



# Revisiting and Harnessing the Transformative Power of Social Entrepreneurship in University Education for Sustainable Green and Blue Economy

Oyetoro, Oyeode Stephen<sup>a</sup> Adebakin Babatunde Azeez<sup>a</sup> Fasanmi Success<sup>a</sup> Abubakar Rabi Ado<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

<sup>b</sup>Aminu Kano College of Islamic and Legal Studies, Kano, Nigeria

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\*Corresponding Author: [soyetoro@oauife.edu.ng](mailto:soyetoro@oauife.edu.ng)

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## Abstract

*This study explores the integration of Social Entrepreneurship Education (SEE) within African university curricula, with reference to Nigeria, as a means of preparing socially responsible change agents for sustainable development in the green and blue economy. It aims to: identify the policies (macro) that support SEE; examine the programmes (meso) implemented within selected degree curricula; and evaluate the suitability of tools and methods (micro) adopted by universities to deliver SEE. A qualitative content analysis of policy and institutional documents (including the National Policy on Education, National Development Plan 2021–2025 and the Study Handbook for the bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship of a federal university) was conducted using a set of six descriptors developed through an international iterative collaborative framework. Findings indicate critical gaps in existing SEE structures, particularly weak policy alignment, limited contextualization to local green and blue economy opportunities, and inadequate interdisciplinary integration as a key requirement for effective implementation. The study recommends the need for mission-driven SEE policies, territorial learning ecosystems, and the adoption of culturally grounded as well as context-responsive teaching strategies. Embedding SEE more deliberately into higher education in Nigeria could strengthen their contribution to sustainable economic and social transformation.*

## Introduction

Unemployment remains a global challenge with varying rates across countries. In Nigeria, records indicate that youth unemployment (ages 15–24) stood at 7.2 percent in the second quarter of 2023 and 8.6 percent in the third quarter (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2023a, 2023b). These figures are considerably lower because they reflect NBS methodological revisions that reclassified many young Nigerians into informal or underemployment categories, however, the underlying reality is that many young Nigerians remain underutilised in productive sectors. Comparatively, Sub-Saharan Africa's youth unemployment rate was estimated to be somewhat higher in recent years, reflecting broader regional labour market challenges (MacroTrends, 2024). Addressing these

challenges requires contextual, knowledge-driven solutions that align national labour market needs with inclusive development goals.

Education, particularly higher education, is widely recognised as a strategic route to improving employability, especially when programmes are aligned to local needs and the labour market priority (World Bank, 2024). In Nigeria, however, persistent evidence points to a disconnect between university training and employer expectations. Adebakin, et. al. (2021) found a marked discrepancy between the employability skills Nigerian graduates possess and those employers require, suggesting that educational institutions must rethink how curricular content, pedagogy, and skill outcomes are linked to work-readiness. Consequently, universities have progressively integrated employability themes and entrepreneurship education into curricula as a strategy to stimulate graduate employment, new venture creation and inclusive economic participation.

Entrepreneurship education, while valuable, has often been narrowly implemented. Programmes tend to emphasise venture creation and profit generation rather than social transformation. Therefore, establishing a direct causal link between formal entrepreneurship programmes and employment outcomes remains difficult. Although Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) constitute more than 90 percent of businesses and contribute roughly half of Nigeria's GDP (National Bureau of Statistics, 2013; PwC Nigeria, 2020; World Bank, 2022), mainstream entrepreneurship education has yet to sufficiently address broader social, environmental, and ethical dimensions of enterprise. Establishing a direct causal link between entrepreneurship education and employment outcomes also remains difficult because of variation in curriculum content, pedagogy, and graduate follow-up (Stiwne & Alves, 2010; Li, Zhang, & Matlay, 2003). These limitations have generated increased scholarly interest in Social Entrepreneurship Education (SEE), which integrates social value creation with innovation and sustainable livelihood development.

Social entrepreneurship prioritises innovation that meets human needs such as access to water, sanitation, health, education, and climate resilience rather than private returns. When embedded in higher education, social entrepreneurship education can train graduates to design and scale ventures that deliver social and environmental benefits while generating livelihoods. Recent African empirical and policy literature stresses the importance of contextualisation, practical pedagogy, multi stakeholder partnerships and inclusion for social entrepreneurship to deliver on its promise (Dynamics of Contextualization, 2024; World Bank, 2025). The emergence of the green and blue economy provides a vital frame for this integration. Africa's environmental and aquatic resources represent significant development opportunities. The green economy emphasizes low-carbon, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive growth. It encompasses renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, and circular-economy business models that minimize waste and pollution (Nguyen, 2025). The blue economy, on the other hand, focuses on sustainable use of oceanic and freshwater resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and ecosystem health (Penca et al, 2025). Both paradigms demand a shift from extractive to regenerative economic practices supported by education, technology, and innovation.

Investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, waste-to-wealth systems, coastal and marine resource management, and circular production models can create jobs, build resilience, and promote environmental stewardship (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2022; University World News, 2021). Within this context, universities can serve as hubs for research, innovation, and capacity building that support social enterprises across terrestrial and aquatic sectors, thereby linking learning with sustainable practice and sustainable livelihoods.

Notwithstanding this potential, several lacunae constrain the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship education in African universities for the green and blue economy. These include weak university industry and community linkages that limit opportunities for applied learning and commercialization; curricula that remain insufficiently contextualised to local green and blue economy opportunities; limited access to funding, incubation and mentorship for social ventures; scant integration of indigenous knowledge and gender sensitive approaches; inadequate practical and technical training in blue economy skills such as sustainable fisheries, aquaculture and coastal resource management; and weak systems for tracking graduate outcomes and social impact. Policy and institutional barriers include limited cross sector coordination, uneven policy frameworks for social enterprise, and inadequate incentives for universities to prioritise impact-oriented research and entrepreneurship pathways (ILO, 2023; Dynamics of Contextualization, 2024; World Bank, 2025). Curricular and pedagogical issues which

include the utilization of appropriate epistemologies and techniques of teaching and learning (Oyetero, 2021; Oyetero, et al 2016) within contexts if not adequately attended to also pose risk to the realisation of blue and green economy through SEE. Moreover, students' persistent inclination toward paid employment rather than entrepreneurial or social-entrepreneurial ventures continues to limit the transformative reach of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities (Adebakin, et al. 2020). Addressing these gaps will require multi-level interventions at macro policy, meso institutional framework and micro pedagogical levels capable of supporting social entrepreneurship education and innovation, towards producing the human capital and ventures necessary for a sustainable green and blue economy.

Although entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has been widely studied, however, no study has examined how social entrepreneurship education is structured and implemented across macro (policy), meso (programme), and micro (pedagogical) levels, particularly concerning the green and blue economy. This study, therefore, seeks to fill the gap by analysing national policy frameworks, curricular provisions, and teaching practices that influence SEE with a view to drive social innovation and sustainable economic transformation through SEE in Nigerian universities.

### **Objectives of the study**

The aim of the study is to analyse the provisions for the development of SEE for teaching and learning green and blue economy in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- a. analyse two policy documents published for consideration on social entrepreneurship education in green and blue economy in Nigeria (Macro)
- b. determine the nature and consideration of programmes instituted for social entrepreneurship education in green and blue economy (Meso)
- c. analyse the tools and methods that universities have initiated and use for social entrepreneurship education in in green and blue economy in universities in the country (Micro).

### **Research questions**

The research questions asked in this study are:

- i. what are the considerations of the two policy (Macro) documents for social entrepreneurship education in relation to green and blue economy.
- ii. What is the nature and consideration of programmes (Meso) instituted for social entrepreneurship education in relation to green and blue economy? and
- iii. what tools and methods (Micro) were proffered and used for social entrepreneurship education in relation to green and blue economy in universities in Nigeria?

### **Territorial Learning Ecosystem for Social Entrepreneurship Education**

Owing to sparse literature on the subject matter, defining a territorial learning ecosystem (TLE) is a difficult task. Intuition however reveals that the term comprised two major concepts namely, territorial and learning ecosystem. A learning ecosystem has been defined as a system of people, content, technology, culture, and strategy, existing both within and outside of an organisation, all of which has an impact on both formal and informal learning that goes on in that organisation (HSI, 2022). The components of a learning system include people, content, technology, learning culture and strategy (HSI, 2022). A learning ecosystem has been compared to a living ecosystem and can therefore be healthy or sick, nurtured, or threatened, self-sustaining or engendered. This assertion necessitates that an organisation should be aware of its ecosystem including its part and the internal and external forces that shape it if it must accomplish its goal (HSI, 2022). On the other hand, territorial which is from the root word *territory* refers to being of a particular geographical boundary and/or location. Beyond the geography-based definition, a territory is defined by interconnected dynamics and is formed by the interplay of diverse systems of practice, ideologies, and forces engendered by the social actors interacting and co-producing evolving sociocultural spaces (Souza, Kuhn, Wals & Jacobi, 2020). It implies diverse modes of collaboration, forms of appropriation, and power relations (Swyngedouw & Boelens, 2016 in Souza, Kuhn, Wals & Jacobi, 2020).

