

A SURVEY ON THE PERCEPTION OF NEED FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL ACQUISITION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN DELTA STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study set forth to survey on the perception of needs for entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduate students of higher institutions in Delta State. It adopts the expo- facto research design and was descriptive in nature. The population comprised of all undergraduate students of Delta State higher institutions. The sample of three hundred and two (302) students was selected using stratified sampling technique. Two research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The hypotheses were tested at the alpha level of 0.05. The results revealed a non-significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for vocational and technical skills acquisition among undergraduate students. It also revealed a significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for catering /confectionery, and agricultural/agro-allied entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduate students in higher institutions. The results show that the entrepreneurial skill needed by undergraduates includes: printing/publishing skills, furniture making skills and garment making skills. It was therefore recommended that entrepreneurship education should be properly integrated as a compulsory course for education students in higher institutions, adequate publicity on the importance of acquiring entrepreneurial skills should be made to create awareness for students and there should be vision and thought for the implementation of entrepreneurship education by providing adequate personnel and facilities to teach entrepreneurial skills.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Skills, Undergraduates, Higher Institutions.

Introduction

There is no gain saying the fact that education in Nigeria has been adopted as an essential element for growth, progress and national development economically, socially and politically.

It directly contributes to the growth of national economy by improving the skills and productive capacity of citizens. This is why we can hardly see any industrialized country without a well-developed education and training system, a system that not only provides a rich variety of programmes or courses that respond to both personal and national development, but also seeks to remove barriers to learners' participation. These industrialized countries make heavy investments on education and training because of the roles that knowledge and skills play in modern economy. This modern economy emphasizes knowledge, skill acquisition and technology which are imperative to the nation's development.

The practice of relying on government to provide white-collar jobs for graduates can no longer suffice. It takes an individual equipped with solid entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to survive in this era of unemployment. Therefore in ensuring undergraduates development of personal skills and qualities which will make them gain knowledge and understanding of the way in which the economy works and reacts to market forces, the provision of entrepreneurship education and training becomes very significant. Omolumen, & Olajide, (2017) stated that the Federal Government directed all institutions of higher learning in Nigeria to introduce the study of entrepreneurship as a compulsory course for all students, irrespective of the disciplines. More so, the National Universities Commission has developed minimum academic standards for the teaching of entrepreneurship in the universities. The role of this education in the march towards the development and modernization of this nation cannot be ignored, because the knowledge gained from entrepreneurial skills is geared towards self-reliance cum wealth creation after graduation, job generation, poverty eradication and value re-orientation include:

1. **Educational Skills/Services:** Operating day care centers, nursery/primary schools, extra-mural lessons, computer schools etc.
2. **Agricultural/Agro-Allied Skills:** Cassava/yam flour production, fishing, farming, fruit processing, garri, production, poultry/piggery farming, snail-rearing etc.
3. **Professional Skills:** Graphic Art and design, architectural practice, legal services, medical practice, etc.
4. **Catering/Confectionery Skills:** Cake making, pastry production, ice block production, catering school, etc.
5. **Printing and Publishing Skills:** Graphic designing, diary/calendar production, magazine publishing, book binding, sticker's production, notebook and envelope production, etc.
6. **Fashion and Textile Skills:** Tailoring services, weaving, fashion designing, beads production, wallet production, flower vase production etc.
7. **Soap/Detergent Making Skills:** Soap production, detergent production, laundry bleach production, car-wash soap production etc.
8. **General Skills:** Mat making, furniture making, painting, carpentry, dry cleaning, pipe fitting/plumbing, auto-mechanic, welding/fabrication, electrical/electronics, vulcanizer, block making, computer digital programming skills, etc.

The populace always look at entrepreneurial programmes with scorn; they prefer elitist education that emphasizes the inculcation of knowledge and attitudes that prepares one for white collar jobs. Unfortunately, the present global economic crisis demands that only individual with entrepreneurial skills and competence can be distinguished. Therefore the

higher institutions should organize entrepreneurial orientation for the students and acquisition of skills and competences as a prelude for surviving in this unstable economic era.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship according to Kariv, Luis, and Mihai, (2019) is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic and social risks and receiving the resulting rewards monetary and personal satisfaction and independence. This definition involves four elements:

- i. The creation process: creating something new in value
- ii. Assuming the necessary risk,
- iii. It requires the devotion of the necessary time and effort,
- iv. It involves the reward of being an entrepreneur.

