



# **Exploring Entrepreneurship Potentials Among Public Senior Secondary School Students for Successful Entrepreneurship in Port Harcourt Metropolis**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined entrepreneurship potentials among public senior secondary school students for successful entrepreneurship in Port Harcourt metropolis. Two research questions were answered in the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised a total of 31,734 male and female senior secondary school students across the 36 public secondary schools within Port Harcourt metropolis. Taro Yamene formula was used to arrive at the study sample of 395. A questionnaire with 20 structured items designed by the researcher was used to collect data for the study. Cronbach's Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and correlation coefficient index of 0.87 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while Z-test statistic was used in testing the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of need to achieve entrepreneurial success, to a moderate extent. They also possess entrepreneurship potential of innovation for entrepreneurship success, to a low extent. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended amongst others that entrepreneurship curriculum in our secondary schools should be thoroughly reviewed to incorporate practically oriented courses so that students upon completion of their secondary school could run their own businesses. Secondary school teachers given the task of teaching entrepreneurship should be properly supervised to ensure that the right things are taught. Teachers should also be encouraged to train and retrain as the business environment is not static. This way, students would be exposed to innovative trends in the society.

**Keywords:** Exploring, Entrepreneurship, Potentials, Needs and Innovations

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a veritable tool that unlocks students' potentials for creativity and national development. Education serves as an instrument which enables individuals solve their problem, meet their expectations and make fundamental changes in the society. According to Godwin and Mathew (2017), for any nation or society to meet her developmental goals, their education system must be functional, involving school-based practices aimed at achieving the developmental goals. They further stated that functional education (which includes entrepreneurship skills acquisition) equips individuals with right competencies and skills that enable them to participate actively in the socio-economic development of the society.

It is important to note that entrepreneurship is a key driver of the economy of any nation. Scholars have long recognized that many of the big businesses today started as small businesses created by entrepreneurially minded individuals as a result of their creative freedom and exposure to entrepreneurship education. Festus (2014) observed that it is the belief of many experienced business people, political leaders, economists and educators that fostering a robust entrepreneurial culture will

maximize individual collective economic and social success on a local, national and global scale and that it is with this in mind that the national standard for entrepreneurship education was developed to prepare youth and adults to succeed in an entrepreneurial economy. The resultant financial gains from entrepreneurial venture without doubt, are always of benefit to a country. The propensity to behave entrepreneurially is not exclusive to certain individual as different individuals have diverse mix of capabilities for demonstrating and acquiring entrepreneurial behaviour, skill and attributes. These behaviours according to Neneh (2011) can be practiced, developed and learned, hence it is important to expose all students to entrepreneurial education. Entrepreneurial skills and attributes provide benefits to society, even beyond their application to business activities.

The economic importance of the entrepreneur has been recognized for several decades. Schumpeter in Igwe (2017) attributed innovation to the entrepreneur, describing an entrepreneurship as the engine of economic development. Schumpeter argued that to study entrepreneurship is to study the central figure in modern history and that unlike the capitalist, the entrepreneur directs the application of acquired knowledge to the production of goods for human consumption. The above benefits according to Godwin et al informed the introduction of entrepreneurship at all levels of education in Nigeria. Godwin et al further noted that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is geared towards bestowing young school leavers with the pre-requisite competencies essential to function effectively in a world of work. Essentially, entrepreneurship education avails students with the functional skills that will enable them to handle their businesses in the future for maximum profit. According to Ezeani (2012), entrepreneurship education creates the willingness and ability in a person to seek out investment opportunities in the society and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. Entrepreneurship education according to experts refers to programmes that promote and provide skill training for business creation and development. Others equally view entrepreneurship education as the type of education which could impact on the growth and development of an enterprise through training.

According to Atakpa (2011), entrepreneurship education is the aspect of education which equips an individual and creates in the person the mind-set to undertake the risk of venturing into something new by applying the knowledge and skills acquired in school. Olusola and Salau (2012) opined that schools in Nigeria must prepare the young generation from the primary through secondary and university education to instill self-reliance rather than thinking of government employment. It is therefore clear from the above that entrepreneurship education is a tool for securing employment and emancipation of people through the provision and acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills to make a living.

