



Impact of Skill Acquisition on Entrepreneurship Development in Ogun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Every developing country like Nigeria is faced with the challenges of unemployment, many citizens of working age roam the streets in search of white collar jobs. Majority of these citizens do not have any form of skills that can help them out of these situations. Thus, the acquisition of appropriate skill in entrepreneurship development is necessary for sustainable empowerment and employment creation. This study examines the relationship between skills acquisition and entrepreneurship development in Ogun State, Nigeria. Ninety-three (93) sample size from population of 120 entrepreneurs were selected for this study. Survey design was employed and data were collected

through primary source, structured questionnaire used to collect data. Responses were analyzed using descriptive (percentages and frequency distribution) and inferential statistics (regression) to test the hypotheses. A significantly strong positive relationship was found to exist between skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development ($r = 0.879$), a strong positive relationship was observed between practical entrepreneurship development and employability ($r = 0.899$). The study therefore, recommends that there is need for skills acquisition training for all youth and young adult starting from primary schools to tertiary institutions vis a- vis practical entrepreneurial studies. There is also the need to build entrepreneurial resource and knowledge centers, theaters and workshops across the length and breadth of Nigeria as a ways to meet with the current trends of societal needs.

Key words: *Skills Acquisition, Practical Entrepreneurship, Employability, Empowerment, Sustainability.*

Introduction

Decades ago job opportunities abound for Nigerian graduates, it was such a situation that employers plead with tertiary institutions to release graduating students on yearly basis for automatic employment into their various organizations. Today, reverse is the case as there are few available jobs being chased by lots of individual, also majority of graduates are not employable because they possess little or no practical skills fit for the job or even the fortunate individuals who get fresh jobs have to be re-trained in order to acquire required skills for efficiency and effectiveness on the job Okolie (2010). There seems to be a gap between the world of learning and the labour market. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of skills acquisition on entrepreneurship development in Ogun State, Nigeria. Therefore, the study seeks the need to blend theoretically acquired knowledge with practical entrepreneurship training in our tertiary institutions. It is against this identified gap that this study tries to x-ray the significance of skills acquisition on entrepreneurship development with focus on practical entrepreneurship training on employability.

Statement of Problem

In today's world, employment prospects amongst Nigerian youths are becoming increasingly competitive and the job openings are equally limited. The stack reality is that for university graduates and other professionals, job competition and unemployment are becoming stiffer and tougher. Unfortunately, government's response to the unemployment problem is slow, inadequate and not radical. More worrisome is the fact that the nation's tertiary institutions continue to turn out graduates yearly, while available jobs

remain inadequate to keep pace with the growing numbers of jobseekers, some graduates are even paid peanuts in order to secure paid jobs, while others now fall back on their lower qualifications to secure menial jobs.

Entrepreneurial skills acquisition has been suggested to help redress the problems of unemployment and poverty among the teeming youths and graduates in Nigeria as they will make them not only to be job creators but also wealth creators (Midea, 2004; Izedonmi, 2009; Unachukwu, 2009).

Furthermore, Unachukwu (2009) opined that entrepreneurship is a central pillar to economic growth and development, employment generation and poverty alleviation. Hence, our nation cannot afford to toy with the issue of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial skills acquisition and development as an instrument of empowerment to provide the people with skill, vocation and make them an entrepreneur, these skills if well acquired can lead to self-sustainability, social interaction amidst the entrepreneurs and ultimately improve the social status of the citizenry. It is on this basis that skill acquisition according to Syme (2007) is very necessary by providing counseling and extension services on start your business, know about business and improve your business and skill for informal, micro and small enterprise operators.

Research Questions

- (i) What extent does skill acquisition significantly impact on entrepreneurship development?
- (ii) How does entrepreneurship development significantly enhances employability?

Research Objectives

- (i) Examine the impact of skills acquisition on entrepreneurship development
- (ii) Ascertain how entrepreneurship development enhances employability

Research Hypotheses

1. **H₀1:** Skills acquisition does not have significant impact on entrepreneurship development
2. **H₀2:** Entrepreneurship development does not significantly enhance employability.

Literature Review

Skills Acquisition: Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is a process whereby individual learns or acquires a particular skill(s) or type of behavior(s) needed for business through mentoring, training, experiences or education (Amadi, 2012) in order to identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunity for self-employment (Samian and Buntat, 2012; Stohmeyer, 2007). It also aid entrepreneurs to acquire self-confidence, self-esteem and participate in decision-making at any levels (Cheston and Kuhn, 2002; Rufai et al., 2013).

