepreneurship as technology is closely related to entrepreneurship. It therefore calls for need for the provision of affordable technologies.

### **Inadequate Qualified Staff**

This is a crucial stage in implementing new secondary school curriculum. For any programme of the curriculum to be properly implemented, the implementer must be adequately qualified. In Nigeria, it is unheard of that most secondary schools do not have adequate qualified teachers. In most cases, teachers are compelled to teach subjects that are not their areas of specialization. This demands urgent attention because teachers are the cornerstone or the hub of any educational system. When the wrong calibre of teachers or educational instructors are recruited to teach and execute vocational and technical education programmes, the result is a poor standard of training for vocational students which result into poor job performances in the labour/industrial market.

## CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship education is no longer a new concept in schools as well as our national policy of education where the curriculum is drawn from. Recognizing the importance of entrepreneurial studies at the secondary school level depends to a significant extent on the pedagogical practices of its teachers, including the usefulness of the learning activities. Similarly, its relevance to our society in terms of empowerment and acquisition of skills for self-reliance cannot be overemphasized. Self-reliance is a vital key to self-actualization, better human relationship, and national efficiency as well as social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress. Entrepreneurship education enhances its recipient to be a job creator rather than job-seeker. It leads to self-reliance, improves the quality of life and the general standard of living of the masses. The rise in crimes and other social vices in our state due to idleness call for urgent attention to remedy the situation by empowering the youth through entrepreneurship education to be self-reliant.

## SUGGESTIONS

From the discussions above the following are suggested:

1. Adequate qualified manpower should be provided to enhance the achievement of the objectives of entrepreneurship education as stipulated in the curriculum.
2. Government of Rivers state should create sensitization programmes and entrepreneurship centers for school leaver to gain entrepreneurial skills in order to be independent or self-reliant.
3. There is an urgent need for the government to provide an enabling environment in the forms of efficient and available basic infrastructural facilities, especially electricity.
4. Interest free loans should be provided through micro-finance banks and other specialized agencies to adequately empower young entrepreneurs to start up any business of their choice after school.
5. The present method of teaching entrepreneurship as a subject should be replaced with teaching entrepreneurship as an activity. As subject, abstract concepts of entrepreneurship are taught to students without practical supplements, while entrepreneurship activity combines teaching with experiential exercises.

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