The Nigerian government in realization of the need to boost employment recognized the importance of entrepreneurship as one to be provided through lifelong learning, and by means of a more labour relevant curriculum (Olanipekun, 2015). At present, Nigeria operates 9-3-4 system of education. The first 9 years is referred to as the Universal Basic Education which is made up of 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. On completion of the 9-year Universal Basic Education, a child can branch off into any trade of his/her choice, while those who wish to continue their career in education can move on to the 3-year senior secondary education. At the end of the 3-year senior secondary education, children who are capable and eager to continue their educational pursuit can move on to a 4-year tertiary education in universities.

Following the successful launching of the 9-3-4 system of education, the National Council on Education (NCE), according to Adeneye (2013), directed the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) to review, restructure and re-align the existing primary, junior and senior secondary school curricula to meet the target of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS). According to Ementa (2013), the senior secondary education curriculum was developed to compliment the 3 years in the 9-3-4 system of education. The curriculum in view of the above, was designed to equip students with relevant and functional trade and entrepreneurial skills needed for poverty eradication, job creation and wealth generation.

Similarly, Adeneye (2013) reported that the new Senior Secondary Education Curriculum structure consists of a group of 5 compulsory crosscutting core subjects, four distinct fields of studies (Humanities, Science and Mathematics, Technology, and Business Studies), a group of 35 trades/entrepreneurship subjects and elective subjects. All students, irrespective of their field of study, according to the report (Adeneye) are to take five compulsory cross cutting core subjects namely: English Language, General Mathematics, One Trade/Entrepreneurship Studies, Computer Studies/ICT and Civic Education. Also, Ementa (2013), added that the 35 trade/Entrepreneurship subjects which a senior secondary school student is to choose from were introduced as part of effort to enable the youth acquire concrete skills for survival, reduce poverty, create jobs and position them to compete globally as well as for higher education.

Preparing today's students for success and eventual leadership in the new global marketplace is the most important responsibility in education today. It is therefore expected that with the establishment of entrepreneurship education through the introduction of 35 trade/entrepreneurship subjects into the senior secondary school education curriculum, students will acquire the required behaviour, skills and attributes to become successful entrepreneurs. Secondary school students are expected to develop enormous entrepreneurship potentials through the study of any of these newly introduced trade/entrepreneurship subjects. It is evident from the above that the entrepreneurship education programme at the secondary school is developed and designed to train individuals for work after school especially for youths who may not enroll for tertiary education. However, the question as to how the entrepreneurship education has impacted secondary school students is yet to be given adequate answer. The researcher attempts to investigate the availability of entrepreneurship potentials in secondary schools and how these potentials can be developed for entrepreneurship success amongst students in Port Harcourt metropolis.

The imperativeness of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria for self-reliance and national development can never be over-emphasized. With the recent introduction of entrepreneurship in secondary schools, the-expectation is that students would be motivated to become creative and innovative; that entrepreneurship would encourage and improve students ability to work with others in a team; acquire joint-venture initiatives; introduce students to small business concepts and opportunities, and encourage them to start business ventures and play an important role in job creation among others. However, the objectives of entrepreneurship seem not to have been achieved since its introduction in schools, as it is very disturbing that social vices are still on the high side. There are still numerous job seekers, armed robbers, prostitutes' kidnappers, fraudsters and touts and other social vices perpetrated by the vast majority of our young school leavers. Akpototwo (2017) observed that most school curriculum in Nigeria do not seem to satisfy current entrepreneurial demands, hence most secondary school leavers make little or no effort in setting up small scale businesses of their own, despite the abundant business opportunities. Similarly, Ojeaga and Okolocha (2017) noted that almost a decade after the introduction of mandatory entrepreneurship, school leavers are still largely seen on the nation's streets searching for paid employment. Based on the above observations, entrepreneurship has not achieved its objectives of reducing unemployment among secondary school students. Hence, there is need to determine the potentials for entrepreneurship amongst public senior secondary school students in order to project their future success as entrepreneurs in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to determine the entrepreneurship potentials among senior secondary school students for entrepreneurship success in Port Harcourt metropolis. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Determine the extent senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of the Need to Achieve as an element in entrepreneurship success.
- ii. Determine the extent senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of Innovation as an element in entrepreneurship success.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed for the study:

- i. To what extent do senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of the Need to Achieve as an element in entrepreneurship success?
- ii. To what extent do senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of Innovation as an element in entrepreneurship success?

