

# **Students' Perception of Empowering Nigerian Youth through Effective Learning of Indigenous Vocations**

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## **Abstract**

Nigerian curriculum planners, realizing the importance of entrepreneurial education to present situation of Nigeria where majority of the youth are all out in quest of white collar jobs, have upgraded the curriculum of basic education with the inclusion of entrepreneurial education into education in both junior and secondary schools. The problem of self-reliance has been a pressing issue that needs to be addressed especially among Nigerian youth, to the extent that vices are prevalent in the country because of unemployment. In an attempt to curb these vices, there is need to embrace the indigenous trade; an aspect of indigenous language which serves as a source of job creation and empowerment in the Nigerian society. Indigenous entrepreneurial skill is also a cultural aspect of a language which has been tried over the years and found reliable. This can be achieved by introducing its teaching to students in Junior Secondary School. This paper discusses the need for the teaching and learning of the culture of an indigenous vocations using Yoruba language as a case study. One of the cultural aspects of the Indigenous language is indigenous vocation of Yoruba language. Yoruba vocations are supposed to be taught in Junior Secondary School as from JSS One to JSS three among Yoruba speakers and some of the vocations are carving, drumming, hair weaving, dyeing etc. The effective teaching of indigenous vocations which will motivate meaningful learning of the students will serve as a linkage between the language and being self-reliant through self-employment, or enterprise. This would serve as a panacea for solving the massive unemployment

problem, prevent poverty and empower the majority of the citizens economically through the use of some of the indigenous vocations which they have acquired from Junior Secondary School. Questionnaires were administered to 320 junior secondary school students in two local government areas in Ijebu division. Data analysis involved mean, standard deviation and t-test. The result revealed the general perception of students on the effective learning of indigenous vocational skills Nigerian youth empowerment, gender difference had relationship with the effective learning of the indigenous vocations. Also, the location of school and the influence of environment (urban and rural) were related to students' perception of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment. It is thus concluded that adequate instructional materials will enhance the effective learning of indigenous vocations. Also, male students find learning of indigenous vocational trades easier than female. School location or influence of environment (rural and urban) had significant relationship with students' perception of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment. It is also suggested that resource persons should be employed as instructors in schools and adult program to be organized for the learning of Yoruba trade skills.

**Keywords:** Indigenous-vocation, Empowerment, Effective learning, Yoruba language

### **Introductory Background**

The general attitude of the people towards the learning of Yoruba as one of the indigenous language is at the lowest ebb (Akinbote and viatonu (1996). Many researchers had made effort to revive people's attitude towards the effective teaching and learning of the language. The attitude of people and the prevalent vices in our society which is as a result of unemployment makes it imperative to find a link between indigenous language with enterprise and

self-employment (Arogundade 2011). This link is clearly spelt out in the objectives of the National policy on Education (FRN 2013). Quality of Education at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating acquisition of competences necessary for self-reliance.

The effective learning of serve as a panacea for solving the massive unemployment problem, prevent poverty and empower majority of the citizens economically (Arogundade, 2011). To achieve this, there is need to conform to an adage which says *charity begins at home* that is going back to a neglected cultural aspect of the Yoruba indigenous trade in school which is indigenous trade to be able to make effective teaching and meaningful learning thus serving as an enhancement for self-reliance.

Effective teaching of indigenous (Yoruba) vocational trades in Junior Secondary school will bring about a major shift in attitude towards self-employment as perceived by JSS students. This opinion is in consonance with the Yoruba Language Curriculum (2007) which incorporated entrepreneurial skills into the relevant contents of the 9 year Basic Education curriculum in Nigeria. Such an integrated policy will ensure that a whole series of target groups, the students and youth in and out of school, the unemployment are enlightened on the importance of indigenous (Yoruba) vocational trade to any society.