Okorie (2000) sees skill as manual dexterity through repetitive performance of an operation. He further explains that characteristics of skill includes expertness, practiced ability, dexterity and tact. Okorie and Ezeji (1988) remarked that the possession of a skill is to demonstrate the habit of acting, thinking or behaving in a specific activity, which has become so natural to the individual through repetition or practice such that it becomes automatic.

Adeyemo (2009) argued that skill is the ability to perform tasks creditably to an extent that the more you practice the specific task the faster and better you become. It is associated with know-how while speed and accuracy are some of its traits and characteristics. To acquire or possess a skill is to demonstrate the habit of acting, thinking and behaving until a process becomes natural to the individual through reverberation or practice. Thus, skills acquisition being firstly a product of an idea while idea begets creative thinking (creativity).

Anumnu (2014) opined that some of the skills acquired through entrepreneurship training affects entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. Such training include the followings:

Creative skill (ability to visualize and identify new problem areas in the society and try to generate new ideas or concepts in that line);

Innovative skill ability to generate and apply creative ideas in some specific content to solve identified problem for the benefit of society.

Managerial skill ability to define goals and objectives, plan and stipulate strategies to organize, motivate, direct and control resources to attain stated objectives.

Analytical skill ability of numeracy, generation and analysis of data for relevant decision making.

Marketing skill ability of book keeping and accounting, integrating business logistics to increase sale of goods and services.

Communicative skill ability to use relevant language to negotiate, persuade and convince.

Career skill ability to assess self, career planning techniques and self-directed learning; knowledge, computer literacy and business-related knowledge.

Thus, once these skills mentioned :- (creative, innovative, managerial, marketing, Career, communicative and analytical skills) are acquired, it will lead to (creativity, innovation and ultimately invention) which are all concept of entrepreneurship which will impact on employability and on the long run has a positive effect on economic development of a nation, this is in tandem with previous studies; Chell (2013) and Mbionwu (2008) argued that skills acquired through formal education in relationship with practical entrepreneurship training will affect economic development positively.

Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurship is the ability and willingness of an individual to discover

opportunities, develop and nurture a business successfully. It affords individuals with acquired skills and tools in order to build a sustainable and prosperous future for themselves and their community. It thereby becomes imperative to develop skill acquisition for entrepreneurial development.

Obasan (2013) defines entrepreneurship as the process of creating something new and assuming the risks and rewards thereof, the art of managing both small and large businesses with the mind of creating satisfaction on both sides. Stevenson (1985) sees entrepreneurship as the process of creating value by putting together a unique package of resources to exploit an opportunity, the ability to create, build something out of practically nothing. Okpara (2000) opined that entrepreneurship provides men and women with valuable life skills and tools to empower them to build sustainable and prosperous futures for themselves and their communities. The ability to seek investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully. Entrepreneurship means much more than starting a new business; it entails the whole process whereby individuals become aware of the opportunities around, develop ideas, take responsibility and initiative. It helps young men and women develop new skills and experiences vital in solving present and future challenges. In fact, entrepreneurial skills acquisition is an instrument of empowerment to provide the people with skill, vocation and make them an entrepreneur.

Complementing the view above the style of teaching of entrepreneurship education across the tertiary institutions in Nigeria has particularly been flawed because of too much emphasis on rudiments of writing of business plan in groups of 10-15 students against practical training, thus, theoretical training alone are not addressing the peculiar nature of the Nigerian business environment (Ifedili and Ofoegbu, 2011).

Entrepreneurship education is better imparted through practical, industrial tours, professional talks from successful business owners and real execution of business projects while in schools. Presently, the focus is more on theoretical instructions and mentoring (Gabadeen and Raimi, 2012).

Adebayo (2013) asserted that the lingering problem of graduate's unemployment in Nigeria is as a result of irrelevant higher education curriculum to the present need of the society by laying emphasis on the theory above practical, unnecessary discrimination between courses, undue hatred for skills and technical training knowledge by the leaders in the sector, prejudice by the conservative academics against any new knowledge that is not totally theoretical, general lack of entrepreneurship education by Nigerian academics in putting together very relevant and an enduring entrepreneurship curriculum for our Universities.