### **Hypotheses**

Based on the above research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas senior secondary school students on the extent to which senior secondary school students possess entrepreneurship potential of the Need to Achieve as an element in entrepreneurship success.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas senior secondary school students on the extent to which students possess entrepreneurship potential of Innovation as an element in entrepreneurship success.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted in senior public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Port Harcourt Metropolis comprises of Port Harcourt City Local Government Area (PHALGA) and Obio/Akpor Local Government Area (OBALGA) respectively. The population of the study comprises all the students in senior secondary schools in PHALGA and OBALGA. As at the time of this study, Port Harcourt Metropolis has 36 senior secondary schools with a population of 31,374 students out of which 16 schools with students' population of 10,559 are located in PHALGA while 20 schools with students' population of 21,175 are in OBALGA (Source: Department of Planning, Research and Statistics; Rivers State Post-Primary Schools Board, 2020). The sample size for the study was 664 students (OBALGA = 358; PHALGA = 306) which was determined by Taro Yamen formula. Multistage sampling technique was employed for the selection of sample. At stage 1, simple random sampling technique was used to select eight (8) and ten (10) schools from PHALGA and OBALGA which represent 50% of the entire schools in each Local Government Area. Stratified sampling technique was used at stage 2 to select only senior secondary 3 (SS3) students since they are more exposed on entrepreneurship subjects than SS2 and SS1 respectively. Stage 3 was the adoption of simple random sampling technique to select 358 and 306 students from OBALGA and PHALGA respectively which was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire tagged "Exploring Entrepreneurship Potentials for Entrepreneurship Success Questionnaire" (EEPESQ) was used to obtain data for the study. The instrument was designed in a Likert-4-point rating scale of High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), Little Extent (LE) and Very Little Extent (VLE) with numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha reliability technique which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Decisions in respect of the research questions were based on real limits as follows such that High Extent (HE) is between 3.50 – 4.00, Moderate Extent (ME) between 2.50 – 3.49, Little Extent (LE) is between 1.50 – 2.49 while Very Little Extent (VLE) is between 0.5 – 1.49. Where the calculated z-value is greater than the critical value, the hypothesis was rejected and if the calculated z-value is less than the critical value, the hypothesis was accepted.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1**

*To what extent do senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of the Need to Achieve as an element for entrepreneurship success?*

