

Journal of Education and Practice  
ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online)  
Vol 2, No 3

[www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)

# Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum Content for Undergraduate Students in Nigerian Universities

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## Abstract

University education in Nigeria, like in other developing countries, is to produce graduates grounded in generic skill and, quality education for the nation's economic development. University curriculum therefore, should reflect research about what works, as opposed to what is popular today or tomorrow. This implies that the curriculum content should enable students to attain the society's expectations, and perhaps most importantly, their needs. This work is an attempt to identify potentially viable skills for curriculum development for entrepreneurship education at undergraduate levels in Nigerian Universities, through providing 66 skills from which 550 undergraduate students of the University of Abuja were tasked to rank. The first twenty most acceptable skills ranked by students was recommended for Universities in Nigeria as the basis upon which they could select entrepreneurship curriculum contents for their students.

**Keywords:** Skills, Undergraduate students, Unemployment, Federal Government, Education, University, Curriculum Contents, Self-reliance, Opportunities

## 1. Introduction

The rising state of insecurity according Okolo (2010) cannot be divorced from the debilitating effects of poverty and unemployment, which have enveloped the country. While, Attahiru (2010), expressed worry over the high rate of graduates unemployment in the country, Katsina (2010) frowned at the increasing involvement of youths in criminal activities in the country and called on government at all levels to initiate proactive curricular in our educational system. Okpara in Okolo (2010) described unemployment and poverty as a very dangerous development that must be tackled prevent the attendant damage to the nation. Inability of graduates to engage in gainful opportunities is due to the previous educational system that did not prepare them for gainful living, in line with this, Suleiman in Nagarba (2009) noted that the persistent social vices in the country, characterized by rape, theft, armed robbery, kidnapping, drugs, addiction and other form of misdemeanors are as a result or the ineffective is evident of the ineffectiveness in the implementation of our social policies. Furthermore the fact that our universities and polytechnics graduates turn into the labour market where jobs do not exist, leads to general frustration, idleness redundancy and social insecurity.

### **1. Concept of entrepreneurship**

Some people contend that the initial of entrepreneurship theory dates back to the writing of Richard Cantillon an Irish man who was living in France, in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century (NIM, 2009). Most scholars however agreed that there are no serious theoretical studies and formulations on entrepreneurship until the works of Max Weber and Joseph Schumpeter. According to Schumpeter (2011) the term is a French word *entreprendre*, which means "to undertake". He defined entrepreneurship as the process of searching out opportunities in the market place and arranging resources required to exploit these opportunities for long term gains. It is the process of planning and organising, opportunities and assumptions. Thus it is a risk of business enterprise. It may be distinguished as ability to take risk independently for utmost earnings in the market. It is a creative and innovative skill that could adapted to the real environment. Entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur, which can be defined as "one who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods" (Wikipedia, 2011).

Frank H. Knight (1921) and Peter Drucker (1970) opined that entrepreneurship is about taking risk. The behavior of the entrepreneur involve willingness to put career and financial security capital on line on an uncertain venture. The function of the entrepreneur as one of combining various input factors in an innovative manner to generate value to the customer with the hope that this value will exceed the cost of the input factors, thus generating superior returns in the creation of wealth. Several factors could therefore explains the rationale behind business venture (NIM, 2009). A well fashioned out curriculum content for entrepreneurship education that would provide under graduates some kinds of skill or skills would definitely lead to a successful business venture.

### **2. Concept of curriculum**

The idea of curriculum according to Kelly (1999) is hardly new, but the way we understand and theorize it has altered over the years and there remains considerable dispute as to meaning. It has its origin in the running / chariot tracks of Greece. A useful starting point for us here might be the definition offered by Kerr (1958). The word curriculum according to Kerr originated from a Latin word "currere: meaning "the course to be run". This implies a track, a set of obstacles that an individual is to overcome, something that has a beginning and an end, and something that one aims at completing. Schools have established "courses of study" through which individuals are to pass. Successful completion of such "course" warrants certification of competence. These courses are referred to as curriculum. The concept of curriculum as a term in educational discourse has been used in a wide variety of ways because educationists view it in different ways.