Therefore, within the confines of this study, TLE with respect to social entrepreneurship education in relation to blue and green economies refers to relatively known peculiar and critical factors that should be taken

cognisance of by stakeholders and actors of social entrepreneurship education for attaining learning goals in blue and green economies in higher education in order to extend what is known concerning SEE when applied to education in blue and green economies. When applied to this study, TLE attempts to answer the question of “what can be learnt in terms of the nature and characteristics of the components that comprise the elements of social entrepreneurship education policies, programmes and methods and tools for maximising teaching and learning objectives in blue and green economies?” One implicit assumption for considering TLE as a construct for this study is that there is a *prima facie* advancement for the comprehension of the components of the elements of SEE in Nigeria. The components of each of the elements of SEE are the descriptors which have been highlighted in the methodology section. Closely related to TLE is the systems theory which has been used extensively in education research.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Conceptual clarifications of blue and green economies**

The green economy emphasizes low-carbon, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive growth. It encompasses renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, and circular-economy business models that minimize waste and pollution (Nguyen, 2025). The blue economy, on the other hand, focuses on sustainable use of oceanic and freshwater resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and ecosystem health (Penca et al, 2025). Blue economy encompasses the traditional ocean industries of fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, ports and marine transport as well as the emerging industries such as offshore renewable energy, bioprospecting and seabed extractive activities (World Bank, 2017). Both paradigms demand a shift from extractive to regenerative economic practices supported by education, technology, and innovation. Africa’s twin transitions toward a green and blue economy present substantial opportunities for job creation, innovation, and sustainable development. These transitions require new skills, business models, and research areas where higher education institutions (HEIs) play a central role. Embedding blue- and green-economy themes into entrepreneurship education via the social entrepreneurship education model can equip graduates with competencies to create sustainable enterprises, respond to ecological challenges, and advance national and continental development goals beyond economic gains to socially desirable outcomes. Recent policy frameworks such as the *Africa Blue Economy Strategy* (UNECA, 2015) and the *Blue Economy for Resilient Africa Program* (World Bank, 2022) demonstrate the growing importance of aligning higher education with sustainability-driven innovation.

### **Why African HEIs should prioritize green and blue entrepreneurship education.**

First, demographic, and economic imperatives make this shift urgent. Africa has the world’s youngest population, with 70% under 30 years of age, and faces a growing need for employment opportunities. The green economy alone could generate about 3.3 million jobs across the continent by 2030 (The Guardian, 2024). HEIs can channel this youth energy toward sustainable entrepreneurship through curricula that integrate environmental awareness and innovation (Amponsah, 2025).

Second, Africa’s natural endowments such as extensive coastlines, rich inland water bodies, abundant solar radiation, and biodiversity among others provide comparative advantages for blue- and green-sector development (Karani, 2022). The extant contributions of blue economy to the overall economic growth and development of Nigeria include an estimated 7 trillion naira yearly (Asua & Nwangwu, 2025). Locally relevant entrepreneurship education helps translate these endowments into viable enterprises, such as solar-powered micro-grids, seaweed cultivation, or sustainable aquaculture ventures (Lefilef, 2025).

Third, the international development landscape now prioritizes sustainable growth. The African Union’s *Agenda 2063* and the United Nations’ *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* promote inclusive, green, and blue economies. By embedding sustainability and entrepreneurship into their mandates, African universities can attract partnerships and funding while producing graduates who meet labour-market needs in renewable energy, marine resources, and climate innovation (Nguyen, 2025).

### **Challenges and risks of integrating green and blue entrepreneurship education**

Despite its potential, the integration of blue and green economy concepts into entrepreneurship education faces multiple obstacles. Many African universities operate under resource constraints such as insufficient laboratories, limited faculty expertise, and outdated curricula (Nguyen, 2025). There is also a disconnect between universities and industry, resulting in graduates who are theoretically sound but unprepared for socially responsive entrepreneurship concerns (Oyinola et al, 2024). Furthermore, environmental governance remains weak in many regions, creating risks of greenwashing or unsustainable exploitation of marine and forest resources (Penca et al, 2025) with the attendant challenges of armed robbery at sea targeted at small-scale fisheries, unsustainable fishing practices, artisanal refining of crude oil and oil spillage (Asua & Nwangwu, 2025). Without robust regulation and ethical orientation, entrepreneurship may reproduce rather than resolve ecological degradation. Another critical barrier is funding. Access to capital remains limited for early-stage green or blue enterprises. Governments and development partners must therefore create financing mechanisms such as green investment funds or blue-innovation grants to support student start-ups (Karani, 2022).

To overcome these challenges, HEIs require supportive policies and institutional reforms. National education ministries should integrate sustainability competencies into accreditation standards and performance indicators. Funding agencies could offer incentives for research and innovation addressing blue- and green-sector challenges (UNECA, 2015). Partnerships with regional organizations such as the African Development Bank and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) can provide technical assistance and seed funding for student-led ventures.