In the opinion of Nanighe and Ibebietei (2014), developed nations of the world have strategically repositioned and project entrepreneurship activities as major drivers and key determinants of economic growth and development having realized that skills acquired in entrepreneurship activity especially in

small and medium scale enterprises have positively impacted in sustaining economic growth and development. These nations have gone ahead to comprehensively include entrepreneurship practical education into different aspects of formal education curricular. Thus, Nigeria cannot avoid to be left behind because presently emphasis and attention are laid on theoretical and classroom teaching of entrepreneurship studies whereas little or no attention given to practical training, imagine universities/colleges offering courses on entrepreneurship without an entrepreneurship theater, centre or workshop, to make matters worse universities/colleges without a sound practical instructor yet theoretical personnel in abundance.

Establishing a link between Entrepreneurship Development and Skills Acquisition

It is useful to consider briefly the concept of 'skills' and its relationship with entrepreneurship. Chell (2013) noted that 'skill refers to proficiency in performance and may be enhanced by practice and training. Chell opined that some of the key literature regarding the nature of entrepreneurship are the knowledge, skills and abilities of entrepreneurs and innovators which are many and varies, but as with personality traits, they interact with situations' One implication of these observations is that, while there may be some personality traits that are associated with entrepreneurial behaviour, in principle it is possible to identify a range of 'entrepreneurial skills' that can be learnt, practiced and improved, in turn enhancing the prospects of business survival and growth.

Nanighe et al (2014) examined the entrepreneurship skills acquired by students in secondary schools in south-south Nigeria. The study revealed that among the six entrepreneurship skills measured - business managerial, farming, electrical works, home economics, fine arts and computer skills, only farming and home economics skills were acquired by secondary school students in south-south Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that comprehensive and collaborative practical approaches be used by government and all stakeholders to ensure that students are adequately equipped. Ekpe (2015) assess the acquisition of employability skills among Malaysian community college students. The study reveals employability skills among students differed as a function of gender and work experience. They therefore recommend for improvement practical entrepreneurial training for employability among community college students. In a similar study, Mbionwu (2008) argued that when youths are given adequate practical training in skills, they could be self-employed after schooling; hence they become active partners in both community and national development. Moreover, effective practical training of students in skill acquisition provides a platform for technological excellence in the face of the globalization of the world economy.

Okolie and Ogbaekirigwe (2014) verified entrepreneurship education

influence on Nigerian higher institutions students in attaining business and economic development. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made that entrepreneurship education should be more practical oriented instead of theories, which we see in many of our institutions.

To acquire skill through formal or informal education is one thing, to be proficient on the job or intending job is another for both the employed and/or the job seeker, as evidenced in Ekpe (2015). Thus, there exist a relationship between skill acquisition, practical entrepreneurship, employability and self-employment practices.

Risk Taking Theory (RTT)

The Risk-Taking Theory postulated by Richard Cantillon and John Stuart Mill around 1755 was adopted for this study. The theory perceived entrepreneurship as a mental education which stimulates individuals to take calculated risk for which future stream of benefits are guaranteed and people taking big risk have to contend with a great responsibility. Alam and Hossan (2003) opined the summary of the theory is that entrepreneurship education is not limited to theoretical training only but also emphasis should be laid on practicability of acquired skills to improve the ability, capability and potentials of individuals to undertake risks for which economic benefits are assured for employability of the individuals.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used in the course of this study as a result of its detailed and factual information gathering which aid in describing an existing phenomenon (Ezeani, 1998).

The targeted population for this study are entrepreneurs who participated in Ogun State Development Board for Poverty Reduction program (ODBPR). There are One hundred and twenty (120) entrepreneurs forming members of three (3) selected groups/associations (National Association of Small-Scale Industrialists, Aquaculture enterprise developers and registered farmers association) out of which 93 respondents participated: These groups were chosen because of their fair representation of active entrepreneurship program and activities over time, and are well recognized in Ogun State as a result of their overall economic contributions in alleviating poverty, promoting skills acquisition programs and employability entrenchment both to individuals and Ogun State as a whole. Purposive sampling technique was adopted; self-administered pre-tested and adapted structured questionnaire by Obasan (2013) served as operational instrument to collect primary data. The questionnaire chiefly divided into five sections; with five (5) questions in each section and in form of closed ended questions.

