

ENTREPRENEURIAL PRACTICES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADUATES IN ABIA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Education and training provides individuals with skills to empower themselves in order to escape poverty. This has been embraced in all aspects of human development including the area of Physical Education and sports. Entrepreneurship development through education which includes the area of Physical Education and Sports has been receiving attention globally. This study was undertaken to investigate the entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education graduates in Abia State, Nigeria. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study consists of 310 graduates of Physical Education in Abia State, Nigeria. The researcher-designed questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire was validated by five experts and has reliability co-efficient of .78. The results of the study indicate that entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education graduates in Abia State includes organizing sports events like inter-house and community sports programme (21.30%), coaching (19.0%), establishment of sports enterprises like health and fitness clubs (11.60%) and dance instructor (10.97%). The study also revealed that there was significant difference in entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education graduates based on age and gender. Based on the findings the researchers discussed the implications of the findings for the development of physical education and sports.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, Practices, Physical Education

Introduction

Entrepreneurship development is seen today as the panacea to economic transformation of individuals and even the national economy. This is in the light of the high rate of unemployment in recent years. The latest report of National Bureau of Statistics puts the unemployment rate in Nigeria at 23.1% of the work force in the third quarter of 2019 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Youth unemployment rate according to the NBS is put at 36.50% in the third quarter of 2018 (NBS, 2019). Though, the Federal and State Governments have been working hard in the area of job creation, the over 2 million job spaces said to be created yearly have not accommodated the large number of graduates (Ekpiken & Ukpabio, 2015). Ekpiken and Ukpabio further stated that in the face of difficulties experienced to secure jobs among young university graduates in Nigeria, entrepreneurship education appears to

be the answer to this growing problem. This according to Ekpiken and Ukpabio (2015) has become necessary because year in year out, as most university graduates wander about after graduation thinking of what next to do. This is so because the jobs for which they have spent the better part of their lives acquiring knowledge and skills are virtually non-existent (Fasasi & Etejere, 2009). Some of the graduates stay without jobs even in their mid thirties and some settle for the informal sector in very poor conditions (Babalola, 2007). Herrington, Kew and Kew (2009) noted that given the failure of the private and public sectors to absorb the growing number of job seekers, increasing attention has focused on entrepreneurship and new firm creation and their potential for contributing to economic growth and job creation. Entrepreneurship is therefore considered a key component of national plan as a result of high rate of unemployment and jobseekers in recent years (Moghimi, 2008).

The concept "entrepreneurship" has been variously defined. Shane (2003) described entrepreneurship as the act of being an entrepreneur. According to Shane, the word 'entrepreneur' can be taken to mean an individual who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods. Shane further stated that the result of one effort in entrepreneurship may be the creation of a new organization or revitalizing an existing organization in response to a perceived opportunity. In another conceptualization Onuoha (2007) defined entrepreneurship as the practice of starting new organization or revitalizing mature organization particularly, new business in response to identified opportunities. It therefore demands that the individual should be prepared to assume a reasonable degree of risks, be a good leader, highly innovative and motivated.

The act of entrepreneurship is difficult to predict. This is because it involves a high measure of risk and uncertainty. As a result of the risk and uncertainty in entrepreneurship, there is need for an entrepreneur to be equipped and willing to face the future with limited resources, and be determined to run the venture successfully. Entrepreneurship also involves innovation. That is to say that entrepreneurship brings something new or that does not exist before to the market. Entrepreneurship education therefore is about transforming an idea into reality through innovations and personal initiatives.

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial initiative is important. The importance of entrepreneurship cannot be overemphasized. Ekpiken and Ukpabio, (2015) submitted that, the massive unemployment that has bedeviled Nigerian young graduates has made entrepreneurship key to survival in the present economy. Given the high rate of unemployment among youths and graduates, there is the need to develop entrepreneurship skills to increase graduates motivation and interest for doing entrepreneurial activities in the area of physical education and sports.