Institutionally, universities should establish sustainability offices to coordinate green-campus initiatives, sustainability curricula, and community engagement. They can also include entrepreneurship metrics such as start-ups launched, patents registered, and jobs created as part of their annual performance assessment (Amponsah, 2025).

### **Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria's Higher Education System**

Entrepreneurship education (EE) traditionally focuses on opportunity recognition, business planning, and venture creation. Entrepreneurship education was started in higher institutions in Nigeria to reduce unemployment and increase graduates' abilities to create new businesses. It was subsequently included as a cross curricula subject in secondary schools' curriculum in 2008, primarily to equip students with the skills which they might find useful in the future.

It is now known that finding employment or creating ventures is dependent on various factors beyond provision of skills (McCowan, 2017; Adedeji, 2017). In fact, in the Nigerian context, Oyetoro (2021) had highlighted the unsuitability and inappropriateness of curricular frameworks for discipline-specific EE. Further aspersions have been cast on the methodology of facilitating the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills in addition to students' lack of benchmarks by which to evaluate the provisions they are receiving and a platform on which to express their views (McCowan, 2017). Yet, empirical evidence also indicates that, despite exposure to entrepreneurship courses, many Nigerian undergraduates still aspire more to wage employment than to venture creation (Adebakin et al., 2020), highlighting the need for pedagogical innovations that can strengthen students' social-entrepreneurial orientation.

When retooled for the blue and green economies, EE would include modules on ecosystem services, sustainable value chains, and environmental governance. According to Makuya (2024), this approach encourages "sustainability entrepreneurs" who integrate ecological stewardship into their business models. Such graduates are better prepared to launch enterprises that not only yield profit but also preserve natural capital (Oyinola et al, 2024).



## Social Entrepreneurship Education

Social entrepreneurship education is a form of entrepreneurship education based on social interests. According to [Ni \(2015\)](#), social entrepreneurship education is the extension and redevelopment of entrepreneurship education, which refers to the general term for education, teaching, and training activities related to social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship education at the macro level refers to the process of helping people form social entrepreneurship values and then master the knowledge, skills, and methods required to create social and economic double value; social entrepreneurship education at the micro level refers to the teaching activities carried out by educational institutions and training institutions to cultivate social entrepreneurship talents. According to [Huang and Li \(2018\)](#), social entrepreneurship education has several attributes, such as sociality and entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship education has three meanings. First, it is not for pure profit-making but emphasises the satisfaction of social needs and the achievement of specific social goals; second, it is based on entrepreneurial behaviour, i.e., it has all the characteristics of entrepreneurial behaviour and the characteristics of individual entrepreneurs; third, it is based on education, i.e., a form of education that is sustainable, lifelong, educational, and transferable.

Moving forward, there is now a modicum of understanding that social entrepreneurship which looks away from businesses that are solely built on the economic value chain (and are geared towards profit maximisation) to ventures that create social values (hitherto non-profit organisations) and are built on valuable business models are the currency of sustainable economic growth and development. Social entrepreneurship is modelled in such a manner that it balances financial, social and environmental value (British Council, n.d.). Businesses that balance these trio are called social enterprises. In specific terms,

*Social enterprises reinvest the money they make back into their business or the local community. This allows them to tackle social problems, improve people's life chances, support communities and help the environment. (So) when a social enterprise profits, society profits. (British Council, n.d, p.15)*

Social enterprises are therefore becoming the order of the day as they have been reported to be growing in recognition and scale. They have been recognized in the European Union with a commitment to them as a key strategy for development. Observably, there is an informal recognition of these social enterprises as drivers of social innovation and change with a sprout in their growth in Nigeria. Examples include the Cece Yara Foundation, HelpMum, Project Enable, Vetsark, BudgIT Foundation, LearnFactory Nigeria, Junior Achievement Nigeria, Bunmi Adedayo Foundation, Solar Sister Nigeria, Rural Development and Reformation Foundation (RUDERF), The Roothub Tech 101 and Seed Tracker- IITA ([Matuluko, 2018](#)).

Nevertheless, the growth in social entrepreneurship cannot be compared to that of economic entrepreneurship as less than three percent of the world's population is engaged in social entrepreneurship compared to over 40 per cent engaging in economic entrepreneurship in some countries (British Council, n.d.). The growing acceptance of social enterprises as a strategy for social innovations, creativity and all-inclusive economic development coupled with the increasing desire to see businesses emulate this model of doing business implies that social entrepreneurship needs to become the way in which children and young people learn about business and enterprise. Attempts therefore need to be made to ensure that education encapsulates social entrepreneurship even as social entrepreneurship encapsulates education ([British Council, n.d.](#)).