Section A contains data on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents; Section B requires responses on general perspective about

entrepreneurship development; Section C sought for information on skills acquisition germane to entrepreneurship development; Section D focuses on how entrepreneurship development enhances employability; Section E responses on the relationship between entrepreneurship development and skills acquisition. The information obtained is supported with face to face interview of some of the entrepreneurs using the same questionnaire as the interview guide. The interview was aimed at getting additional information on skills acquired through Ogun State Development Board for Poverty Reduction (ODBPR) program. It also created room for follow up questions on issues that are not clear using a Likert scale of five points: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The Ordinary Least Square method (OLS) was used in the analysis which comprises various tests such as t- test, F- test, R^2 and the Adjusted R^2 .

Hypothesis Testing

H₀1: skills acquisition does not have significant impact on entrepreneurship development.

Table 1: Regression Analysis of impact of skills acquisition on entrepreneurship development

a) Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.985 ^a	0.969	0.968	0.18851

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-sustainability, Social interaction and promotes welfare status, Employability, Level of local technology, Skills Acquisition

Source: Researcher's computation using SPSS

b) ANOVA

Model		Sum Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	98.027	5	19.605	551.694	0.000 ^b
	Residual	3.092	87	0.036		
	Total	101.118	92			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-sustainability, Social interaction and promotes welfare status, Employability, Level of local technology, Skills Acquisition

Source: Researcher's computation using SPSS

c) Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.041	0.062		0.665	0.008
	Skills Acquisition	0.109	0.079	-0.099	-1.373	0.043
	Employability	0.135	0.067	0.145	2.026	0.046
	Level of local technology	0.829	0.062	0.862	13.305	0.000
	Social interaction and promotes welfare status	0.092	0.049	0.081	1.863	0.026
	Self-sustainability	0.007	0.064	0.008	0.107	0.005
a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship development						

Source: Researcher’s computation using SPSS

The Adjusted R² statistic in Table 1a indicates that the model as fitted explains 97% of the total variability in Entrepreneurship development. In other words, 3% of the total variability in entrepreneurship development can be explained by other variables. The value of Adjusted R² = 0.968 shows that skills acquisition is a good predictor of entrepreneurship development. Table 1b shows that the analysis of variance of the fitted regression equation is significant with F value of 551.694. This is an indication that the model is a good one. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it shows a statistically significant relationship between the variables at 95% confidence level. The standardized coefficients (Beta) value in Table 1c reveals that the independent variables are statistically significant at 0.05 significant levels. Therefore, the hypothesis (H₁) is positive.

H₀2: Entrepreneurship development does not significantly enhance employability

Table2: Regression Analysis on how entrepreneurship development enhances employability

a)Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.962 ^a	0.926	0.922	0.31373
a. Predictors: (Constant), Strong teamwork and productivity, Effective service delivery, Acquire personal management and responsibility skills, Display initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done., Entrepreneurship development				

Source: Researcher’s computation using SPSS

b) ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	107.136	5	21.427	217.699	0.000 ^b
	Residual	8.563	87	0.098		
	Total	115.699	92			
a. Dependent Variable: Employability						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Strong teamwork and productivity, Effective service delivery, Acquire personal management and responsibility skills, Display initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done., Entrepreneurship development						

Source: Researcher's computation using SPSS

H_2 was also analyzed using the regression analysis. This statistical method was used because the hypothesis sought to ascertain how entrepreneurship development enhances employability. The results are shown in Table 2a. The Adjusted R^2 statistic in Table 2a indicates that the model as fitted explains 92% of the total variability in employability. In other words, 8% of the total variability in employability can be explained by other factors. The value of Adjusted $R^2 = 0.922$ shows that entrepreneurship development is a good predictor of employability. Table 2b shows that the analysis of variance of the fitted regression equation is significant with F value of 217.699 this is an indication that the model is a good one. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it shows a statistically significant relationship between the variables at 95% confidence level. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{0_2}) is rejected. Thus, accept alternative hypothesis (H_{1_2}) Entrepreneurship development has significantly enhances employability. The standardized coefficients (Beta) value in Table 2 reveals that the independent variables are statistically significant at 0.05 significant levels.

Discussion

The hypothesis regarding the impact of skills acquisition on entrepreneurship development, finding revealed that skills acquisition has significant impact on entrepreneurship development, as a concept it has helped in redressing the menace of unemployment and poverty across many nations of the world based on previous studies ranging from the India, France and Germany experiences to mention a few as earlier discussed. Their Government provided practical trainings, friendly curriculum (theoretical and practical) based and financial support to entrepreneurs not only to be job creators but also wealth creators, (Brana, 2008) (Stohmeyer, 2007) thus, if practical entrepreneurship training could be added in all levels of education in Nigeria the result would be more explosive and rewarding.