Physical Education as a distinct professional area fortunately encompasses diverse areas of specialization which potentially provides investment opportunities for prospective persons to set up Physical Education and sports related businesses for

providing direct and indirect services to the society. The diverse entrepreneurial possibilities existing within the field of Physical Education and sports have continued to expand in recent times. It is however, the identification, development and initiating steps to set up entrepreneurial outfits that Physical education graduates lack in Nigeria. Hence, there is the need to re-engineer the process of professional preparation, content and practice of Physical Education towards sports entrepreneurship.

Sports entrepreneurship according to Matengo (2018) embeds the identification of conditions and procedures in which emergent business ventures with a social orientation are formed. An industry as large as the sports industry requires educated people to run a variety of sports related businesses (Borgese, 2010). The sports industry entails a variety of entrepreneurial outfits. These may include: health club facilities, sports arena and facility operators, league owner/operators, sporting goods store owners, sports ticket agencies, and sport physical therapists – just to name a few (Borgese, 2010). Borgese further stated that there has been significant growth in the coaching and fitness type businesses in recent years within the sports industry. In a study by Jones and Jones (2014) 23.19 per cent of Physical Education students undertook employment in sports-related occupations including sports coaching in a variety of sports, fitness gym coach, dance instructor, life guard and personal trainer. Ogbonna (2015) equally reported that the most entrepreneurial engagement of graduates of physical education is sports events centres.

Socio-demographic factors can have an encouraging or impeding effect on the intention of individuals to engage in entrepreneurial practices. According to Sanditov and Verspagen (2011) factors such as family background, education, previous work experience, risk attitude, over-optimism, preference for independence and the norms and values of a society influence the choice of individual's life careers, i.e. entrepreneurship or salaried employment. In other words, individual difference variables have been found to predict entrepreneurship. These variables according to Hatak, Harms and Fink (2015) include age, gender, education, work experience and role models, family background and education.

Gender is one the factors associated with entrepreneurial practices. Gender refers to the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences (Hornby, 2015). Gender has been proposed to have an impact on entrepreneurial intention (Kristiansen&Indarti, 2004). Women have generally been reported as having lower entrepreneurial intentions than men. Zhao, Seibet and Hills (2005) concludes that women are less likely than men to desire becoming an entrepreneur. Other studies also argued that females are less likely to establish their own business than men (Phan, Wong & Wang, 2002a, b). Megibaru (2014) reported in a study that out of the total of 99 females, only 30.3% intended to be entrepreneurs. In contrast, a little over half of male students (50.71%) intended to start and run their own knowledge based business. The remaining 69.7% female and

49.3% male students prefer to search and enroll in white collar jobs. However, studies by Smith, Sardeshmukh and Combs, (2016a, b) and Chaudhary (2017) showed no meaningful difference between men and women in terms of intentions to start businesses. These results challenge past research findings which ranked female students lower on entrepreneurial dimensions compared to male students. Further research is therefore needed to establish the impact of gender on entrepreneurial practices.

Age is another factor capable of influencing entrepreneurial practices. Age refers to the number of years a person has lived or has existed (Hornby, 2015). According to Kristiansen and Indarti (2004) age have been proposed to have an impact on entrepreneurial intention. Levesque and Minniti (2006) explained the age-related effect on entrepreneurial intention as a result of the opportunity costs of time. Studies by Choo and Wong (2006) and Delmar and Davidson (2000) have established that the age at which most people decide to own firms is between the ages of 25 to 34. On the other hand, Weber and Schaper (2004) stated that although older people are more capable of exhibiting behaviours that deviate from the customary way of doing business because they have greater means and opportunity for doing so, but they are much less likely as younger people to take steps toward acting entrepreneurially. It can thus be assumed that age has a negative relation with entrepreneurial intention. In addition, Hatak, Harms and Fink (2015) confirms that age is associated with a lower likelihood of having an entrepreneurial intention. On the contrary, Chaudhary (2017) does not support that age is inversely associated with entrepreneurial practices.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship is today regarded as one of the best economic development strategies to tackle unemployment. A country's economic growth in terms of job creation, firm survival and technological change hinges on entrepreneurial practices. The diverse entrepreneurial possibilities existing within the field of Physical Education and sports have continued to expand in recent times which include sports coaching in a variety of sports, fitness gym coach, dance instructor, life guard and personal trainer. The Physical education graduate is therefore expected to engage in any of this area as a private sector participant in order to be self employed.

