

VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CLUBS AND SOCIETIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA.

BY

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Abstract

The study on Vocational and Technical Clubs and Societies in Secondary Schools for Entrepreneurship Development in Benue State was born out of the quest to sensitize the younger generation on the values, potentials and benefits derivable in extra-curricular activities especially in these days of unemployment. The study was carried out in the three (3) Educational Zones of Benue State. The survey design was adopted and a self-structured questionnaire was used to generate data used in answering the five (5) research questions that emanated from the five (5) objectives of the study. Three (3) hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study had a population of thirty (30) secondary schools. One hundred and twelve (112) Teacher-Guides and five hundred and forty six (546) student-members. The purposive sampling technique was used to arrive at the fifteen (15) secondary schools, while cluster sampling technique was used to arrive at the eighty six (86) Teacher-Guides and two hundred and twenty six (226) student-members used for the study. Results among others revealed that young farmers club; JETs clubs are some of the vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State. It was recommended among others that Entrepreneurship Development should be the focal issue in these vocational and technical clubs and societies since employment opportunities and self-reliance are achievable in them though TVET.

Introduction

Education no doubt entails an all-round development; it is not acquired in the classroom alone. Especially when viewed as bringing about a relatively permanent change in the behaviour of an individual, people can therefore learn or acquire education through social interaction. High schools or secondary schools as referred to in Nigeria are attended after one completes primary education, they are dedicated to developing the total person mentally, physically, socially and spiritually-through scheduled classes and a variety of activities such as clubs, societies and games which are offered to students.

Secondary school clubs and societies are students-based consisting of school authority's

approved functions with myriads of tasks varying on the specific purpose of each respective club or society, (Clinton 2013). In the words of Clinton (2013) secondary school club or society is an association of two (2) or more students united by a common interest or goal. Furthermore, such clubs and societies may fall outside the normal curriculum of the school to supplement the curriculum through informal meetings and professional mentoring.

A report from Ardenne (2013) submits that school clubs and societies composed of students (student-members) with adults (teacher-guides) as advising figures to maintain their functionality. That primarily, they focus on four (4) aspects; fundraising, community service, career interest and interpersonal

dynamics (also known as group dynamics), these are referred to as extracurricular activities. The report further affirmed that generally school clubs and societies are broken down into two (2) categories; state and/or nationwide clubs and local clubs. Thus school clubs and societies are started by corporations, counterpart adult organizations, or student themselves looking for avenues to satisfy a need or demand that cannot be met using the curriculum for formal teaching and learning.

Vocational and technical education given in secondary schools in Benue State is aimed at preparing students for entry into skilled vocations, for the purposes of providing employment and self-reliance for the teeming youths that may or may not further their education. A boost to the usual reluctant way this has been going on in our secondary schools is to incorporate entrepreneurship development into the activities of school clubs and societies, if we are indeed to catch them young and to also record a turn-around in the economic situation of the country. This is because a report from Double Gist (2013) affirmed that it is apparent that extra-curricular activities have become as much as a part of the students' requirements as textbooks. They influence student's activities, characters, behaviours and relationships with people. Also, many factors such as culture, economic situations and socio-economic status of families influence the type or nature of activities which students engage in after school. Therefore, participation in these activities fosters social integration and deepens students' sense of belonging, commitment and of responsibility to the school, community and the nation.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2014) refers to Entrepreneurship Development as the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution-building programmes. It emphasize that at the entrepreneurship development level, a key role of the programme is to develop tools and programmes that deal with the long term effects of entrepreneurial

culture. It create awareness among young people of the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship and self-employment, a practical tool that addresses the challenge of youth unemployment, highlighted in the Millennium Development Goals and its transition to sustainable Development Goals. And also in the role of shaping their future and that of their country's economic and social development.

Members of any vocational and technical school club and society are potential entrepreneurs, who are pivotal in driving economic growth and creating employment. They are also recognized as sources of innovation and new ideas and most specifically as "agents" that foster competitiveness and productivity with the global economy. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (1999) reports that despite government institutional, financial and policy efforts, Nigeria lags behind other developing countries in promoting the growth and sustainability of entrepreneurs. That government initiative over the past years has not been satisfactory in supporting businesses. The impacts and achievements of such initiatives have fallen short of aspirations for the future of the Nigerian economy. According to the report, part of the solution to these challenges can be achieved through strategic and coordinated investment in entrepreneurship development programs. In this case secondary school clubs and societies in vocational and technical education should provide providing quality training, coaching and mentorship for emerging entrepreneurs in Benue State, Nigeria.