Previous studies depicts that skill acquisition aids self-sustainability a

situation that an individual is self-reliance requiring little or no assistance to survival or earn a living, a state of self-independence, which helps individual(s) to become employed or even employer of labour as the case may be (Employability) . Hence the coming together of like-minds in sharing ideas leads to social interaction thereby increases Level of local technology which will definitely have a positive impact on the standard of living of members (welfare status). Thus, this is in tandem with the first hypothesis earlier analyzed

Holistically, Entrepreneurship development practices among individuals coming together as a group brings about strong teamwork and increases productivity which in turn aids quality service delivery thereby individual(s) acquires more skills, take initiative, responsibility when/where necessary and persist in achieving targeted result. Thus, this is in tandem with the second hypothesis earlier analyzed

The regression analysis ascertained the amount of variations in the dependent variable (entrepreneurship development) which can be associated with changes in the value of an independent or predictor variable (Skills Acquisition, Employability, Social interaction and promotes welfare status, Level of local technology, Self-sustainability) in the absence of other variables. The p-value is less than 0.05; it shows a statistically significant relationship between the variables at 95 % confidence level. Thus, skills acquisition has significant impact on Entrepreneurship development as this confirms the findings in the study of Nanighe et al (2014), Ekpe (2015) and Mbionwu (2008). Thus, recommended that comprehensive and collaborative practical approaches be used by government and all stakeholders to ensure that students are adequately equipped. Another finding was how entrepreneurship development significantly enhance employability. This study has claimed that gaining realistic entrepreneurial skills is crucial before entering the job market and emphasized the significant role played by entrepreneurial skills in improving employability and opportunities for career enhancement. It is often suggested that entrepreneurial skills play an important role in the development of employability. In support to expectations, the regression analysis ascertained the amount of variations in the dependent variable which can be associated with changes in the value of an independent or predictor variable (Entrepreneurship development, display initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done, strong teamwork and productivity, effective service delivery, acquire personal management and responsibility skills) in the absence of other variables. The p-value is less than 0.05; it shows a statistically significant relationship between the variables at 95% confidence level. Therefore, this implies that if theoretical and practical skills acquired are well channeled to an economically oriented activities it will not only enhances employability but also reduce poverty level and make them wealth creators which is in line with previous studies by Midea, (2004), Izedonmi, (2009) and

Unachukwu (2009)

Conclusion

Skills acquisition as a catalyst to entrepreneurship development creates employment opportunities, self-sustainability for the (unemployed) and skilled labour for the (already employed). Improvement will be much significant if theoretical and practical entrepreneurship is encouraged at all level of our educational system. Entrepreneurial theatres and workshop be built in all secondary and territory institutions and practical entrepreneurship skills training be infused into our curriculum. Also, even if you work for others and get paid, there is a need to get better on the job answering one of life fundamental question “what can I do to make things better, or what can I do to make better things’ (creativity) better still, adding something new to an existing process or product (innovation). Which are all element of entrepreneurship necessary for both job seekers and the already employed.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the study will be incomplete without the following recommendations and suggestions to management of organizations, practionners in the field of entrepreneurship, policy makers, Government agencies, parastatal’s, students and others that may find this research work relevant.

1. Establishment of entrepreneurship resource and knowledge centers, theaters and workshops in all secondary and territory institutions in Nigeria.
2. The development of teachers guides, instructional manual and students’ handbook for all students as well as capacity building for lecturers in each School.
3. Continuous on-the-job entrepreneurial skills training and re-training for the employed.
4. More emphasis and seriousness on practical entrepreneurial programmes and curricula should be designed to meet with the current trends in our institutions of higher learning.
5. Its content should be properly designed towards making a graduate in Nigeria skillful in a particular trade or enterprise of interest before he or she leaves the school, such that the long years of waiting for the elusive supposed dream or plum job will be greatly cut-down through practicing the trade or enterprise earlier learnt in school.
6. Adequate fund should be set aside by both the public and private enterprises and channeled towards entrepreneurial skills for the people to set up their own privately-owned enterprises in the area of their skill. This also comes with the possibility of becoming an employer of labour as against the usual after school long waiting for the never forthcoming dream job.

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