



**ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION PERFORMANCES AMONG
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS: ASSESSMENT OF THE POLICY OF
UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABILITY
AND FINANCIAL WELLNESS, NIGERIA**

<https://doi.org/10.83151/k43m-3p06>

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine entrepreneurial skills acquisition performances in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Nigeria for the sustainability and financial wellness of school children and teachers using the objectives of UBE as a benchmark. The population was over 3,000 teachers, with the sample of 150, while the learners were 20,300, with a sample of 1,015 from Cross River State in Calabar, Ikom, and Ogoja Education Zone. Stratified and simple random sampling procedures were adopted for this study. Three research questions addressed entrepreneurial skills acquisition of teachers/learners in catering, bread making, fruit/juice drinks, restaurant, ICT, AI tools, photography/videography, hair dressing, tailoring, snails, poultry, fishery, and gardening. Students' Upper Basic Education Entrepreneurial Skills Scale (SUBEESS) and Teachers' Entrepreneurial Skills Scale (TESS) were employed to collect data. Cronbach Alpha reliability results were obtained with the values ranging from 0.81 to 0.92. respectively. Descriptive survey research design and descriptive statistics; frequency counts/percentages, means, and standard deviation were the statistical tools used for analysis. The outcome was generally low entrepreneurial skills among teachers/learners in the UBE programme. The study recommended a paradigm shift for entrepreneurial skills acquisition to be put in practice at both lower and upper basic levels for transformation, sustainability, and commendable financial wellness. Government and UBE administrators should provide funds and facilities for entrepreneurial skills centers and implement them for training in schools.

Keywords: Assessment, UBE Programme, Policy, Entrepreneurial skills acquisition performance, sustainability, financial wellness.

Introduction

Entrepreneurial skills education among school children in Universal Basic Education is becoming a vital issue of concern in our country, Nigeria, that needs to be addressed to save young people's lives for their sustainability and financial wellness. Some of the universities, like the University of Calabar, have started running separate programmes on entrepreneurial skills acquisition due to the importance accorded to it. In the western world, countries such as the USA, Japan, Singapore, and especially China adopt entrepreneurial and vocational training education for their children when they are young to improve talents and skills for the future.

Maspalma and Dalatu (2024) opine that the word “entrepreneurship” was originally coined from a French name, ‘entreprendre,’ which refers to ‘undertake’. It means it is a state of combination of the inventive and ground-breaking capabilities and services of a person to recognize and produce commercial activities in his location, using the existing funds to achieve marketing strategies. According to Ogele, Ishiwu and Onwuka (2020) “Entrepreneurship” is a noun derived from “entrepreneur”, which is the ability to invent, produce, and bring on board novel thoughts that will change situations positively, either in the business area or other facets of life.

Again, Maspalma and Dalatu (2024) thus viewed entrepreneurship education as “teaching students the rudiments, ideas, philosophies, services, and procedures in business”. The idea for entrepreneurial skills is to remind us of our rich endowment that God has blessed Nigerians with, and that was never or properly managed, which can be introduced to every Nigerian child and be utilized judiciously for his/her own good/betterment and to create a business culture.

In Nigeria, where the rate of unemployment and hardship is on the high increase, job racketeering is given to only the rich people and the well-privileged, leaving the poor people. Incessant strike actions, the death of most parents of upper basic children, and other factors invite redesigning of the curriculum that should include entrepreneurial skills acquisition training education programme to bring a face lift of our younger generations. The scheme agrees with the slogan “Catch Them Young”, meaning, the programme will excel among young people better when taught from the grassroots and at early stages of their growth and development.

Some of the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE), which lay emphasis on provisions of instructional and infrastructural facilities to aid the acquisition of lifelong skills of school children, are yet to be utilized. The UBE still lacks policy implementation of those things stated in the objectives, which makes it seem like a mirage. The UBE programme ought to have flourished in rural settings for rural students to benefit maximally in all skills acquisition, especially in agriculture, to promote fishery, piggery, poultry, subsistent farming, gardening, snail farming, bees farming, cattle/animal rearing, which will boost meat production and entrepreneurial business. Urban students also have greater opportunities to enjoy vocational and entrepreneurial skills acquisition such as catering, tailoring/fashion designing, decoration, party/home food management, free hand drawing, clothing and textile (tie and dye), barbing, hair dressing, typing, computer literacy, carpentry, sports, photography, videography, bakery, painting, petty electrical

installation, bricklaying, blocks making, pottery, metal usage, music including DJ, comedy, script writers and event planning based on the environment they are.