Social entrepreneurship education has been pointed out to have the unique ability to solve the two interlinked problems of an unsustainable global economy that needs to be rebalanced towards social and economic value; and the problems of the 21st century ([GEM Social Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2009](#)). EU countries have since started exploring the diffusion of social entrepreneurship into their school curricula most especially at the higher education level first by enacting relevant laws and policies on social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship education and second by implementing social entrepreneurship in higher education institution's curricula. Countries in sub-Saharan Africa including Nigeria are also trailing this path with various documentations and mention of green, circular and blue economy conferences and seminars. The spate of transition from meaningful conversations and mentions on these themes to action-based implementations, however, need to be monitored if desired outcomes will not be delusive. Thus, in order to identify the lacunae in the policy development-

implementation nexus for social entrepreneurship education in higher education in Africa with Nigeria as a case study, there is need to determine the nature and extent of laws and policies (if any) for social entrepreneurship education in higher education, the existing programmes designed for social entrepreneurship education and educational tools and methods used for such programmes.

## **Methodology**

This study adopted a qualitative document analysis design to examine how social entrepreneurship education (SEE) is conceptualised and implemented within Nigeria's higher education system in relation to the green and blue economy. Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) is an interpretive approach that allows the researcher to identify patterns of meaning, values, and assumptions embedded in textual materials such as policy statements, institutional frameworks, and curricular documents (Bowen, 2009; Schreier, 2012). The design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to understand how policies and institutional programmes express and operationalise social entrepreneurship education rather than to measure their outcomes. It further aligns with the study's conceptual lens, the Territorial Learning Ecosystem (TLE) framework, which emphasises contextual interconnections among policy, institutional, and pedagogical subsystems.

Three official documents were purposively selected for analysis based on their relevance to national and institutional strategies for entrepreneurship and sustainable development. These were: (a) the National Policy on Education (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2017), (b) the National Development Plan 2021-2025 (Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, 2021), and (c) the Study Handbook for the bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship of a federal government-owned university. Collectively, these documents represent the macro, meso, and micro levels of the educational system, providing insight into national policy intentions, institutional programmes, and pedagogical practices respectively. Data collection involved retrieving the selected documents from verified government and institutional repositories. Each document was read repeatedly to obtain a holistic understanding of its content and context. Relevant sections were coded manually using the predetermined descriptors, while additional themes that emerged inductively during the reading were recorded in analytical memos. The coding and interpretation processes were iterative, involving continuous comparison and refinement to ensure that the analysis captured both explicit statements and implicit meanings related to social entrepreneurship education.

The analysis was guided by a set of six descriptors at each analytical level (policy, programme, and practice) developed through an international iterative collaborative process during the Adult Education Academy (2022) of the Julius-Maximilian Universität Würzburg, Germany. The descriptors at the macro level included international frameworks, types of policies enacted, aims of policies, actors and stakeholders, levels of policy development, and sources of funding. At the meso level, the focus was on multi-stakeholder approaches, interdisciplinary strategies, evaluation systems, financial support, institutional services, and programme goals. The micro level examined educational devices, teaching methods and tools, learning outcomes, stakeholder involvement, and curriculum integration (whether intra- or extracurricular). These descriptors provided a structured lens for interrogating each document and ensuring conceptual coherence across the levels of analysis. The analysis progressed in three main stages. The first involved identifying textual excerpts that reflected SEE-related provisions within each document. The second stage entailed categorising these excerpts under the corresponding descriptors to allow for comparison across the macro, meso, and micro levels. The final stage integrated these categories into interpretive narratives that revealed areas of alignment, disconnection, and omission within Nigeria's policy and institutional ecosystem for SEE. This process combined both deductive reasoning, by applying the predefined framework, and inductive reasoning, by allowing new insights to emerge from the data. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, multiple validation strategies were employed. Triangulation was achieved by comparing findings across the three document types, representing different levels of the educational system. Peer debriefing was conducted through consultations with colleagues who participated in the Adult Education Academy collaborative project, providing an opportunity to cross-verify interpretations and enhance analytical reflexivity. An audit trail of coding notes and decisions was maintained to preserve

transparency, while thick description was used to contextualise findings within Nigeria's higher education landscape. These measures strengthened the dependability and confirmability of the study's conclusions.

This study relied exclusively on publicly available documents; therefore, no human participants were involved, and formal institutional ethical clearance was not required. However, the research adhered to principles of academic integrity, transparency, and proper attribution of all sources. In addition, the authors acknowledge the ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the preparation of this paper. OpenAI's ChatGPT (GPT-5 model) was utilised to assist in language refinement, structural reorganisation, and formatting in accordance with the American Psychological Association guidelines. The AI tool was not used to generate data, analyse documents, or draw interpretations; rather, it served as an editing assistant under the direct supervision and intellectual direction of the authors. All analytical insights, interpretations, and conclusions remain solely those of the authors.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Research Question 1: What are the considerations of the two policy (Macro) documents for social entrepreneurship education in relation to green and blue economy?**

Two publications were analysed namely: the National Policy on Education (Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 2017) and National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2025 (Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning (FMFBNP, 2021)). The findings are summarised below.