Kerr (1968) defined curriculum as all the learning (experiences) which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried out in groups or individually inside or outside the school. Bobbitt (1969), considered as the father of curriculum define it as all the experiences that make up an adult life. Bobbitt the first person to use scientific term or method to deal with curriculum stressed that we learn many things such as roles, rules, respect, hard work and other values both herent and inherent learning that take place in the school. Bobbitt believed that what schools teach should conform to what the children learn at home. Curriculum is generally understood to mean all the processes, products and human activities intended for the realization of the society's aspirations through schools (Cookey, 1970; Onwuka 1981).

Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) opined that the success of a new curriculum depends largely on how well those who have planned its development and implementation have perceived the needs of students. It is in line with this that the study is being carried out to give the students an opportunity to select most acceptable curriculum contents for entrepreneurship education from a number of curriculum contents.

### **3. For a way forward**

Alarmed by the worsening unemployment problem in the country, the national President of the Nigerian Association of Chamber of commerce, industry, Mines and agriculture (NACCIMA) Dr. Simon Okolo called on the Federal Government to absorb the teeming population of unemployed youths across the Country. Isaac (2010) emphasizes that one of the major ways to get out of poverty is through getting a sound education that will enable the present generation to compete favourably with their counterparts in other countries. Having a healthy society the youth sector of the population needs to be rediscovered and reintegrated into the mainstream. Finding productive engagement for our youths is the only answer to our vast development needs and the attempt the move to make entrepreneurship compulsory for all students will be a worthwhile alternative. It behove students in various institutions of higher learning to acquire skills and capacity to be self-reliant as they, conclude their respective areas of specialization (Attahiru, 2010). Rabi (2010) opined that employment generation especially for youths, is the key to keep restive youths gainfully employed. This development would assist the federal government's drive towards reducing crime by gainfully employing the youths in the country. The Nigerian Institute Management (NIM, 2009) reiterated that Nigerian graduates of today can no longer rely on the Nigerian labour market to provide them with jobs. He or she has to invent an alternative source for self employment.

It is of importance to urge that the Federal Government of Nigeria as well as several state governments to launch entrepreneurship development programmes to alleviate the situation, as characterized by the outcry from different segments of the society calling for more intensified effort on the part of the government. In an attempt to address the problem of youths restiveness the 2006 presidential directive through the Federal Ministry of Education made entrepreneurship education compulsory for ALL students of higher Education Institute (HEI) in Nigeria, effective 2007/2008 academic session (Yahaya, 2011).

General objective of Entrepreneurship Education according to Yahaya are as follows:

- Address the problem of unemployment and underemployment
- To encourage Universities to generate knowledge and other competencies that will build an entrepreneurial human capital for national development
- Challenge Universities to evolve ways to foster entrepreneurship especially in diffusing innovations through research activities
- To enable Universities move further up from traditional enclaves to include possible commercialization of untapped research activities which could be new sources of revenue and
- To help build an innovative and entrepreneurial culture in order to create a productive and socially responsible generation of graduate among others.

#### **4. Statement of the Problem**

The problem of unemployed youths is becoming a source of concern and great embarrassment to the country, this is because in the past government failed to provide employment for the youth, moreover, our pass curricular did not prepare the youths for self-reliance. Worried by the alarming rate of unemployment in the country, especially of graduates, the emphasis by most tertiary institutions in recent times has been on providing entrepreneurial skills development scheme for its students as equipment for self employment and relevance in society (Oyesiku, 2008). University education in Nigeria, as it is the case in other developing countries, has a specific mission of producing a critical mass of Nigerians, grounded in the key generic skills, who on the basis of the high-quality higher education they offer would provide the needed catalyst for the nation's socio-political and economic development. In almost all tertiary institutions in Nigeria today, entrepreneurship education and related courses are taken as compulsory General Studies courses (ASURU, 2009).

Studies and opinions of experts however, show that Nigerian Universities at present are not producing high-quality graduates. In effect, it means that the curriculum is poorly implemented. In order to get right this time around, there is the need to offer students the correct choice of skills in the entrepreneurship curriculum that would adequately empower them to become self-reliance should they fail to find a white collar job. In the face of the serious and

growing threat of graduate unemployment in Nigeria today, the need for the Nigerian graduate of today to seek avenue for self-employment and self-fulfillment now seems inevitable.

### **1.1      *Research Method***

Five hundred undergraduate students selected through stratified random technique drawn from all the eleven faculties of University of Abuja in Nigeria, formed the sample for the study. A check list containing sixty-six skills which were drawn from available literature: Creative Arts and Basic Technology Curriculum and Entrepreneurship Programme designed by the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM) for Nigerian Universities, formed the instrument for this study. Under graduate students of University of Abuja in Nigeria, were asked to rank the twenty most acceptable curriculum contents of their choice, out of the sixty-six provided. The statistical data employed in the study is simple ranking and mean.