### **The Content of Yoruba Vocational Education**

Indigenous Yoruba vocations are to be taught right from Junior Secondary School 1-3 as it is in the curriculum and the indigenous vocational skills are: farming, drumming, calabash carving, tie and dye, hair plaiting, bead making, cane work, clay work, broom making and the modern trades recently introduced are food selling, Yoruba musician, comedian, engagement orators etc. students should be exposed to the cultural aspect of Yoruba language which if taught adequately with instructional technology and pragmatic

approach will arouse the interest of the students and if developed upon can serve as a means of sustaining livelihood.

There is need to revive the cultural aspect of the indigenous language (Yoruba) and if this would be done effectively to the extent that it will bring about meaningful learning in students, then teachers are expected to employ modern instructional technology and appropriate methods. Sotonwa, (2005) opine that effective teaching of Yoruba Language as an indigenous language depends on the methodology a teacher uses, which will bring effectiveness on the learning outcomes of students. He is of the view that the teacher is always faced with the problem of choosing an appropriate teaching approach; the effectiveness of such approach depends upon a variety of factors which are within and outside the classroom environment. For example, instructional materials and equipment as well as textbooks are not adequately available in schools, a situation that makes it impossible for the teacher to use teaching materials and equipment during teaching. (Akindolu 1995 & Sotonwa 1998). Besides, learners are not always exposed to the practical nature of Yoruba vocational trades, more so, when the teaching of trade which is a cultural aspect of the indigenous language, is more practical and functional than the theoretical aspect as used by the teacher in the classroom. This will make students to understand the content, develop interest in the content, create knowledge and apply knowledge in the everyday activities.

Junior secondary school curriculum of Yoruba language is supposed to reflect depth, appropriateness and inter-relatedness of the curricula content, but it reflects incomprehensiveness. According to Yoruba language curriculum for junior secondary school I – III NERDC (2007), only two trades are stated in the curriculum for a week in three years and these are farming and drumming. Some other indigenous trades are mentioned in Ladele et al (1986) such as “tie and dye”, pot molding, oil making, calabash carving, hair weaving, bead making and some other

modern vocations that have been incorporated into the Yoruba Language such as Yoruba Theater, Yoruba musician, food seller and Yoruba comedian.

### **Research Questions**

The study is therefore out to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the general perception JSS students to effective learning of indigenous Yoruba vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?
2. Will there be any significant difference between male and female junior secondary school students' perception of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?
3. Will the location of students' school be related to their perception of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?

### **Research Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive and inferential survey research. Simple random sampling was used to select the subjects.

#### **Sampling method**

Three hundred and twenty students in Junior Secondary I - III were randomly selected from eight schools in two local government areas of Ijebu division in Ogun state, Nigeria; Ijebu ode and Ijebu north – east local government areas. Forty students in each school and four schools were selected from each zone comprising of four public schools in Ijebu ode town and four public schools in the rural area of Ijebu division.

## Instrument

A Likert scale questionnaire was used for the study. Likert scale questionnaire is used in a survey study, it is applicable to finding information on perception of students on effective learning for empowering Nigerian youth through indigenous vocation

## Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The instruments was adapted from a study as in Banjo (2000) to ensure face and content validity of students' questionnaire on students ' perception on empowering Nigerian youth through effective learning of indigenous vocations. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Chronbach coefficient alpha and a reliability value of 0.74 was obtained.

## Procedure

Students' questionnaires were administered to three hundred and twenty students in eight junior secondary schools (rural and urban) for completion and data was collected for analysis. Standard deviation and t-test were used to analyze the data.

## Results

1. **RQ1:** What are the general perception JSS students to effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?