Secondary schools in Benue State support a number of students-led clubs and societies that bring together students with similar career interest. These clubs such as young farmers club, future scientist and engineers among others focus on specific career fields and help students understand them better, (Hallmark, 2013). These clubs and societies run a number of events that give students opportunities to

learn more about roles available and the skills needed in industries; learn from and network with alumni and other professionals; build links with relevant employers in the sector. Many competitions, awards and conventions are held to give club members advantages in these fields by exposing them to new opportunities (Clinton, 2013).

The importance of secondary school clubs and societies can therefore not be over emphasized, as Clinton (2013) added that they help in the exploration of individual talents amongst students; they are agents of socialization; and are platforms for the exchange of ideas and dissemination of information in secondary schools. It is on this note that the researcher deem it fit to look into vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher observed that incessant involvement of students in social vices like cult, thuggery, assassination and kidnapping is becoming a daily occurrence in the State. Most students are losing grip of the dignity in genuine labour and are not awake to entrepreneurship opportunities, because they are not provided with enough platforms that will encourage and build these values in them. The alternative to catching them young in schools and to prepare them as great future entrepreneurs in vocational and technical skills is seen in secondary school clubs and societies.

Objectives for the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the activities of vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools for entrepreneurship development in Benue State, Nigeria. The following objectives were posed to guide the study:

1. Identify vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State;
2. Examine the objectives of these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State;

3. Determine opportunities of incorporating entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State;
4. Determine linkages for these vocational and technical clubs and societies with other bodies for the secondary schools in Benue State;
5. Identify challenges of entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. What are the vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?
2. What are the objectives of these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?
3. What are the opportunities of incorporating entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?
4. How can linkages to be established with other bodies for these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?
5. What are the challenges of entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance to confirm the findings of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Teacher-Guides and student-members on the opportunities of incorporating entrepreneurship development in vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Teacher-Guides and student –members on linkages with other

bodies to be established for these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools.

3. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Teacher-Guides and Student-Members on challenges to entrepreneurship development in vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State.

Methodology

A survey design was adopted for the study. This was because the study described the phenomenon involved using the information gathered from people associated with it

Thirty Public and Private secondary schools in three (3) educational zones of Benue State (Zone "A", Zone "B" and Zone "C") were used for the study. The population of the study was 658 made up off One hundred and twelve (112) and five hundred and forty six (546). The

VTCS was subjected to face validation from three (3) experts, one (1) from measurement and evaluation and the other two (2) from experienced school Teacher-Guides. This was to ensure content coverage, unambiguous words expression and non-bogus instrument for the study. The reliability of VTCS was

Results

The data for answering research questions and testing formulated hypotheses are presented in tables 1 to 5

Research Question 1: What are the vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of the Responses of the Respondents on the Vocational and Technical Clubs and Societies in secondary schools in Benue State.

S/No	Vocational and Technical Clubs and Societies	Mean Responses and Standard Deviation				Remarks
		Teacher-Guides		Student Members		
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	
1.	Young Farmers Club	3.51	1.12	3.52	1.11	Agreed
2.	JETs Club	3.51	1.12	3.52	1.11	Agreed
3.	Science Club	3.31	0.89	4.00	1.28	Agreed
4.	Computer Club	4.00	1.21	4.00	1.50	Agreed
5.	Health Club	3.07	1.60	3.48	1.42	Agreed
6.	Energy Society	2.56	0.81	3.00	1.08	Agreed

sample consisted of Fifteen (15) sampled secondary schools; eighty six (86) Teacher-Guides and two hundred and twenty six (226) student-members were sampled respectively for the study. A self-structured questionnaire named vocational and technical clubs and societies (VTCS) was used for data collection. This was divided into two (2) sections. Section "A" for Personal Information and Section "B" with information on types of Club and societies in School, objectives, entrepreneurship development opportunities, linkage and associated challenges. The responses in Section B are anchored on a four (4) point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4; Agreed (A) = 3; Disagreed (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1. This gave the study a benchmark of 2.5; above this point item responses are agreed with and below this point item responses are disagreed with.

established using Chronbach Alpha coefficient which was 0.82 indicating high reliability.

Mean (\bar{x}) and Standard Deviation (SD) were used in answering the research questions while t-test was used in testing the research hypotheses.

7.	Home Makers Club	3.02	1.99	4.00	1.33	Agreed
8.	Mathematics Club	3.10	1.00	3.00	1.06	Agreed
9.	Geography Club	2.34	0.88	2.16	1.11	Disagreed
10.	Environmental Society	2.01	1.53	2.44	0.89	Disagreed
11.	Carpentry Club	2.54	0.72	3.61	1.08	Agreed
Grand Mean		$\bar{X}_1 = 3.55$		$\bar{X}_2 = 3.71$		

$n_1 = 86; SD_1 = 1.79; n_2 = 226; SD_2 = 1.56$

Table 1 above indicates that both Teacher-Guides and Student-Member agreed with all the identified vocational and Technical clubs and Societies in secondary schools as functional with mean values above 2.5, they disagreed with two that had mean values below 2.5 as not Functional.