Despite these numerous opportunities in the area of physical education and sports, self-employment seem to be less among the young educated members of the society including graduates of physical education. Thus, the involvement of young university graduates in entrepreneurship tradition may be very little. Entrepreneurship has been associated with small business enterprise and viewed as a less attractive career option for university graduate. Many graduates may still inclined to white collar jobs than entrepreneurship.

Moreover, the researchers could not find any detailed research conducted on issues related to entrepreneurial practices of physical education graduates. This

therefore necessitated this study on entrepreneurial practices of physical education graduates in Abia State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education graduates in Abia State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. Entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers;
2. Entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on gender; and
3. Entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on age.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on gender and
2. There is no statistically significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on age.

Methods and Materials

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behaviour of subjects without influencing it in any way (Maduabum, 2004). Moreover, this method according to Nworgu (2006) involves describing, recording, analyzing, and interpreting conditions as they exist. This design was considered appropriate because the study recorded analyzed, interpreted and described entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education Teachers.

The population of the study comprised 364 physical education graduates in public secondary schools in Abia State. The entire 364 physical education graduates in public secondary schools in Abia State were used for the study. In other words, there was no sampling due to the fact that the population size is manageable. This is in line with Nworgu (2006) who stated that for some studies, the population may be small enough to warrant the inclusion of all the population in the study.

Instrument for data collection was researcher designed questionnaire tagged Entrepreneurial Practices of Physical Education Graduates (EPPEG). The validity of the instrument was established through the judgments of five experts – three from the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education and two from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation), from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was established through the

Spearman Brown Statistics. The correlation coefficient index of 0.78 was obtained. The instrument was therefore considered reliable for the study.

Three hundred and sixty four copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents. Three hundred and fifty-two were returned. After screening of the returned copies of the questionnaire, a total of 310 were dully completed and thus were used for data analysis. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentages. The response options of the questionnaire were "Yes" or "No". The Chi Square statistics were used to test the null hypotheses at 0,05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers (N = 310)

S/N	Entrepreneurial Practices engaged in	Yes		No	
		f	%	f	%
1	Establishment of health and fitness clubs	36	11.60	274	88.40
2	Sale of sports equipment	33	10.60	277	89.40
3	Organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc	66	21.30	244	78.70
4	Production and repair of sports equipment	18	5.80	292	94.20
5	Establishment of sports academy	13	4.20	297	95.80
6	Coaching	59	19.03	251	80.97
7	Life guard and personal trainer	23	7.42	287	92.58
8	Dance instructor	34	10.97	276	89.03
9	Establishment of private schools	28	9.03	282	90.97

Table 1 shows that Organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc (21.30%) is the most entrepreneurial practice engaged in by Physical education teachers. This is followed by coaching (19.03%), establishment of health and fitness club (11.60%) and dance instructor (10.97%). The least entrepreneurial practice engaged in by the respondents is establishment of sports academy (4.20%).

Table 2: Entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers based on Gender

Gender	Male (n = 168) Yes	Female (n = 142) Yes
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S/N	Entrepreneurial Practices engaged in	f	%	f	%
1	Establishment of health and fitness clubs	26	72.22	10	27.78
2	Sale of sports equipment	22	66.67	11	33.33
3	Organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc	43	65.15	23	34.85
4	Production and repair of sports equipment	17	94.44	1	5.56
5	Establishment of sports academy	13	100	0	0
6	Coaching	38	64.41	21	35.59
7	Life guard and personal trainer	21	91.30	2	8.70
8	Dance instructor	17	50.00	17	50.00
9	Establishment of private schools	24	85.71	4	14.29

Result in Table 2 revealed that only male Physical education teachers established sports academy (100%). The Table further showed that higher proportion of the male Physical education teachers adopts entrepreneurial practices such as production and repair of sports equipment (94.44%), life guard and personal trainer (91.30%), and establishment of private schools (85.71%); as against their female counterparts. The Table further revealed that dance is the most entrepreneurial practice engaged in by female Physical Education Teachers (50%). This is followed by coaching (35.59%) and organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc (34.85%). However, none of the female Physical Education Teachers established sports academy (0.0%).