**Table 1:** Distribution of JSS students' perception of effective learning of Indigenous (Yoruba) vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment N=320

S/N	Items on the Questionnaire	Mean Score	Std. Deviation	Remark
1.	The knowledge of indigenous vocation helps to be self-reliant.	3.60	.491	Positive

2.	I am interested in learning indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills.	3,10	.539	Positive
3.	I am interested in learning indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills but my parents prefer me to face my studies	2.80	.750	Positive
4.	I want to learn the Indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills but my house is very far to the workshop	2.50	.807	Negative
5.	When films or Pictures are used to teach me the indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills my interest is highly motivated.	3.30	.901	Positive
6.	I like going on Excursions to where Indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills are practiced.	3.70	.459	Positive
7.	The Learning of Indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills will earn me more money.	3.70	.459	Positive
8.	I have never been taught any of the Indigenous (Yoruba) vocations	2.60	.801	Positive
9.	Indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills are easily learnt in the cities rather than villages.	3.30	.782	Positive
10.	Girls find it very easy to learn Indigenous (Yoruba) vocational skills more than boys.	2.60	.801	Positive

*(Yoruba)*

Table 1 reveals that the sampled junior secondary school students recorded positive and high perception scores in nine out of the ten items on the students’ perception questionnaire. High perception scores implied a mean score of more than 2.50 (the benchmark mean score), while any mean score of 2.50 or less result in negative or low perception. The table thus revealed that the students’ perception of effective learning of indigenous entrepreneurial skills can generally be described as high or positive since all the

320 students recorded mean perception score that reflects positive perception in nine out of the ten statements on the perception scale.

1. *Research Question 2:* Will there be any significant difference between male and female junior secondary school students' perception of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?
  
2. Table 2: Gender Difference in the JSS Students' Perception Scores of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?

<b>Students' Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig. of t</b>
Male	160	19.20	1.47	318	2.703	.039*
Female	160	18.80	1.94			
Total	320					

\* significant t at  $P < 0.05$

The result in Table 2 revealed that ( $t = 2.703, P < 0.05$ ). This outcome implied that the sampled male and female students differed significantly in their perception scores. The mean perception score of 19.20 recorded by the male students is higher than that of the female students who recorded a mean perception score of 18.80, with a difference that is statistically significant. Hence, there is significant difference in the perception of male and female junior secondary school students on effective learning of indigenous entrepreneurial skills in favour of the male students.

1. *Research Question 3:* Will the location of students' school be related to their perception of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment?



2. Table 3: Difference in JSS Students’ Perception Scores according to Location of effective learning of indigenous vocations for Nigerian youth empowerment

Students’ Location	N	Mean	S.D.	Df	T	Sig. of t
Urban	160	19.00	2.10	318	5.172	.000*
Rural	160	17.80	2.05			
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>					

\* significant t at  $P > 0.05$

The result in Table 3 revealed that ( $t = 5.172, P < 0.05$ ). The mean perception score of 19.00 recorded by the city based (urban) JSS students is higher than that of the village based (rural) JSS students who recorded mean perception score of 17.80, the difference being statistically significant. Hence, there is significant difference in the perception of city based and village based junior secondary school students on effective learning of indigenous vocational skills in favour of the urban based students.

### Method of Data Analysis

The research question 1 was answered using mean and standard deviation scores while the remaining research questions were answered using the independent t-test of significance at the 0.05 level of significance. The t-test was appropriate to test for significant difference in the students’ perception of effective learning of indigenous vocational skills according to gender and location classification.

### Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings in the study:

- (i) Junior secondary school students generally recorded high on effective learning of indigenous vocational skills.
- (ii) There is significant difference in the perception of male and female junior secondary school students of effective learning of indigenous vocational skills in favour of the male students.
- (iii) There is significant difference in the perception of urban and rural based junior secondary school students of effective learning of indigenous vocational skills in favour of the students in urban based location.

### **Discussion of findings**

The general responses of Junior Secondary students revealed in items 1 and 7 that indigenous vocational skills can make one to be self-reliant. Items 2-4 revealed that students were willing to learn but due to some constraints like living very far from the place of learning the skills, perhaps the interest against the wish of the parents. Some students indicated that they have never been taught the indigenous vocational skills. This is in consonance with Oni (2006) who regretted that vocational skills for some decades had been perceived to mean the education for the mentally retarded, physically handicaps and socially maladjusted students. This is the reason why some students stated that they have never been exposed to the learning of indigenous vocations. The implication is the students' inability to be self-reliant once they do not get white collar jobs. Indigenous vocations are highly useful because its occupational contents offer the trainees the opportunity to acquire skills, attitudes and knowledge which are needed for the technological growth of Nigeria.