#### *National Policy on Education*

Findings revealed that while there are concepts that could be indirectly linked to social entrepreneurship education, there are no express mentions of the concepts of "social entrepreneurship education," "social entrepreneur," "social enterprise." There are, however, policy statements in the policy that could form the basis for specific policies and laws on social entrepreneurship education that would hence influence strategies in higher education. The national policy highlighted that "university education shall make entrepreneurship skills acquisition a requirement for all Nigerian Universities" (Sec 86a). This document also provides that every tertiary educational institution (*sic*) should provide a more practical based curriculum relevant to the needs of the labour market (par. 82f). Also, it was stated the generation and dissemination of knowledge, skills and competencies by these institutions should contribute to national and local economic goals which enable students to succeed in a knowledge-based economy. These statements emphasised the basic elements of social entrepreneurship education. Yet, there was no use of the terms "social entrepreneurship," "social entrepreneur" "social enterprise" in the policy document.

#### *National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2025*

The National Development Plan 2021-2025 (FMFBNP, 2021) is a medium-term national development plan that is targeted at improving the capacity of the public, private, and social sectors to boost industrialization, and sustainably improve inclusive, holistic development and competitiveness. Specifically, it aims at improving the economic competitiveness with a GDP growth of 3.8%, that drives job creation, generates inclusive national growth, and lifts at least twenty-five million Nigerians out of poverty between the years of coverage 2021-2025. Nigeria is well known for the formulation of promulgations, laws, statutes, edicts, plans and policies that are rarely executed. Sincerity of purpose and genuine concerns to see improvement in the living conditions of its citizens is needed by successive governments. Recent sectoral-wide development plans in Nigeria include National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) (Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 2004) and the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020) (FGN, 2017).

The NDP 2021-2025 was analysed for key concepts of *education, social enterprise, social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship*. Results show the following counts: Education- 163, Entrepreneurship-6, Social enterprise-1, Social entrepreneur-0 and, social entrepreneurship-0.

The NDP has copious strategies and policies that could be connected to the social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship education drive although they are not expressly captured as such. The policy document is clear



on the role of education in creating jobs in various sectors of the economy. More succinctly, the policy captures social entrepreneurship areas including renewable energy, circular economy strategies and bioeconomic strategies. The nexus between job creation; employment; and socio-economic development through social enterprise and social entrepreneurship education could be seen in the following policy statements:

*Prepare for a transition to a greener economy by investing in the training and development of core skills. Measures will be aimed at introducing elements in current primary, secondary (including technical schools) and tertiary curriculum, thus building the skills required to develop local capacity for thriving bio and circular economy. Further measures will be taken to identify certification courses for public and private business employees, to ensure that they are well equipped to support companies in reducing emissions. The Nigerian government will also partner with countries with advanced environmentally sustainable systems for knowledge acquisition and technological adaptation/transfer.*

## **Description of the policy ecosystem for social entrepreneurship in higher education system in Nigeria**

### *International Framework*

It was gathered that Nigeria complied with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) provisions in the development of social entrepreneurship education in its tertiary institutions. The policy documents were observed to have goals on sustainability; focus on sustainability and outline the central role of the university/higher education system in the quest for increased employability.

### *Types of the different Policies (including education)*

Multi-sectoral policies that border on the development of entrepreneurship skills and abilities including social entrepreneurship through youth development, sports, education, health, agriculture, electricity, manufacturing, oil and gas, hospitality and tourism, alternative energy, digital economy, culture, creative, science, technology and information could be garnered from the Nigeria's National Development Plan 2021-2025.

### *Aims of the policies*

Policies related to social entrepreneurship education in Nigeria are geared towards employment, vocational training, social change, skills development, empowerment and employability of graduates of the higher education system. The specific aims of the policies are to: introduce and improve relevant capacity building programmes for youths through academic, vocational and entrepreneurship training; prepare for a transition to a greener economy by investing in training and development of core skills and such skills aimed at developing local capacity for thriving bio and circular economy and; partner with other countries with advanced environmentally sustainable systems for knowledge acquisition and technology adaptation/transfer. It was observed that there is a lag in the environmental sustainability dimension of (social) entrepreneurship. The goal of social entrepreneurship in Nigeria as contained in its NDP is the focus of entrepreneurship education on technology adaptation.