Table 3: Entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers based on Age

S/N	Entrepreneurial Practices engaged in	20-45yrs (n = 174)		46 yrs + (n = 136)	
		Yes f	%	Yes f	%
1	Establishment of health and fitness clubs	22	83.3	14	16.7
2	Sale of sports equipment	8	23.5	25	76.5
3	Organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc	26	39.40	40	60.60
4	Production and repair of sports equipment	3	16.67	15	83.33

5	Establishment of sports academy	5	38.46	8	61.54
6	Coaching	24	40.68	35	59.32
7	Life guard and personal trainer	18	78.26	5	21.74
8	Dance instructor	23	67.64	11	32.36
9	Establishment of private schools	7	25.00	21	75.00

Data in Table 3 shows that 83.3% of Physical Education Teachers that established health and fitness clubs, 78.26% that are life guard and personal trainers and 67.64% that are dance instructors were aged 20 – 45 years. The Table also indicates that the least entrepreneurial practice of the teachers aged 20 – 45 years is the production and repair of sports equipment (16.67%). Table 3 further shows that majority of the teachers aged 46 years and above engaged in entrepreneurial practices such as production and repair of sports equipment (83.33%), sale of sports equipment (76.5%) and establishing private schools (75.00%). The least entrepreneurial practice of those aged 46 years and above include establishment of health and fitness clubs (16.7%) and life guard and personal trainer (21.74%).

Table 4: Summary of Chi-square (χ^2) Analysis Testing the Null Hypothesis of no significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on gender

S/N	Entrepreneurial Practices engaged in	Gender				χ^2	df	P-value
		Male (n =168)		Female (n =142)				
		Yes	No	Yes	No			
1	Establishment of health and fitness clubs	26	142	10	132	28.67	1	.000
2	Sale of sports equipment	22	146	11	131	23.54	1	.004
3	Organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc	43	125	23	119	43.17	1	.004
4	Production and repair of sports equipment	17	151	1	141	46.25	1	.002
5	Establishment of sports academy	13	155	0	142	9.87	1	.000
6	Coaching	38	130	21	121	34.65	1	.004
7	Life guard and personal trainer	21	147	2	140	39.46	1	.021
8	Dance instructor	17	151	17	125	6.32	1	.067
9	Establishment of private schools	24	144	4	138	11.87	1	.003

Overall **31.63** **.000**

Data in Table 4 shows the Chi-square analysis verifying the responses of Physical Education Teachers on the entrepreneurial practices based on gender. The Table show that the overall $\chi^2 = 31.63$, p-value = .000. Since the p value is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on gender is not accepted. In other words, significant differences exist in the entrepreneurial practices of male and female Physical Education Teachers in Abia State.

Table 4 further showed that no significant differences exist in the entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education teachers based on gender on only one out of the nine statements which is on dance instructor ($\chi^2 = 6.32$, p value = 0.067).

Table 5: Summary of Chi-square (χ^2) Analysis Testing the Null Hypothesis of no significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on age

S/N	Entrepreneurial Practices engaged in	Age				χ^2	df	P-val
		20-45yrs (n =174)		46 yrs + (n = 136)				
		Yes	No	Yes	No			
1	Establishment of health and fitness clubs	22	152	14	122	18.65	1	.001
2	Sale of sports equipment	8	166	25	111	21.94	1	.004
3	Organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc	26	148	40	96	33.17	1	.087
4	Production and repair of sports equipment	3	171	15	121	42.89	1	.132
5	Establishment of sports academy	5	169	8	128	7.07	1	.057
6	Coaching	24	150	35	101	42.65	1	.066
7	Life guard and personal trainer	18	156	5	131	56.11	1	.004
8	Dance instructor	23	151	11	125	19.32	1	.069
9	Establishment of private schools	7	167	21	115	16.87	1	.003
	Overall					41.22		.0549

Table 5 shows the Chi-square analysis verifying the responses of Physical Education Teachers on the entrepreneurial practices based on age. The Table show that the overall $\chi^2 = 41.22$, p-value = .0549. Since the p value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the entrepreneurial

practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on age is not rejected. In other words, significant differences do not exist in the entrepreneurial practices of younger and older Physical Education Teachers in Abia State.