**Table 1: Mean Response on How Students Possess Entrepreneurship Potential Needs.**

| S/N                  | Need to achieve potential and entrepreneurship success  | PHALGA      |             |                        | OBALGA      |             |                        |
|----------------------|---|-------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
|                      |   | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Remark                 | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Remark                 |
| 1.                   | Ability of students to take responsibility of their actions aids development of entrepreneurial potential for business success              | 2.99        | 0.63        | Moderate Extent        | 3.01        | 0.64        | Moderate Extent        |
| 2.                   | Assessing students and giving immediate feedback promotes entrepreneurship potentials among students  | 2.70        | 1.15        | Moderate Extent        | 2.78        | 1.12        | Moderate Extent        |
| 3.                   | Use of teaching methods that build students interest to work independently enhances student's entrepreneurship potential                    | 2.79        | 0.74        | Moderate Extent        | 2.80        | 0.76        | Moderate Extent        |
| 4.                   | Allowing students to make personal discoveries promotes entrepreneurship behaviour among secondary school students                          | 2.67        | 0.85        | Moderate Extent        | 2.73        | 0.83        | Moderate Extent        |
| 5.                   | Exposing students to existing business opportunities across various sectors of the economy enhances students desire to become entrepreneurs | 3.20        | 0.80        | Moderate Extent        | 3.19        | 0.82        | Moderate Extent        |
| 6.                   | Teaching students how to practically raise business funds develops students' entrepreneurial potentials                                     | 3.65        | 0.53        | High Extent            | 3.35        | 0.63        | Moderate Extent        |
| 7.                   | Taking students on business field trips and excursions encourages entrepreneurial mindsets among students                                   | 3.02        | 0.77        | Moderate Extent        | 2.98        | 0.78        | Moderate Extent        |
| 8.                   | Regular take-home assignments with specified time frame for completion and submission enhances student's entrepreneurship potential.        | 2.96        | 0.91        | Moderate Extent        | 3.03        | 0.89        | Moderate Extent        |
| 9.                   | Encouraging students to have entrepreneurial role models promotes students desire for greater achievements                                  | 3.41        | 0.58        | Moderate Extent        | 3.39        | 0.59        | Moderate Extent        |
| 10.                  | Students desire to become entrepreneurs can be developed by their teachers  | 3.70        | 0.50        | High Extent            | 3.39        | 0.59        | Moderate Extent        |
| <b>Grand Mean/SD</b> |   | <b>3.11</b> | <b>0.75</b> | <b>Moderate Extent</b> | <b>3.07</b> | <b>0.76</b> | <b>Moderate Extent</b> |

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 shows the extent to which senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of need to achieve entrepreneurship success as rated by male and female respondents. The result revealed a Moderate Extent by male and female students with an average mean score of 3.11 and 3.07 for PHALGA and OBALGA students respectively.

**Research Question 2**

*To what extent do senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of Innovation as an element for entrepreneurship success?*

**Table 2: Mean Response on How Students Possess Entrepreneurship Innovation Potential.**

| S/No | Innovation potential and entrepreneurship success  | PHALGA      |             |                   | OBALGA      |             |                   |
|------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
|      |  | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Remark            | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Remark            |
| 1.   | Building students' creative abilities develops their entrepreneur potentials   | 3.67        | 0.47        | High Extent       | 3.67        | 0.47        | High Extent       |
| 2.   | Exposing students to business opportunity discovery techniques enhances the development of students' entrepreneurial potentials  | 2.25        | 0.60        | Low Extent        | 2.41        | 0.55        | Low Extent        |
| 3.   | Exposing students to multiple ways of problem solving enhances their potentials to become successful entrepreneurs   | 3.39        | 0.58        | Moderate Extent   | 2.45        | 0.50        | Low Extent        |
| 4.   | Encouraging students to try new ways of doing things and seek unusual new solutions develops their potentials to become successful entrepreneurs                             | 2.39        | 0.57        | Low Extent        | 1.73        | 0.86        | Low Extent        |
| 5.   | Exposing students to several learning experiences enhances creative thinking potentials required for entrepreneurship success  | 2.22        | 0.76        | Moderate Extent   | 2.18        | 0.79        | Low Extent        |
| 6    | Allowing students to use their initiative in carrying out assignment develops innovative potential of students   | 1.84        | 0.37        | Low Extent        | 1.81        | 0.39        | Low Extent        |
| 7    | Giving students task and assignments involving original thinking enhances student's entrepreneurial development  | 2.42        | 0.50        | Low Extent        | 2.42        | 0.50        | Low Extent        |
| 8    | Allowing students freedom to experiment various ways of completing a routine task enhances their innovative thinking abilities   | 2.03        | 1.00        | Low Extent        | 2.00        | 1.00        | Low Extent        |
| 9    | Exposing students to learning experiences that enable them apply theories to practical situations enhances students' potentials required for future entrepreneurship success | 1.67        | 0.47        | Low Extent        | 1.67        | 0.47        | Low Extent        |
| 10   | Allowing students to try out something new enhances their potentials necessary for future entrepreneurship success   | 2.53        | 0.50        | Moderate Extent   | 2.54        | 0.50        | Moderate Extent   |
|      | <b>Grand Mean/SD</b>   | <b>2.44</b> | <b>0.58</b> | <b>Low Extent</b> | <b>2.29</b> | <b>0.60</b> | <b>Low Extent</b> |

Source: *Field Survey, 2019*

Table 2 shows the extent to which senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt metropolis possess entrepreneurship potential of innovation to achieve entrepreneurship success as rated by male and female respondents. The result revealed a Low Extent by male and female students with an average mean score of 2.44 and 2.29 for PHALGA and OBALGA students respectively.