Entrepreneurial skills among upper basic students should embrace modern technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is also lacking in UBE schools. Ari-Tano, Otu, Uchegbue, and Abba (2025) pointed out that the potential of AI to influence assessment and research practices among students in UBE is profound. These AI-powered tools will help in data analytics software, critical thinking, improve writing quality, communication skills, computer knowledge, drawings, graphics, paintings, and several designs. Meanwhile, Ari and Ojong (2024) state that there is poor funding of ICT and infrastructural facilities by the government that should have helped UBE teachers and students enhance entrepreneurial skills efficiency in the educational settings, as well as the entire society. If the government and UBE officials ensure that entrepreneurial skills acquisition is at the topmost priority and fully practiced, unemployment problems and contemporary social issues may be properly handled.

Ogwu (2020) reported the challenges teachers face in Nigeria associated with entrepreneurship education, “such as poor planning, inexperience, poor funding administration, deprived location, poor conduct, uncontrolled expansion and misappropriation, non-provision of infrastructure, low vocational skills, low manpower, poor awareness, counseling and orientation on entrepreneurship skill acquisition”. Furthermore, Usman and Markus (2024) stated that the International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that there are over 200 million individuals who do not have means of livelihood globally, leading to global monetary predicament crumbling many countries with huge financial recession and job loss.

Adequate knowledge of affective and psychomotor skills enhances the entrepreneurial development of students in UBE. According to Uchegbue, Ari-Tano, Otu and Anele (2024), “The advancement of affective and psychomotor tools among students is crucial for holistic education where students are prepared for roles as educators and facilitators of learning. To them, “psychomotor tools especially enable the practical application of theoretical knowledge, ensuring students acquire the hand-on skills necessary for effective teaching practices and well equipped to meet contemporary educational challenges”. Therefore, inclusivity of entrepreneurial skills acquisition and vocational training programmes in the curriculum that is geared at practical approaches, innovations and productivity becomes necessary for UBE teachers and students in Nigeria to help curb the problem of unemployment and other challenges such as exams malpractices identified by Ari-Tano, Ojong, Odiong, Otu, and Abba (2025) stating that “it is one of the menaces in our society which is a form of corrupt practices among the delinquent...” escalating due to very low skills acquisition obtained by students..

Statement of the problem

It has become an abnormal situation where the level of unemployment is rising very high by the day in Nigeria. Parents' mortality rate, especially during strike actions of health workers, is on the increase, who would have been a succour and shield to their children and wards for sustainability and financial wellness. Most children can no longer imbibe

their parents' occupational careers, vocational training, and entrepreneurial skills for survival. This has affected the school children by resulting in hunger, sicknesses such as ulcers, malnutrition, exposure to gangsterism, stealing, fighting, aggression, and pickpocketing. Students whose parents lack comfortable jobs or a good source of income could hardly provide three times the quality of meals for them. To save the situation, it is now the reverse where school children are found during school hours hawking in the streets in order to provide food on the table for the family, hence the need for this study regarding entrepreneurship skills acquisition for students. It also affects teachers regarding teaching resources for vocational/technical education. This study seeks to address these salient issues by bringing the Government and UBE attention towards a reconsideration of inclusiveness and funding of entrepreneurial skills acquisition performance training programmes to help the students' sustainability and financial wellness. Thus, to what extent is the availability of entrepreneurial skills provided and obtained by UBE students? What is the level of teacher competency regarding entrepreneurial training education?

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. To what extent are the availability of entrepreneurial skills facilities provided in the universal basic education programme?
2. What is the level of entrepreneurial skills acquisition performances obtained by students in the universal basic education programme?
3. To what extent is the knowledge competency among teachers regarding entrepreneurial skills acquisition educational training in the universal basic education programme?

Methodology

Descriptive statistics of means, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages were utilised for this study. A sample of 1,015 from 20,300 learners and over 3,000 teachers, with a sample of 150, was randomly selected. A stratified and simple random sampling technique was employed. Students' Upper Basic Education Entrepreneurial Skills Scale (SUBEESS) and Teachers' Entrepreneurial Skills Scale (TESS) were used to collect data. Section 'A' captures "SUBEESS" consisting of items 1 – 64, while section "B" consists of the "TESS" instrument, which comprises items 1 - 26. Cronbach Alpha reliability results were obtained with the values ranging from 0.81 to 0.92. respectively. The instrument was subjected to face validation by experts in measurement and evaluation. Means less than 2.50 indicates low/poor/unskilled, and above 2.50 specifies skilled/good or a great extent of the phenomenon under investigation.