Researchers defined entrepreneurship as the process of venturing, undertaking and assuming risks involving creative skills associated with the organizing, directing and managing of a business enterprise (Isa, 2019; Kendall, 2019; Asogwa, & Dim, 2016).

Entrepreneurship education prepares people especially youths to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and who contribute to economic development. According to Akpochofo, & Alika, (2018), entrepreneurship education is not just only about teaching someone to run a business; it is also about inculcating in an individual creative thinking and promoting a strong sense of self-worth and accountability. It is all about training someone to be self-employed and be able to generate employment for others.

Today, the high level of unemployment in our country is because of lack of entrepreneurial skills and a lot of undergraduates only think about white-collar jobs or what their certificates can offer them on graduation. They forget that the best job for them is self-employed jobs which will give satisfaction, or employers jobs of labour that will impact lives in their generation, hence the need to embrace entrepreneurship education is very essential. Entrepreneurship education and training is about the development of personal skills and qualities so that individuals gain knowledge and understanding of the way in which the economy works and reacts to market forces. This involves ways and methods to the development of creativity, problem solving, taking calculated risks, time management, communication skills, leadership skills which can lead to improved employment prospects. According to Wikipedia (2010) entrepreneurship education seeks to provide student with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial .success in a variety of settings. It can also be defined as an organised, formal conveyance of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills which includes creativity, sense of initiative, innovation and risk acceptance as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve its objectives. The primary purpose of entrepreneurship education at the higher institution level is to develop entrepreneurial capacities and mindsets. Other aims include inculcating in students the ability to:

- Identify and solve problems using critical and creative thinking,
- Work effectively with others as a proactive team member and cultivate the ability to resolve conflicts,

- Organise and manage one-self and one's activities,
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information to make decisions that must be carried through,
- Communicate and negotiate effectively,
- Reflect on experiences and explore various strategies for effective learning,(Aja-Okorie and Adali 2013).

For entrepreneurship education and training to be effective in our higher institutions of learning, there must be vision and thought for it, provision of human and material resources and advocacy. Also the knowledge acquired must not be only through factual knowledge and the limited skills acquired in the classroom/school, but also through the stimulation of new ventures and the increasing capacity of the entrepreneur to pursue even greater success.

Statement of the Problem

In our higher institutions of learning little appears to have been provided as direct entrepreneurship education and training for students although those pursuing courses in vocational and technical courses, economics and business faculties have some background. There is lack of entrepreneurial spirit among undergraduates of higher institutions, even before graduation they always focus their minds in job search without thinking of how they could use the knowledge they have acquired to create job. The inability to structure a programme that will attract and hold students interest and academic pursuit of entrepreneurship courses has constituted its ineffectiveness in higher institutions. There is also lack of administrative concern, students' apathy, lack of feelings, indifference, interest, finance and lack of comprehension support of infrastructure for entrepreneurship education. The problem of this study put in a question form: what are the students perceptions of the need for entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions in Delta State?

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What are the students' perceptions of entrepreneurial skills acquisition needed by undergraduates in the higher institutions?
2. What are the students' perceptions of entrepreneurial skills acquired by undergraduates in higher institutions?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for vocational and technical skills acquisition among undergraduate students in higher institutions.
2. There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for catering/confectionery entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduates in higher institutions.
3. There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for agricultural/agro-allied entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduate students in higher institutions.

Purpose of the Study

This study is set forth to examine the perception of male and female on the need for entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduate students in higher institutions. Specifically this study will investigate on:

1. The entrepreneurial skill needs of the undergraduate students in higher institutions of Delta State.
2. The entrepreneurial skill possessed by undergraduate students in higher institutions.
3. If there is any significant difference between vocational and technical skills of undergraduate students.
4. How male and female undergraduate students differ in their perception of catering/confectionery skills and agricultural/agro-allied skills.

