

ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ECONOMICS STUDENTS IN OSHIMILI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF DELTA STATE: PANACEA FOR BOOSTING SELF EMPLOYMENT

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Abstract

Self employment is one of the major things Nigeria needs to alleviate the economic hardship of the country. For one to be self employed there is every need for the individual to possess some entrepreneurial skills. The study explores entrepreneurial skills acquired among senior secondary students in Economics, as a panacea for boosting self-employment. The purpose of the study is to examine senior secondary Economics students innovative, communicative and managerial entrepreneurial skills and interest for self employment. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Four research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population comprised 3,026 senior secondary school students in Oshimili Local Government Area, Delta State. Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 353 students. A purposive random sampling technique was used to select 4 co-education schools from 15 public schools; a simple random sampling was used to select 200 girls and 153 boys from each school. An Entrepreneurial Skills' Acquisition Questionnaire for Secondary School Economics Students (ESAQSSES) was used for data collection. ESAQSSES was structured into twenty-five items on a four point rating scale. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were statistical analysis used for the study. The results showed that students possessed innovative, communicative entrepreneurial and some managerial entrepreneurial skills. The findings further revealed that students' innovative and communicative, entrepreneurial skills showed a significant difference in the mean ratings of their responses of male and female students. Also, findings showed that managerial entrepreneurial skill showed no significance difference between the mean ratings of male and female students. These findings indicate that students showed high percentage of interest for self employment and reduced percentage as a result of risk factors in business. It was recommended among others that teachers should help motivate students to identify their potentials and build essential skills that will be relevant to the student and society.

Key words: Self-employment, entrepreneur, entrepreneurial skills, economics and acquisition

Introduction

The increasing rate of unemployment is of great concern to nations of the world. Nigeria in particular according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2019) specified that unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 23.10 percent in the third quarter of 2018 from 22.70 percent in the second quarter of 2018. Unemployment rate in Nigeria has become a source of concern to the nation and the society at large. This could only be resolved when youths and students identify their potentials and work towards self-actualization. Education could be seen as key towards intellectual, national and self-development (Wei-Loon, Juam, Izaidin and Ismail, 2012).

Education is a process of acquiring necessary and knowledgeable skills that will better the life of an individual. The wealth of knowledge and skills acquired by an individual after studying a particular subject matter or experience is life's lesson that provides understanding of the future (Business Dictionary, 2019). According to Akuma and Emesin (2017), education prepares the recipient the opportunity to fit into changes in the society for relevance. In other words, education is a vital tool that enables the learner to face the challenges of the society and life. These challenges have to do with the means of livelihood to become a better and useful citizen to himself and the society at large. Education becomes the key to success and national development through entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneur is a skill-driven task that promotes self-development. Entrepreneurs have contributed to job creation and production that move the society forward. Entrepreneurship is synonymous with self-employment (Wei-Loon et al, 2012). Thus, the intervention of entrepreneurship will help reduce high rate of unemployment and improve creativity in an individual.

Research has shown many views on entrepreneur. Verma, (2016) explains entrepreneurs as a catalyst for economic change that uses purposeful searching carefully for planning and sound judgment when carrying out the entrepreneurial process. Also, Abbaszadegan (2009), sees an entrepreneur as someone who takes initiative, decision making, power, risk taking, involving in continuous innovative process and leading ability that makes outstanding performance. Moreso, investopedia (2016) sees an entrepreneur as a person who has skills and initiatives necessary to participate currently in future needs that brings about good business ideas. Thus, operationally, an entrepreneur is a person that is skillful, possesses unique ideas or innovations on how wealth could be created and plays significant roles in the economy. Entrepreneur are often thought of as national assets to be refined, motivated and remunerated to greatest possible extent (Rahul & Baijab, 2016).

The colonial education introduced into Nigeria made us to be white color job seekers rather than inventors. The emphasis of western education was on 4rs (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Religion), this education prepares the recipient for the job opportunities as teacher, church evangelists, clerks and interpreter (Garba, 2012). Presently, Nigerian government is much interested in entrepreneurship at the

senior secondary and tertiary levels of education when the rate of unemployment continued to increase at a tremendous rate.