Results and Discussion

1. Research question one: To what extent is the availability of entrepreneurial skills facilities provided in the universal basic education (UBE) programme? This is a summary presentation of the level of availability of entrepreneurial skills provided in UBE. Apart

from items 7, 10, 15, 20, and 21 (from items 1 – 31), results show that entrepreneurial skills are not adequately provided to meet the training standards required for the learner's skill acquisition. The acronym displayed on the table, AV stands for Available; NAV indicates Not Available and Decision. Mean values below 2.50 indicate poor, while those above 2.50 indicate good.

Table 1: Summary of the participants' responses of their means, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages on availability of entrepreneurial skills facilities provided in the universal basic education (UBE) programme.

ITEMS	AV.		NAV.		Decision
	N	%	N	%	
1. Oven	25	2.5	990	97.5	Poor
2. Tailoring machine	95	9.4	920	90.6	Poor
3. Carpentry tools	203	20.0	812	80.0	Poor
4. Video Camaras.	17	1.67	998	98.3	Poor
5. Photographic devices	35	3.5	980	96.5	Poor
6. Textiles materials	129	12.7	886	87.3	Poor
7. Gardening tools	659	65.0	356	35.0	Good
8. Shoe making tools	20	1.97	995	98.0	Poor
9. Poultry equipment	18	1.8	997	98.2	Poor
10. Cooking utensils	659	65.1	356	34.9	Good
11. Wheel barrow	206	20.3	809	79.7	Poor
12. Fashion designing tools	200	21.2	800	78.8	Poor
13. Desktop computers.	220	21.7	795	78.3	Poor
14. Laptops.	245	24.1	770	75.9	Poor
15. Cutlasses/ hoes	568	56.0	447	44.0	Good
16. Beauty/cosmetics	95	9.6	920	90.4	Poor
17. Barbing devices	78	7.7	937	92.3	Poor
18. Painting tools	69	6.8	946	93.2	Poor
19. Electrical equipment	189	18.6	826	81.4	Poor
20. Musical instruments	580	57	435	43	Good
21. Assorted sports facilities	596	59.7	419	41.3	Good
22. Security services	389	38	629	62	Poor
23. Bakery (Mini)	18	1.8	997	82	Poor
24. Snails equipment.	25	2.5	990	97.5	Poor
25. Bee's equipment.	24	2.4	991	97.6	Poor
26. Fishery equipment.	36	3.6	979	96.4	Poor
27. Soap/Cream tools	204	20	811	80	Poor
28. Fruit/juice equipment.	239	23.5	776	76.5	Poor
29. Hair dressing equipment	75	7.4	940	92.6	Poor
30. Building equipment	176	17.3	839	82.7	Poor

31. Sowing machines	125	12.3	890	87.7	Poor
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2. Research question two: What is the level of entrepreneurial skills acquisition performances obtained by students in the universal basic education programme? Table two presented upper basic students' knowledge and performances of entrepreneurial skills acquisition. The means less than 2.50 and the percentage below 50% in each item specify level of entrepreneurial skills obtained was poor and vice versa. Items 32 – 64 displayed low entrepreneurial acquisition, except for items 33, 34, 38, 43, 44, 49, 51, 52, and 59, whose skills acquired were high.

Table 2: Summary of students' responses in their means, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages of the level of entrepreneurial skills acquisition performances obtained in the universal basic education (UBE) programme.

ITEMS	AV.		NAV.		Decision
	N	%	N	%	
32. I do bake many things.	152	15	863	85.0	Low
33. I can braid someone's hair.	606	59.7	409	40.3	High
34.. I am good in gardening	596	58.7	419	41.3	High
35. Have knowledge in carpentry	215	21.2	800	78.8	Low
36. I do building work very well.	151	14.9	864	85.1	Low
37. Tailoring is part of me now.	221	21.8	794	78.2	Low
38. I operate computer very well.	561	55.2	454	44.8	High
39. Bees farming is the skill I acquired.	127	12.5	888	97.5	Low
40. Snail farming is what I often do.	162	16	853	84.0	Low
41. I have ideas in animal rearing.	173	17.1	842	82.9	Low
42. I often fix electronics parts for use.	122	12.1	893	87.9	Low
43. Cooking is the skill I do better.	592	58.3	423	41.7	High
44. I do have barbing skills.	649	63.9	366	36.1	High
45. I am happy doing my metal work.	204	20.1	11	79.9	Low
46. Shoe making business is my priority	158	15.6	857	84.4	Low
47. I can type with a typewriter.	136	13.4	879	86.6	Low
48. I do some carving work.	128	12.6	887	87.4	Low
49. My music lessons helped me to sing.	516	50.8	499	49.1	High
50. Painting work is what I can do.	246	24.3	769	75.7	Low
51. Drawing is now one of my best art.	592	52.1	489	47.1	High
52. I can play musical instruments.	624	62.6	391	38.4	High
53. Decoration is easy for me to do.	186	18.3	829	81.7	Low
54. I am very good in clothing/textile	130	12.8	885	87.2	Low