Research Question 2: What are the objectives of these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of the Responses of the Respondents on Objectives of Vocational and Technical Clubs and Societies in Secondary Schools in Benue State.

Objectives	Mean Responses and Standard Deviation				Remarks
	Teacher-Guides		Student Members		
	\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	
Have Educative Value	3.11	0.99	3.04	1.01	Agreed
Give opportunities for skills acquisition	3.09	1.01	3.21	1.08	Agreed
Provide opportunities for developing concrete career culture and interest.	3.24	0.84	3.50	0.85	Agreed
Provide training in leadership	4.00	1.03	3.63	0.90	Agreed
Enrich the social life of the student (ethical character and corporate life)	4.00	1.20	3.95	1.07	Agreed
Provide opportunity for worthy use of leisure and relaxation.	4.00	1.34	3.98	0.92	Agreed
Provide opportunity for recreation	3.33	0.69	3.07	0.88	Agreed
Provide opportunity for developing traits/tools necessary for life after school.	4.00	1.32	4.00	1.41	Agreed
Grand Mean	$\bar{X}_1 = 3.41$		$\bar{X}_2 = 3.32$		

$n_1 = 86; SD_1 = 1.36$

$n_2 = 226; SD_2 = 0.79$

Table 2 above indicates that both Teachers-Guides and Student-Members agreed with all the stated objectives of vocational and Technical clubs and societies in secondary schools, since all items have mean values above 2.5.

Research Question 3: What are the opportunities of incorporating entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical

clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Teacher-Guides and student-members on the opportunities of incorporating entrepreneurship development in vocational and technical clubs and soci

Wombo, A.B

Table 3: Mean and t-test analysis of Responses of Teacher-Guide and Student-Members on Entrepreneurship Development Opportunities in Vocational and Technical Clubs and Societies in Secondary Schools in Benue State.

Entrepreneurship Development Opportunities	Mean Responses and Standard Deviation				t-cal	t-crit.	Remarks
	Teacher-Guides		Student Members				
	\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂			
Through the stated objectives	3.40	1.36	3.70	1.24	-3.76	1.96	NS
Through club and society activities.	3.11	0.99	3.55	1.42	0.16	1.96	NS
By organizing special entrepreneurship week.	3.09	1.79	3.38	1.39	-1.25	1.96	NS
By organizing special professional week.	2.71	0.83	3.10	1.00	-2.00	1.96	NS
By arranging excursions and fields trips to strategic outfits.	4.00	1.32	3.49	1.42	0.96	1.96	NS
By organizing field days	3.50	1.01	3.61	1.00	0.78	1.96	NS
By attending trade fair/shows.	2.82	0.67	3.11	0.99	0.33	1.96	NS
By attending conferences/seminars	2.50	0.86	3.09	1.01	-3.66	1.96	NS

$n_1=86;SD_1=1.08$

$n_2=226;SD_2=1.29$

Table 3 above indicates that both Teacher-Guides and Student-Members agreed that programmes and activities of vocational and technical clubs and societies provide entrepreneurship development opportunities for students in secondary schools. The t-test analysis shows that for each item/opportunity, the t-cal is less than the critical t, thus accepting the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the responses of the two groups.

Research Question 4: Are there linkages to be established with other bodies for these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Teacher-Guides and student-members on linkages to be established with other bodies for these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools.

Table 4: Mean and t-test analysis of Responses of Teacher-Guides and Student-Members on Linkages with other Bodies for Entrepreneurship Development

Bodies for Linkages	Mean Responses and Standard Deviation				t-cal	t-crit.	Remarks
	Teacher-Guides		Student Members				
	\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂			
Professional bodies (Engineers, Lawyers)	4.00	1.32	3.17	0.79	0.27	1.64	NS
Private Sector (Companies, Industries)	3.12	0.96	3.21	1.08	0.89	1.64	NS
Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)	3.17	0.86	3.28	1.00	0.16	1.64	NS
Government Agencies	4.00	1.25	3.54	1.41	1.26	1.64	NS
Community Base Organizations (CBOs)	3.22	0.89	3.39	1.39	0.54	1.64	NS

Faith Base Organizations (FBOs)	3.08	1.01	3.25	1.10	0.71	1.64	NS
Philanthropists	4.00	1.13	4.00	1.50	-2.02	1.64	NS
Higher Learning Institutions	2.50	0.86	3.09	1.01	-1.31	1.64	NS
Financial Institutions (Banks)	3.09	1.01	3.54	0.89	0.88	1.64	NS

$n_1=86;SD_1=1.10$

$n_2=226;SD_2=1.25$

Table 4 above indicates that both Teacher-Guides and student-members agreed with the bodies as capable of providing linkages for entrepreneurship development for vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools, since all items have mean values above 2.5. The t-test analysis shows that for each item/named body, the t-cal was less than critical t, thus accepting the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the responses of the two groups.