Methods and Procedure

The study adopts the expo- facto research design and was descriptive in nature. It sought to establish the difference between the dependent and independent variables of entrepreneurship skills acquisition of undergraduate students in higher institutions. The population of the study comprised of all the students of Delta State higher institutions. The sample was made up of three hundred and two (302) students which was selected using the stratified random sampling technique. The selection was restricted to only education students of the two colleges of education (Warn and Agbor) and Faculty of Education, Delta State University. The questionnaire was used to collect data and this was divided into two sections. Section 'A' sought information about the Bio-data of respondents, while section 'B' sought information on various entrepreneurship skills. A four point Likert scale of SA, A, D, SD, was used to measure the 53 items in the instrument. The face and content validity of the instrument was established. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the test-re-test method to establish the stability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient value obtained was 0.75. The data collected were analysed using the t-test statistical tool. The alpha level of significance was set at 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the students' perceptions of entrepreneurial skills acquisition needed by undergraduates in tertiary institutions?

Table 1: Mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Skills Needed by Undergraduate Students

S/N	Items	Mean	Remarks
1	Vulcanizing skills	2.10	Disagree
2	Farming skills	3.50	Agree
3	Soap making skills	3.18	Agree
4	Barbing skills	2.77	Agree
5	Mechanic skills	2.35	Disagree
6	Furniture skills	3.21	Agree
7	Catering skills	3.37	Agree
8	Decoration skills	2.80	Agree
9	Printing and publishing skills	3.85	Agree
10	Fruit processing skills	2.55	Agree
11	Mat making skills	2.18	Disagree
12	Car washing skills	2.40	Disagree

13	Hair making skills	3.00	Agree
14	Shoe making skills	2.33	Disagree
15	Laundering skills	2.67	Agree
16	Telecommunication skills	2.80	Agree
17	Ceramic making skills	2.54	Agree
18	Livestock rearing	2.75	Agree
19	Garment making skills	3.18	Agree
20	Plumbing skills	2.25	Disagree
21	Electrical skills	2.90	Agree
22	Computer repair skills	3.00	Agree
23	Marketing consulting skills ,	3.15	Agree
24	Graphic designing skill	3.23	Agree
	Cumulative Average Mean	2.84	

Source: Computed from Fieldwork, 2020

Table 1 shows that out of twenty four entrepreneurship skills listed the respondents agreed that eighteen entrepreneurship skills are the ones needed by the students to prepare them for future life. This is because the mean ratings of the eighteen entrepreneurship skills are above 2.50 which is the acceptance level. Also the cumulative mean average is 2.84 as indicated in the table.

Research Question 2: What are the student perceptions of need for entrepreneurship skills acquired by undergraduates in higher institutions?

Table 2: Mean ratings of Entrepreneurship Skills acquired by Undergraduate Students

S/N	Items	Mean	Remarks
	Vulcanizing skills	2.10	Disagree
	Farming skills	2.73	Agree
	Soap making skills	3.20	Agree
	Barbing skills	2.72	Agree
	Furniture making skills	1.62	Disagree
	Catering skills	2.64	Agree
	Decoration skills	2.22	Disagree
	Printing and publishing skills	2.13	Disagree
	Fruit processing skills	2.11	Disagree
	Mat making	2.40	Disagree
	Car washing skills	2.21	Disagree
	Hair making skills	2.65	Agree
	Shoe making skills	2.41	Disagree
	Laundering skills	3.15	Agree
	Telecommunication skills	2.42	Disagree
	Ceramic making skills	2.48	Disagree
	Livestock rearing	2.95	Agree
	Garment making skills	2.84	Agree
	Plumbing skills	2.32	Agree

	Electrical skills	2.50	Disagree
	Computer repair skills	2.40	Disagree
	Marketing consulting skills	2.16	Disagree
	Graphic designing skill	2.73	Agree
	Mechanic skills	2.33	Disagree
	Cumulative Average Mean	2.48	

Source: Computed from Fieldwork, 2020

Table 2 reveals that out of twenty four entrepreneurship skills listed, the respondents agreed that ten entrepreneurship skills with mean ratings above 2.50 acceptance levels are possessed by undergraduate students in higher institutions. The other fourteen entrepreneurship skills with mean ratings below 2.50 are not possessed by undergraduate students. The cumulative average mean of 2.48 is below the decision rule 2.50 showing lack of entrepreneurial skills possessed by students.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female students on the need for vocational and technical skills acquisition among undergraduate students in higher institutions.