55. I know how to play gymnastic games.	257	25.3	758	74.7	Low
56. Bread making is very simple to me.	133	13.1	882	86.9	Low
57. I know how to use manure/fertilizer.	250	24.6	765	75.4	Low
58. Knitting is one of the skills I do.	239	23.5	776	76.5	Low
59. I play football very well.	666	65.7	349	34.3	High
60. I can use different sports apparatus.	385	37.9	630	62.1	Low
61. Volley ball is the game I play better.	315	31	700	69	Low
62. I know how to do poultry business.	206	20.3	809	79.7	Low
63. I am good in videography for business.	98	9.7	917	90.3	Low
64. Photography is what I do for income.	70	6.9	945	93.1	Low

Research question three: To what extent is the knowledge competency among teachers regarding entrepreneurial skills acquisition educational training in the universal basic education programme? Table three presents the means, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages of responses of the level of knowledge competency among teachers regarding entrepreneurial skills acquired. Percentages (above 50) indicate that teachers are knowledgeable and competent in such entrepreneurial skills and vice versa.

Table 3: Summary of teachers' responses of their means, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages of the level of knowledge competency regarding entrepreneurial skills acquisition educational training in the universal basic education programme

	Agree		Disagree		Decision
	N	%	N	%	
I was not employed to teach entrepreneurial skills.	130	86.7	20	13.4	Unskilled
I cannot teach entrepreneurial skills	126	84	24	16	Unskilled
Snail rearing skills is not what I do.	128	85	22	15	Unskilled
Bee farming is totally strange to me.	140	93	10	7	Unskilled
No time to carry students out for sports.	80	53	70	47	Skilled
No course outline for the various skills.	104	76	46	24	Unskilled
I do not know how to teach painting.	109	72	41	28	Unskilled
Drawing is not difficult for me to draw.	90	60	60	40	Skilled
I can use oven for bakery.	88	58.7	62	41.3	Skilled
No ideas to teach skills acquisitions.	100	66.7	50	33.3	Unskilled
I cannot operate a computer very well.	60	40	90	60	Skilled
Soap/cream/making is very difficult	43	28.7	107	71.3	Unskilled

I have very little idea in electronics.	98	65.5	52	34.5	Unskilled
Shoe making is the last thing I love to do.	110	73.3	40	26.7	Unskilled
It is difficult for me to knit/ fabrics.	93	62	57	38	Unskilled
I use to be afraid of handling cutlass.	66	44	84	56	Skilled
I feel lazy to teach entrepreneurial skills	97	64.7	53	35.3	Unskilled
I lack ideas on how to use equipment.	109	72.7	41	27.3	Unskilled
I have never used video machine before.	95	63.3	55	36.7	Unskilled
I've not used photography camara or studio.	99	66	51	34	Unskilled
Building/construction skills are not in me.	89	59.3	61	40.7	Unskilled
It is difficult to teach poultry farming.	50	33.3	100	66.7	Skilled
I have never been trained in tailoring.	47	31.3	103	68.7	Skilled
Hair dressing skills is not part of me.	67	44.7	8	55.3	Skilled
I do not know barbing saloon skills.	104	69.3	45	30.7	Unskilled
I am good at teaching AI technologies.	52	34.7	98	65.3	Unskilled

1. Provision of entrepreneurial skills acquisition facilities at basic education:

Table 1 displays diverse entrepreneurial skills acquisition, which ought to be provided and made available in schools for young people to learn based on the revised education curriculum that considers the present needs of the economy of our nation. Findings revealed that these skills were not provided by the government and UBE officials for training. A few items that score high, such as cooking utensils, sports facilities, gardening tools, cutlasses, and musical instruments, were provided by internal self – effort within the schools. This study is in agreement with the report of Bebenimibo (2025), stating that “The New Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) is designed to achieve the foundation of entrepreneurship education in the first nine years of learning. This curriculum aims to establish a contemporary and practical scheme that will guarantee the utmost advancement of the latent abilities of the learners. Based on this, “the desire can only be achieved through effective entrepreneurship education implementation of BEC” (Bebenimibo, 2025). In corroboration of this study, Ugorji, Nwobike, and Chioma (2025) studied entrepreneurial skills acquisition amongst students in Rivers state by laying emphasis on other skills that our young people may need, such as marketing, communication, and technology skills, e.g., software and hardware, to help students become self-reliant.