Secondary school education involves students having spent their three years in Junior Secondary School (JSS) and then proceeding to 3 years of Senior Secondary School (SSS) which could be referred to as post basic education. The philosophy of secondary school economics curriculum is to the presenting Economics as a subject that has relevance in everyday life and could prepare graduates for an entrepreneurial career in future. At the senior secondary level students are exposed to acquisition of basic skills necessary for lifelong learning in entrepreneurship. The guiding principle of secondary education is to facilitate the learner with necessary knowledge, skills, attitude and values that will enable the learner to fit into life after school and contribute meaningfully to the community (UNESCO, 2010). Economics is a subject that when taught helps the learner achieve a well fulfilled life.

Economics is a social science subject that studies the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. Marshal and Cannon (1989), sees economics as a study of wealth creation that deals with man's activities over wealth acquisition, utilization and satisfaction of his or her wants. In other words, economics studies human behaviour to satisfy his needs in life. Thus, economics is a broad field of knowledge that concerns the study of mankind, survival for man to make a living from his environment he needs to have necessary skills in life which includes entrepreneurial skills.

Entrepreneurial skills are forces towards wealth creation and innovations (Gautam, 2015). Improving on entrepreneurial skills in economics requires that the teacher has to relate theoretical content to real business challenges, teach specific contents with caution on areas that will develop the students business initiatives; involve professionals in areas needed; encourage field trips to small medium enterprise (SMES); motive students business ideas; and stress technology importance to the learner. Entrepreneurial skills are skills possessed by person that makes one to become self-employed and self-dependent. Entrepreneurial skills and knowledge can play an important role among young people to achieve a bright professional perspective (Lepuschitz, Koppensteinev, Leeb-Bracher, and Merdan, 2018). Nevertheless, the identification of a set of characterized skills as entrepreneurship skills is distinguishes from one individual from another (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2015). Operationally, entrepreneurial skills are linked to competencies that are identified and utilized to attain maximum output. Entrepreneurial skills could be associated to personality trait theory.

Personality trait theory was first propounded by Gordon Allports in 1936. Allports believes that every individual has unique traits that differentiate the individual to another. This theory could be anchored to entrepreneurial skill acquisition in which the unique nature of the learner has traits that enhances entrepreneurship character. However, this theory gives insight into these traits or in-

born qualities that identifies the characteristics associated with entrepreneurs. Thus, at the secondary school level it is expected that the child should have started or would have exhibited some of the entrepreneurial skills. The study of economics at the secondary school level gives the students ample opportunity to identify these skills. According to the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2008), economic curriculum equips students with basic knowledge and skills to solve economic problems through entrepreneurship. In other words the knowledge of economic equips students' readiness to live and contribute to the development of the society.

Recently, there are considerable skills agreed upon by researchers that make someone an entrepreneur and these skills were identified to be learning and teaching which depends on academic experiences (Kuratko, 2005; Matley, 2008; Department of Business Innovation and Skills, 2015). Thus, categorically entrepreneurial skills could be grouped into technical, management; entrepreneurship and personal maturity, these are considered ingredients for students success in school (Lyon & Lyons, 2002; Smith, Schallenkango and Eichholz, 2007); Engineering thoughts and action, collaboration (team work), communication and character as secondary school entrepreneur behaviours (Q-Li, Harichandvan, Camasciali, Erdil and Nocito Gobel, 2016). Tarver (2019) identified some skills that an entrepreneur should have as communication, soft skill of sales, focus, ability to learn, and business strategy. A study carried out by Rengamani & Ramachandvan identified that Human Resource Ability, Communication ability, Goal Setting, taking Initiative and risk taking as being significance towards entrepreneurship interest. Also, a study carried out by Chang and Rieple (2013) showed significant changes in students' perception of their skills overtime. Thus, it showed that students' perception was in line with entrepreneurial skills possessed. A study by Din, Anuav and Usman (2015) found out that the variables of business plan, risk taking and self efficacy are significantly related to the effectiveness of the entrepreneurship program while the variables of need for achievement and locus control are not significant. Thus, the study looked into students' entrepreneurial skill acquisition to ascertain the extent these skills are possessed by students and its implication for self-employment.