### *Actors and Stakeholders*

The two consulted policy highlighted that documents for Nigeria specify that government ministries, departments and agencies, public and private business owners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), universities and other educational institutions at the primary and secondary educational levels are stakeholders. There are more private sector engagements with social entrepreneurship and its education in Nigeria.

### *Level of Policies development*

There is a specific education policy in Nigeria. The education policies in Nigeria are also contained in national documents. Nigeria targets the primary, secondary including technical schools and tertiary education system's curricula for social entrepreneurship education as could be obtained in its National Development Plan (2021-2025).

### *Funds*

The policy documents for Nigeria specify general government contribution (Federal Government, sub-National government contribution which includes state governments and local governments) and private sector contributions as sources of funds for social entrepreneurship education. Albeit funding is envisaged to be from public and private sectors and NGOs, the chunk of the funding is from the national funds.

## **Description and comparison of the programme ecosystem for social entrepreneurship in higher education system in Nigeria**

### *Multi-stakeholders and Networking Approach*

Multiple stakeholders and networking approaches outline the patterns of approaches utilized to ensure the inclusiveness of all needed parties in the mobilisation of resources to ensure the accomplishment of the set goals for social entrepreneurship education. Evidence of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) exists among public and private establishments and the universities in Nigeria's policy documents and in the implementation of social entrepreneurship education. For instance, the BOI-UNILAG Incubation and Co-Working Hub which was established in 2021 is situated in the University of Lagos and was funded by the Bank of Industry.

### *Multi and/or interdisciplinary approaches*

Students from various disciplines come together to collaborate and pitch social enterprise ideas that will aid the provision of social services for the local communities. Also, social entrepreneurs in different fields of human endeavours are invited as resource persons to inspire students to be creative and develop appropriate social critical thinking skills.

### *Evaluation system and evaluation impact*

Evaluation goals and outcomes are varied. The outcomes of any evaluation should be usable, suitable and feasible. In Nigeria's situation, impact evaluation is carried out by the Budget and Planning arm of the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning while using a Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) framework developed by the National M & E dept and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Paper and pencil tests are used to measure cognitive and affective outcomes. University appointed supervisors and mentors are employed among existing university teachers and reviewers in the business communities. Nigeria also has systems for product evaluation as well as abilities and rights which include business idea pitches and presentations. These evaluation practices, however, often fail to address the employability-skills gap earlier identified among university graduates (Adebakin et al., 2021), indicating that SEE assessment mechanisms must integrate explicit skill-mapping frameworks.

### *Financial Supports*

Nigeria enjoys funding support from the general government and private sector contributions (Public Private Partnerships) for planning, implementing and evaluating social entrepreneurship education programmes.

### *Services and strategies*

Nigeria employs skill acquisition programmes and both formal and non-formal education engagements in all its educational institutions in its drive for social entrepreneurship education. Incubator centres financed by public and private funds are becoming commonplace. Skills development focuses on strategies in practical activities.

### *Focus and goals.*

Keywords garnered from policy documents reveal that the goal of social entrepreneurship education in Nigeria include Capacity building, Globalisation, Employment and Sustainability.

## **Description and comparison of the tools and methods ecosystem for social entrepreneurship in higher education system in Nigeria**

*Educational devices:* These are more specific programmes used in realising the goals set for social entrepreneurship education. The following devices are used in Nigeria: Apprenticeships/artisanal training, Industrial training and Internships (ITs), workshops, field trips/visits, Community Development Services (CDS) and farm year. These educational devices could be used by professional educators in different contexts, comprising both indoor and outdoor activities.

*Teaching Methods:* Teaching methods are concerned with the procedures through which teachers dispense, generate and elicit information from students to promote or facilitate learning (Oloyede, Ajibade & Bamidele, 2010). Al-rawi (2013) defines teaching method as the mechanism that is used by the teacher to organise and implement a few educational means and activities to achieve certain goals (Al-rawi, 2013). Teaching methods are considered more specific than strategies and often entails several techniques.

Embedded in policy documents for the implementation of social entrepreneurship education in Nigeria are “practical teaching methods, activity based, experiential and IT supported, culturally relevant pedagogies, mentoring, learner centred methods and community visits.” All the methods highlighted are supposed to be collaborative, student-centred, active and experiential. It is observed that there is the recognition of e-learning in the policy documents and the need for the diffusion of methods with e-learning tools, a growing phenomenon that is relevant in the post COVID-19 era.

*Tools:* Textbooks remain the dominant tools for the dissemination of social entrepreneurship education outcomes in Nigeria despite rhetorics of manual and electronic gadgets such as projectors, desktops, television, radio, Web 2.0 technologies (WhatsApp, Telegram), e-conference tools (ZOOM, Google meet), etc in the policy documents in the country.

*Learning outcomes:* Learning outcomes are oriented towards technical skills development, personal development and entrepreneurship.