Table 5 further showed that no significant differences exist in the entrepreneurial practices of Physical Education teachers based on age on five out of the nine entrepreneurial practices. These entrepreneurial practices include organizing sports events like inter-house sports and community sports programmes ($\chi^2 = 18.65$, $p = .087$), production and repair of sports equipment ($\chi^2 = 42.89$, $p = .132$), coaching ($\chi^2 = 42.65$, $p = .066$) and dance instructor ($\chi^2 = 19.32$, $p \text{ value} = 0.069$).

Discussion

Result in Table 1 show entrepreneurial practices of Physical education teachers in Abia State. Entrepreneurial practices of Physical education graduates include organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc (21.30%), coaching (19.03%), establishment of health and fitness club (11.60%) and dance instructor (10.97%). From the Table organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc is the most entrepreneurial practice engaged in by Physical education teachers. This is not surprising because most of these graduates have been involved in organization of inter-house sports, so it is most likely that they would establish entrepreneurial outfits for purposes of organizing sports events. This finding is in line with that of Jones and Jones (2014) who found that 23.19 per cent of Physical Education students undertook employment in sports-related occupations including sports coaching in a variety of sports, fitness gym coach, dance instructor, life guard and personal trainer. This study also shows that there has been significant growth in the coaching and fitness type businesses in recent years within the sports industry, which agrees with the views of Borgese (2010).

Table 2 showed entrepreneurial practices of physical education graduates based on gender. Most male physical education graduates established sports academy (100%), production and repair of sports equipment (94.44%), life guard and personal trainer (91.30%), and establishment of private schools (85.71%). While for the female teachers, entrepreneurial practices include dance instructor (50%), coaching (35.59%) and organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc (34.85%). However, none of the female Physical Education Teachers established sports academy (0.0%). This is not surprising, because women have generally been reported as having lower entrepreneurial intentions than men. This finding is in line with Megibaru (2014) who reported in a study that Out of the total of 99 females, only 30.3% intended to be entrepreneurs. In contrast, a little over half of the male students (50.71%) intended to start and run their own knowledge based business.

The null hypothesis of no significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on gender is not accepted.

This disagrees with Chaudhary (2017) who reported no meaningful difference between men and women in terms of intentions to start businesses.

On entrepreneurial practices of physical education graduates based on age, result in Table 3 showed that 83.3% of Physical Education Teachers who established health and fitness clubs, 78.26% who were life guards and personal trainers and 67.64% who were dance instructors were aged 20 – 45 years. For the teachers aged 46 years and above, the Table showed that majority of them engaged in entrepreneurial practices such as production and repair of sports equipment (83.33%), sale of sports equipment (76.5%) and establishing private schools (75.00%). This is not surprising but expected. The differences in entrepreneurial practices could be as a result of new curriculum change and perhaps due to differences in experiences acquired by the elderly teachers. This finding is not in line with Studies by Choo and Wong (2006) and Delmar and Davidson (2000) who established that the age at which most people decide to own firms is between the ages of 25 to 34. However, the finding agrees with Chaudhary (2017) who reported that that age is not inversely associated with entrepreneurial practices.

Conclusions

The study examined the entrepreneurial practices of physical education graduates in Abia State. The findings indicated that entrepreneurial practices of Physical education graduates include organizing sports events like inter-house, inter-community sports, etc, coaching, and establishment of health and fitness club and dance instructor. The study also revealed that the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the entrepreneurial practices adopted by Physical Education teachers, based on gender is not accepted while the hypothesis based on age is accepted.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the researchers recommend that strategies be put in place by government and university authorities to encourage physical education graduates to venture into entrepreneurship in sports. Also, the physical education curriculum should incorporate entrepreneurial education at all levels of education.

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