Items 5-6 declares the interest of the students that if the modern methods coupled with the existing ones are introduced

for effective teaching of the indigenous vocational skills, that will get their interest motivated towards learning the skills. It was also revealed that majority of the students that boys find it easy to learn the vocational skills more than girls. This in agreement with Adeniyi (1984) that in those days of indigenous vocations girls and women were not allowed to learn any trade or vocations, they are to take care of domestic chores at home.

Research question 3 was answered that environment does not hinder the attitude of the students but both students in rural and urban areas are not exposed to the learning of indigenous vocational skills. All these vocational skills have physical structures which are typical to Yoruba language without the language; these skills are losing their original structure. Obidi (1990) opined that vocational education is usually based on manual and practical activities and are traditionally non academic but related to a specific trade or occupation. The physical structure tagged “ ile isenbaye” meaning cultural house is not featuring in many schools today. It is obvious that the learning of the indigenous vocational skills has been neglected and they need to be revived not only among the students but also among the adults. The study revealed that adequate instructional material and method will enhance the learning of indigenous trade, and that Junior Secondary students in urban schools are exposed to many important places so they easily grasp the trade.

## **Conclusion**

The need for Nigerian youth empowerment calls for urgent attention. This is on the basis that more students are admitted into tertiary institutions and the rate at which they graduated and in search for jobs are alarming. There is need for government to project into the future and build in the young folks the spirit of self – reliance through the effective learning of indigenous Yoruba

vocations, thus, empowering the youth to be independent and self – reliant, boosting the economy of the nation, Nigeria, upgrading the status of Nigerian youth, building a secured environment when vices is curbed and reduced which will eventually raise moral, reliable and useful citizens in future.

### **Recommendation**

The following recommendations were made:

1. Involve junior secondary school students both boys and girls in the learning of a vocation of their interest.
2. Increase access of students from both the rural and urban areas into the learning of indigenous Yoruba vocations
3. Sustaining drop-out students through the learning of indigenous vocations in continuing education centres, where effective teaching – learning activities will be carried out. This will serve as encouragement for them to continue their education with either in Yoruba language studies or in Yoruba vocations in higher institutions applicable.
4. Revitalising of adult and non formal education centres which includes the learning of Yoruba vocations in learning activities of such centres, thus, widen the horizing of such non educated adults. These centres can be establish in every part of the country for the non – educated adults to enroll in such centres.
5. The formal and non – formal literacy centres should be equipped with modern pedagogical, infrastructure and instructional materials.
6. Resource persons should be employed to demonstrate different vocational skills for the learning. practical of such Yoruba vocations should be demonstrated to learner to encourage them of self demonstration

7. The Yoruba language curriculum should be redesigned in a way that will accommodate the needs of employment of the present youth in Nigeria .
8. Indigenous Yoruba vocations should be made compulsory for Yoruba language students in Nigerian junior secondary schools.
9. Indigenous vocations of other languages should also be made mandatory for their learners. This will help to reduce the high rate of unemployment.
10. Organizing training program for teachers to be able to make use of effective and appropriate method for the teaching of vocational skills.
11. Students should be exposed to excursion trip to make the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial skills more real and effective.
12. More funds should be released for the development of the indigenous language.
13. Textbooks on Yoruba vocations should be developed and the use of film and video tape to make the concept more practical to the extent that if the vocation is developed, it can be used as a second career in future which can earn some of them living and become self-employed or self-reliant.
14. Yoruba vocational centres should be established and people should be employed to produce different types of vocational products for sale. This will sustain the mastery of the skills and will eventually boost the economy of the nation.

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