Table 3: T-test Analysis of the Perception of Male and Female Undergraduate students on the Acquisition of Vocational and Technical Entrepreneurial Skills

Variable	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of significant	Decision
Male	151	18.32	4.56	300	-8.83	1.96	0.05	Not Significant (Retained)
Female	151	24.77	7.47					

Source: Computed from Fieldwork, 2020

Table 3, shows that the t-calculated value of -8.83 was less than t-critical value of 1.96 hence, the null hypothesis was retained. This shows a non-significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for vocational and technical entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for catering/confectionery entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduates in higher institutions.

Table 4: T-test Analysis of the perception of Male and Female Undergraduate students on the Acquisition of Catering/Confectionery Entrepreneurial Skills

Variable	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of significant	Decision
Male	151	18.32	5.530	300	7.55	1.96	0.05	Significant (Rejected)
Female		13.48	5.608					

Source: Computed from Fieldwork, 2020

In table 4, the t-calculated value of 7.55 was greater than the t-critical value of 1.96. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there was a significant difference between the perception of male and female undergraduate students on the need for catering/confectionery entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for agricultural/agro allied entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduate students in higher institutions.

Table 5: T-test analysis of the perception of male and female undergraduate students on the acquisition of Agricultural/Agro Allied entrepreneurial skills

Variable	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of significant	Decision
Male	151	21.97	6.15	300	8.12	1.96	0.05	Significant (Rejected)
Female	151	16.42	5.17					

Source: Computed from Fieldwork, 2020

As indicated in table 5, the t-calculated value of 8.12 was greater than the t-critical value of 1.96. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there was a significant difference between the perception of male and female undergraduate students on the need for agricultural/agro allied entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions.

Discussion of Results

This study answered two questions and tested three hypotheses on the perception of entrepreneurial skill needs and acquisition of undergraduate students of higher institutions in Delta State. Table 1 shows that out of twenty four entrepreneurial skills listed, the respondents confirmed that eighteen skills are needed by the undergraduates for self-reliance. The six other skills which include vulcanizing skills, mechanic skills, mat making skills, car washing skills and plumbing skills were not applauded as entrepreneur skills needed by these undergraduate. The reason for the rejection may be due to the demeaning nature of the job.

Table 2 shows that out of twenty four entrepreneurial skills listed, the respondents confirmed that only ten skills are possessed by undergraduate students as indicated by the mean rating below 2.50 acceptance level.

The study revealed a non-significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the need for vocational and technical entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduates in higher institutions. This result revealed that both male and female undergraduate students perceive these entrepreneurial skills from the same perspective. The study also showed that there was a significant difference between the perceptions of male female students on the need for catering/confectionery entrepreneurial skills acquisition among undergraduates in higher institutions. The result showed that male and female undergraduate students differ in their perception of the acquisition of catering/confectionery

entrepreneurial skills. The plausible reason might be that these skills are more feminine in nature.

The study also revealed that there was a significant difference between the perception of male and female undergraduate students on the need for agricultural/agro-allied entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions. The result revealed that male and female students differ in their perception of the acquisition of agricultural/agro-allied entrepreneurial skills.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the findings that:

- There was no significant difference in the perception of male and female students on the need for vocational and technical entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions.
- There was a significant difference in the perception of male and female students on the need for catering/confectionery entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions.
- There was a significant difference in the perception of male and female students on the need for agricultural/agro-allied entrepreneurial skills acquisition in higher institutions,

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made for effective acquisition of entrepreneurship skills among undergraduate students in higher institutions especially education students:

- Entrepreneurship education should be properly integrated as a compulsory course for education students in higher institutions.
- Adequate publicity on the importance of acquiring entrepreneurial skills should be made to create awareness for students of higher institutions.
- There should be vision and thought for the implementation of entrepreneurship education by providing adequate personnel to teach entrepreneurial skills.
- Adequate provision of essential infrastructural facilities should be made available in higher institutions.
- For entrepreneurship education to be functional, government should allocate funds for its implementation and management in tertiary institutions.

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