### **1.11      *Analysis Result***

**Table1. Undergraduates' Ranking of Curriculum Contents for Entrepreneurship Education**

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Nos.	Skills	+4	+3	+2	+1	RANKING	
1	Soap making	298	172	36	44	13 <sup>th</sup>	
2	Tie and dye	189	221	91	59	36 <sup>th</sup>	
3	Brewing	214	176	117	43	15 <sup>th</sup>	
4	Pure water	286	154	58	52	14 <sup>th</sup>	
5	Fisheries	250	191	58	51	24 <sup>th</sup>	
6	Aquaculture	321	119	42	68	16 <sup>th</sup>	
7	Vegetable oil production	257	190	83	20	17 <sup>th</sup>	
8	Bakery	345	143	42	20	7 <sup>th</sup>	
9	Leather work	132	178	141	99	52 <sup>nd</sup>	
10	Bead making	170	189	100	91	47 <sup>th</sup>	
11	Music lessons	290	139	52	69	18 <sup>th</sup>	
12	Pottery	220	231	80	19	20 <sup>th</sup>	
13	Interior decoration	382	130	21	37	2 <sup>nd</sup>	
14	Printing	211	185	104	50	37 <sup>th</sup>	
15	Poultry	121	280	95	154	26 <sup>th</sup>	
16	Rabbit production	-	140	150	260	65 <sup>th</sup>	
17	Welding	56	133	140	21	66 <sup>th</sup>	
18	Furniture making	272	137	92	51	29 <sup>th</sup>	
19	Upholstery making	282	108	57	63	39 <sup>th</sup>	
20	Fashion designing	336	164	39	11	6 <sup>th</sup>	
21	Motor bike mechanic	63	117	148	222	40 <sup>th</sup>	
22	Graphic design	330	156	42	22	9 <sup>th</sup>	
23	Tiling	115	232	130	73	49 <sup>th</sup>	

24	Making brooms	61	89	142	278	62 <sup>nd</sup>
25	Cane technology	50	161	132	207	60 <sup>th</sup>
26	Bricklaying	73	167	102	208	59 <sup>th</sup>
27	Plumbing	162	218	84	136	41 <sup>st</sup>
28	Tinkering	104	126	153	167	58 <sup>th</sup>
29	Vehicle mechanic	180	132	79	161	54 <sup>st</sup>
30	Electrical/installation	315	155	37	43	5 <sup>th</sup>
31	Making of decorative pots	264	252	24	10	12 <sup>th</sup>
32	Hair weaving	314	123	102	11	11 <sup>th</sup>
34	Tailoring	252	174	102	22	19 <sup>th</sup>
35	Knitting children's sweaters, socks and caps	261	109	128	42	34 <sup>th</sup>
36	Weaving traditional clothes	151	207	111	81	48 <sup>th</sup>
37	Painting	172	186	162	30	45 <sup>th</sup>
38	Raising of flowers	290	182	57	21	10 <sup>th</sup>
39	Landscaping	222	157	151	20	3 <sup>rd</sup>
40	Making of baskets and cages from Palm fronds	87	192	223	48	57 <sup>th</sup>
41	Sculpture	163	243	102	92	33 <sup>rd</sup>
42	Cloth making	240	280	91	39	46 <sup>th</sup>
43	Making of baskets and cages from Palm fronds	87	192	223	48	56 <sup>th</sup>
41	Sculpture	163	243	102	92	33 <sup>rd</sup>
42	Cloth making	240	280	91	39	45 <sup>th</sup>
43	Horticulture	235	183	92	40	41 <sup>st</sup>