2. Student's entrepreneurial skills acquisition performance in universal basic education

Table 2 displayed students' performances in their entrepreneurial skills acquisitions in UBE. The results show low skill performances, and this poses a future problem of unemployment for our future young people. The students did well in skills such as: playing football and musical instruments, singing, barbing and hair making, drawing, painting, literacy level in computer, gardening, and enjoyed cooking, but had low skills acquisition in many other lucrative business ventures. The study revealed that the students' exposure to the above-mentioned skills, either transferred from home, peers, and teachers

during home economics practical, agriculture, basic science, and physical education activities, gave them enormous support and improvement, thus, the need to take entrepreneurship at UBE is a topmost priority.

Iwuoha, Ikwubiela and Ebenezar-Nwokeji (2021) also identified huge problems and challenges surrounding entrepreneurial skills acquisition in other related areas. Their outcome stated that “entrepreneurs’ skill of planning, communication, management, goal setting, problem solving, and risk bearing is needed for employment generation by students. Other challenges, such as poor infrastructure and facilities, poor teaching methods, lack of finance, and others, affect the abilities of the students in utilizing the skills for employment generation.

3. Teacher’s entrepreneurial skill acquisition competency in universal basic education

Table three reveals teachers’ competency in imparting entrepreneurial skills acquisition to upper basic students. A lot of teachers complained they were not employed to teach those skills, additional workload, novices in the various skills, not having interest, and some of the skills are very taxing and demanding to teach students. Given this scenario, the government and stakeholders need to employ qualified skills acquisition teachers, provide facilities and also put things in place for the take-off of this entrepreneurial skills acquisition programme. Adebisi (2024) expresses the cause of these problems as “predominantly the poor programming of curricula that emphasize white-collar employment rather than knowledge and skills that promote self-reliance. Unemployment has become a major problem affecting the lives of youths and graduates, leading to frustration, depression, rejection, and dependency on relatives and friends.

These tables above provide data regarding entrepreneurial skills which also gives guidance and feedback in policy decision making by the government to encourage entrepreneurship programmes, thereby building the gap between theory and practice and to enhance research. According to Odoing, Udemba, Ari, Ekpoto, Owan and Idika (2024) rightly opine that “research data accessibility is the foundation of the development of science. Data storage also helps to keep information and is applicable to the advancement of entrepreneurial skills acquisition. In line with this study, Otu, Uchegbue, Ari-Tano, Ita, Ofoegbue, Anele and Otu (2025) stated that “the primary goal of education is to foster the development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities among students while equipping them with the requisite knowledge and skills for personal and societal advancement.”

Conclusion and Recommendations

The outcome of this study aided the researcher to conclude that entrepreneurial skills acquisition of students in the universal basic education programme is a dream yet to be realized in Cross River State. The study’s findings revealed the shortcomings and challenges beginning from the mindset of the government, UBE officials and curriculum developers in the funding of entrepreneurial skills facilities, which are not available. Students’ entrepreneurial skills acquisition education programme performances were poor. Teachers’ competency for entrepreneurial skills acquisition and training indicates

that many were unskilled in diversification. The study concluded that there is a need for inclusiveness of entrepreneurial skills acquisitions to be implemented completely from theory to practice to all UBE and public schools, which addresses unemployment, financial hardship, hunger and health challenges. This study made the following recommendations:

1. Government and UBE officials should include entrepreneurial skills acquisition in the curriculum for both public/private schools and provide adequate funding for it.
2. Every student in school must obey the policy guiding entrepreneurial skills acquisition and develop an interest in learning for their financial wellness and sustainability in the future.
3. Teachers should possess the mindset of readiness in accepting to learn entrepreneurial skills acquisitions and also willingness to impart those skills to their students.
4. Parents and all significant adults should learn entrepreneurial skills and transfer them to their younger people to address hardship and unemployment challenges.
5. Authorities concerned should provide structured training modules, various infrastructures and school-based enterprise centers for entrepreneurship practices.

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