*Stakeholders' involvement:* The elements of the quadruple helix model (University-Industry-Government-Public) with significant non- state actors participate in social entrepreneurship education. The students as significant stakeholders in the social entrepreneurship education curriculum implementation are also involved.

*Implementation in the curriculum (intra or extra-curricular):* Nigeria employs both intra and extracurricular activities in the implementation of social entrepreneurship education. Though Students' Business Clubs are not widespread in Nigeria as obtained in countries like China however, sparse evidence of Business Clubs can be found. These Business Clubs are non-formal and administered independent of the official, overt curricula. The extracurricular activities comprise field trips, lectures from experts, etc. Noticeably, the social entrepreneurship education curriculum in Nigeria is still evolving and there is high dependence on curriculum previously designed for entrepreneurship education.

## **Research Question 2: What is the nature and consideration of programmes (Meso) instituted for social entrepreneurship education in relation to green and blue economy?**

All the universities in Nigeria are required to follow the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) released and usually updated by the National Universities' Commission (NUC). The programmes in the benchmark may be further modified in relation to the vision and mission of a particular university without losing the core and basics as specified by the BMAS. A review of the (social) entrepreneurship programme offered in one of the first tier Federal-owned universities, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, was conducted to provide a glimpse into what is obtainable in most of the universities in Nigeria.

Currently, the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Development Studies (IFEDS) of the Obafemi Awolowo University runs a 4-year B.Sc. degree in *Entrepreneurship and Industrial Extension* and one-year Postgraduate Diploma in *Entrepreneurship Studies*. The Institute is also responsible for offering two elective courses in Entrepreneurship for all students in the university. The courses are *Principles and Practice of Entrepreneurship and Self-employment* and *Business Environment and Approach to Business Start-up*. These elective courses have no consideration for social entrepreneurship but general entrepreneurship contents. The 4-year undergraduate degree programme has little consideration for social entrepreneurship education. The little consideration for social entrepreneurship at Obafemi Awolowo University could be annexed to reference to the word “social entrepreneur” in one of the objectives of the B.Sc. degree in **Entrepreneurship and Industrial Extension programme**. The objective highlighted that the B.Sc. programme is designed to develop students to be:

*Entrepreneurship practitioner who is endowed with knowledge and skill for setting up and managing entrepreneurial enterprise, which may be for profit or not-for-profit (social entrepreneur).*

Also, the term “Greening national economies” was found under the “elements of the programme.” This phrase seems ambiguous albeit related to social entrepreneurship education. Conclusively, the degree programme offered by IFEDS is a general entrepreneurship programme compared to special programmes on social entrepreneurship (social innovation and creativity) at undergraduate and postgraduate education levels in some Western universities.

### Research Question 3: What tools and methods (Micro) were proffered and used for social entrepreneurship education in relation to green and blue economy in universities in Nigeria?

The NPE is replete with such concepts as entrepreneurial skills, creativity, knowledge and innovation. The policy document further states that educational activities shall be learner centred for maximum self-development and self-fulfilment; teaching be practical, activity-based, experiential and IT supported; and that education shall be related to overall community needs (suggestive of *culturally relevant pedagogy*) (FGN, 2017, par. 8a,b,c; par. 88). It is expected that educational tools and methods to be used in university social entrepreneurship education programmes should be in consonance with the provisions of the above-mentioned policy statements. In the programme description of the generic entrepreneurship programmes offered by the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Development Studies of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Southwestern Nigeria, it was stated in the objectives which is related to educational tools and methods that:

*develop entrepreneurial competencies in students through the teaching of concepts, theories, principles and practice of entrepreneurship as well as exposing them to mentorship by successful entrepreneurs.*

Even for a general entrepreneurship programme, the above extract is too general. What method/technique of teaching does teaching refer to? However, mentorship is a technique that remains valid for social entrepreneurship education programmes.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

There is a need for deliberateness in the formulation of specific social entrepreneurship education policies. Such policy frameworks should also address students' employment-orientation barriers identified in prior research (Adebakin et al., 2020), by embedding value-driven and community-impact modules that make social entrepreneurship an attractive career path. Social entrepreneurship education with reference to green and blue economy should be integrated into the university entrepreneurship education system; reflected in teacher training and adequately optimized via the overt, implemented curricula (Oyetoro, 2021). The improved social entrepreneurship education curricula developed with contents in green and blue economy should be designed to inform and strengthen potential entrepreneurial orientation, attitude and practice of the students and should be portrayed in the cultural propaganda for the common good of these societies. Lastly, it is necessary to understand the specific challenges the target groups (those who will benefit from the outcomes of social enterprise) face via social entrepreneurship education teaching and research to maximise the social values derivable from the blue and green-oriented social enterprises.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest

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