44	Toy making	56	202	131	161	63 <sup>rd</sup>
45	Vulcanizing	150	127	182	91	55 <sup>th</sup>
46	Ceramics production	205	240	61	44	38 <sup>th</sup>
47	Plantain chips production	193	217	85	65	25 <sup>th</sup>
48	Metal work	92	222	102	134	60 <sup>th</sup>
49	Wood work	141	196	112	101	50 <sup>th</sup>
50	Raising of pets	117	199	143	91	53 <sup>rd</sup>
51	Electric wiring	260	227	82	71	4 <sup>th</sup>
52	Fabrication	233	215	70	32	21 <sup>st</sup>
53	Radio/ television repairs	272	118	99	61	32 <sup>nd</sup>
54	Weaving	162	241	75	72	43 <sup>rd</sup>
55	Carving	211	188	129	32	31 <sup>st</sup>
56	Veterinary services	254	193	43	60	32 <sup>nd</sup>
57	Operating a saloon	321	160	52	17	1 <sup>st</sup>
58	Operating a business centre	350	129	50	21	8 <sup>th</sup>
59	Packaging of food items	307	162	51	30	23 <sup>rd</sup>
60	Distilling and bottling water	213	223	72	42	28 <sup>th</sup>
61	GSM credit card retailing	198	152	126	64	44 <sup>th</sup>
62	Cane technology	160	171	122	97	49 <sup>th</sup>
63	GSM phone repair services	247	152	93	38	35 <sup>th</sup>
64	Computer services repair	300	172	56	32	22 <sup>nd</sup>
65	Shoe making	263	137	81	69	27 <sup>th</sup>

66	Bag making	195	123	71	161	51 <sup>st</sup>
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The table 1 above shows undergraduates' ranking of curriculum content for Entrepreneurship Education. A total of sixty-six curriculum contents for Entrepreneurship Education was drawn up for undergraduates students of University of Abuja situated at the Federal Capital Territory in Nigeria. The under graduate students were asked to rank the most acceptable curriculum content of their choice. According to analysis of data a mean of 3.609 for operating a saloon ranked 1<sup>st</sup> and this was considered to be the highest most acceptable skill, while piggyery was the most unacceptable curriculum content with a mean of 1.618 .

**Table.2 Undergraduates' Ranking of Twenty Most Acceptable Curriculum Contents for Entrepreneurship Education**

58	Operating a saloon	321	160	52	17	3.609	1 <sup>st</sup>
13	Interior decoration	382	130	21	37	3.594	2 <sup>nd</sup>
31	Electrical/installation	315	155	37	43	3.56	3 <sup>rd</sup>
31	Electric wiring	260	227	82	71	3.553	4 <sup>th</sup>
52	Fashion designing	336	164	39	11	3.500	5 <sup>th</sup>
8	Bakery	345	143	42	20	3.485	6 <sup>th</sup>
59	Operating a business centre	350	129	50	21	3.469	7 <sup>th</sup>
23	Graphic design	330	156	42	22	3.433	8 <sup>th</sup>
23	Making of decorative pots	264	252	24	10	3.400	9 <sup>th</sup>
34	Raising of flowers	290	182	57	21	3.347	10 <sup>th</sup>
32	Hair weaving	314	123	102	11	3.345	11 <sup>th</sup>
39	Pure water	286	154	58	52	3.331	12 <sup>th</sup>
40	Soapmaking	228	172	366	44	3.3201	13 <sup>th</sup>
6	Aquaculture	321	119	42	68	3.256	14 <sup>th</sup>
7	Vegetable oil production	257	190	83	20	3.244	15 <sup>th</sup>
3	Brewing	214	176	117	43	3.233	16 <sup>th</sup>
53	Music lessons	290	139	52	69	3.193	17 <sup>th</sup>
34	Tailoring	252	174	102	22	3.192	18 <sup>th</sup>
12	Pottery making	220	231	80	19	3.185	19 <sup>th</sup>

35	Fabrication	233	215	70	32	3.180	20 <sup>th</sup>
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## 5. Discussion

Often time it is difficult to determine what skills to offer student. This statement agrees with NIM (2009) that it is sometimes difficult to identify viable project. As many as one hundred skills, were recommended by the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM). But this study provided twenty skills for undergraduate students of University of Abuja to select most acceptable entrepreneurship education curriculum contents of their choice. Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) opined that the success of a new curriculum depends largely on how well those who have planned its development and implementation have perceived the needs of students. Also, making sure your provide student skills that would enable them become self-reliance becomes imperative. NIM (2009) reiterated that in the face of the serious and growing threat of graduate unemployment in Nigeria today, the need for the Nigerian graduate of today to seek avenue for self-employment and self-fulfillment now seems impelling.

## 6. Recommendation

This study makes only one recommendation, that the National University Commission should make available, the twenty curriculum contents developed in this study to all Universities in Nigeria to be the foundation upon which to build on their Entrepreneurship Education programme.

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