Research Question 5: What are the challenges of entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State?

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Teacher-Guides and Student-Members on challenges to entrepreneurship development in vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools in Benue State.

Table 5: Mean and t-test analysis of Responses of Teacher-Guides and student-Members on Challenges to Entrepreneurship Development in Vocational and Technical Clubs and Societies in Secondary Schools in Benue State.

Challenges	Mean Responses and Standard Deviation				t-cal	t-crit.	Remarks
	Teacher-Guides		Student Members				
	\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂			
Lack of workshops/tools	4.00	1.21	4.00	1.50	0.72	1.98	NS
Negative attitude toward vocational and technical careers	3.10	1.00	4.00	1.28	0.56	1.98	NS
Poor administrative support	4.00	1.20	3.95	1.07	0.99	1.98	NS
Poor students interest/participation	2.83	0.65	3.21	1.08	-1.48	1.98	NS
Inadequate number of teacher-guides	3.09	1.79	3.44	1.37	-1.61	1.98	NS
Poor funding/logistics	3.36	0.71	4.00	1.41	-2.15	1.98	NS
Poor linkages with other bodies	4.00	1.32	3.48	1.42	0.70	1.98	NS
Absence of external activities for clubs and societies	3.24	0.84	4.00	1.33	0.55	1.98	NS
Absence of teacher/student motivation	4.00	1.32	4.00	1.28	0.83	1.98	NS

$n_1=86;SD_1=1.09$

$n_2=226;SD_2=1.33$

Table 5 above indicates that both Teacher-Guides and Student-Members agreed with the challenges to Entrepreneurship Development in vocational and Technical clubs and societies in secondary schools, since all items have mean values above 2.5. The t-test analysis shows that for each item/challenge, the t-cal was less than

critical t, thus accepting the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the responses of the two groups.

Discussion

Research Question 1 identified vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary

schools as associations where students carry out different vocational projects. This finding was supported by Hallmark, (2013) who listed young farmers clubs, future scientist and engineers as functional clubs that focus on specific career fields, to help student develop positive attitude towards them.

Research Question 2 listed the objectives of these vocational and technical clubs and societies in schools as guiding the activities of these clubs and societies in supplementing the curriculum, through informal meetings and professional mentoring. This finding was supported by a report from Double Gist (2013) accepting these objectives as influencing student's activities that foster social integration and deepens students' sense of belonging, commitment and of responsibility to the school, community and the nation. Thus, making student attracted to positive ventures than being a menace to the society.

Research Question 3 sought for entrepreneurship development opportunities in the activities of these vocational and technical clubs and societies. These finding was supported by the report of ILO (2014) that entrepreneurship development is a process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution building program. That it deals with the long term effects of entrepreneurial culture, to create awareness among young people of the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship and self-employment since student-members are potential entrepreneurs. These opportunities are embedded in their activities which include organizing entrepreneurship and excursions among members.

Recommendations

1. Secondary schools in Benue State should endeavor to run at least two (2) vocational and technical clubs and societies.

Research Question 4 identified bodies that these vocational and technical clubs and societies should be linked with for support in order to promote their activities. These finding was supported by Clinton (2013) who agreed that these clubs and societies run a number of events that gives students opportunities to learn more about roles available and the skills needed in industries, learn from and network with alumni and other professionals and also build links with relevant employers in the sector.

Research Question 5 found challenges to entrepreneurship development in these vocational and technical clubs and societies, which were agreed with by UNDP (1999) report that lamented over lack of sustenance in promoting the growth of entrepreneurship development. These initiatives over the past years, have not been receiving satisfactory support to the aspirations of these clubs and societies in secondary schools in the state. Based on the tested hypotheses 1 to 3, as shown on tables 3 to 5, that the opportunities for entrepreneurship development are needed, and that linkages to these clubs and societies are also needed also, there exist challenges to the operations of these clubs and societies thus rejecting all the null hypotheses of no significant difference in the mean responses of the two groups.

Conclusion

An all round development of learners who will compete favorably with others and be a solution to challenging situation has been the goal of education. More so, Vocational Technical Education and Training (TVET), the life wire for training in skills acquisition is seen to find bearing in vocational and technical clubs and societies in secondary schools, as highlighted in the findings of this study.

2. School administrators/principals/proprietors should beef up support for these vocational

and technical clubs and societies in order inculcate lifelong skills in students.

3. Entrepreneurship development should be the focal issue in these vocational and technical clubs and societies, since employment opportunities and self-reliance are achievable in them through TVET.

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