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas senior secondary school students on the extent to which they possess entrepreneurship potential of the Need to Achieve as an element for entrepreneurship success.

**Table 3: z-Test Analysis on Potential of Need to Achieve Entrepreneurship Success**

| LGAs    | N   | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | Df  | z-cal | z-crit | Decision |
|---------|-----|-----------|------|-----|-------|--------|----------|
| PHALAGA | 261 | 3.11      | 0.75 | 555 | 0.88  | 1.96   | NS       |
| OBALGA  | 296 | 3.07      | 0.76 |     |       |        |          |

The result presented in Table 3 shows that the calculated z-value of 0.88 is less than the z-crit value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with the degree of freedom of 555. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas senior secondary school students on the extent to which they possess entrepreneurship potential of the Need to Achieve as an element for entrepreneurship success is therefore retained.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas senior secondary school students on the extent to which they possess entrepreneurship potential of Innovation as an element for entrepreneurship success.

**Table 4: z-Test Analysis on Innovation for Entrepreneurship Success**

| LGAs   | N   | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | Df  | z-cal | z-crit | Decision |
|--------|-----|-----------|------|-----|-------|--------|----------|
| PHALGA | 261 | 2.44      | 0.58 | 555 | 1.79  | 1.96   | NS       |
| OBALGA | 296 | 2.29      | 0.60 |     |       |        |          |

The result presented in Table 4 shows that the calculated z-value of 1.79 is less than the z-crit value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with the degree of freedom of 555. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas senior secondary school students on the extent to which they possess entrepreneurship potential of Innovation as an element for entrepreneurship success was therefore retained.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The result obtained from data analysis from Table 1 reveals that the views expressed by both PHALGA and OBALGA students on the extent to which they possess Need to Achieve potential is not significantly different. This is shown by result obtained from test of hypothesis one. This finding agrees with the view of Selyal (2016) who opined that entrepreneurs must have strong Achievement orientation and talents for entrepreneur-enthusiasm, and that the Need for Achievement through self-study, goal setting and interpersonal support accounts for entrepreneurship success.

Results obtained from Table 2 analysis revealed that respondents share similar views regarding innovation potential for entrepreneurship success as their mean responses were not significantly different and that Innovation potential possessed by senior secondary school students within Port Harcourt Metropolis is generally low. This is as evidenced by analysis of data obtained from respondents. Innovation is a vital entrepreneurship success potential without which entrepreneurial venturing would be impossible. This result agrees with that of Kuratko (2009) who stated that innovation involves a process by which entrepreneurs convert opportunities (ideas) into marketable solution crucial to productivity and that without innovation, there is no entrepreneurship. The findings also agree with that of Bateman and Snell (2011) who averred that entrepreneurship is about the pursuit of lucrative opportunities by enterprising individuals (being) inherently about innovation and that without innovation, creating a new venture where one did not exist would be difficult.

## **CONCLUSION**

The main conclusion drawn from the findings of this study is that public senior secondary school students within Port Harcourt metropolis generally possess low entrepreneurship potentials for entrepreneurship success despite the introduction of entrepreneurship education at the senior secondary level of our educational system.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

1. Entrepreneurship curriculum in our secondary schools should be thoroughly reviewed to incorporate practically oriented courses so that students upon completion of their secondary school could run their own businesses.
2. Secondary school teachers given the task of teaching entrepreneurship should be properly supervised to ensure that the right things are taught. Teachers should also be encouraged to train and retrain as the business environment is not static. This way, students would be exposed to innovative trends in the society.

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