Gender could be seen as differences in physical constructs of a being (male and female). These constructs determines the unique nature of both gender. Differences in gender could be seen in business growth and strategies, men and women use in business growth and survival (Kariv, 2012). Also, according to the department for business innovation and skills (2015) 'socially dexterous and interpersonal skills were strong entrepreneurial skills possessed by women. A study carried out by Olaniyi, Soladoye, Olufumilola, Airegbee and Osunloye (2012) found that marketing related value with regards to choice of entrepreneurial skills has nothing to do with being a male or female. Iloeje and Okolocha (2018) also identified in their study that gender was not a significant factor on entrepreneurial skills needed

by business education graduates for effective management of small enterprise. Rufai, Abdukadir and Abal (2013) found out that entrepreneurship graduates could not get employment because they possessed low skills and low self-confidence required by industries exposures while in school studies also show that skill acquisition training was found to have positive effect on entrepreneurial activity in Nigeria. However, the extent of entrepreneurial skill acquisition to enhance self employment on gender is not doubtfully questioned. Because of the critical importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition to boost self employment, this study was therefore, poised to investigate on entrepreneurial skills possessed by secondary school students.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to investigate entrepreneurial skills acquisition of senior secondary school economic students for boosting self employment. Specifically the study determined:

1. The entrepreneurial innovative skills among senior secondary school students in Economics.
2. The entrepreneurial communicative skills among senior secondary school students in Economics
3. The entrepreneurial managerial skills among secondary school students in Economics
4. Determine the proportion of students that indicate interest for self-employment

Research Questions

1. What are the entrepreneurial innovative skills among senior secondary school students in Economics?
2. What are the entrepreneurial communicative skills among senior secondary school students in Economics?
3. What are the entrepreneurial managerial skills among secondary students in Economics
4. What proportion of students indicates interest for self-employment?

Hypotheses

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

1. Innovative entrepreneurial skill acquisition mean scores of male and female students of senior secondary schools will not differ significantly.
2. Communicative entrepreneurial skill acquisition mean scores of male and female students of senior secondary schools will not differ significantly.
3. Managerial entrepreneurial skill acquisition mean scores of male and female students of senior secondary schools will not differ significantly.

Methods

The study adopted descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design seeks to collect data that describes a study under investigation. According to Nworgu (2015) descriptive survey design seeks to document or describe what exist in present status of existence or absence of what is being investigated. Thus, descriptive survey design is appropriate for the study because it sought to investigate students attributes toward entrepreneurial skills in economics and interest in self employment. The study was conducted in Osimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. The population of the study comprised 3,026 senior secondary school students in Osimili local government area. The area of the study was chosen due to high rate of poverty and unemployment among youths that makes them become useless to themselves and the society at large, this calls for concern. From the population of the study, 353 students were selected using Yamane formula to determine sample size of which 153 were male and 200 female. A multi-stage sampling technique was used.

Initially, purposive random sampling was used to select 4 co-education schools from 15 public secondary schools in Oshimili south local government area of Delta state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 153 boys and 200 girls from each of the schools. Four research questions posed were answered and the data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while three null hypotheses formulated to guide the study were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument for data collection was an Entrepreneurial Skill's Acquisition Questionnaire for Secondary School Economics Students (ESAQSSES). The ESAQSSES was structured into twenty-five items of a four point rating scale that has two sections: A and B. Section A contains personal information of the respondents while B contains information about entrepreneurial skills acquisition of students (innovation, communication and managerial skills). The instrument had a 3 points scale of Strongly Acquired (SA), Acquired (A), and Not Acquired (NA) with values 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts, one each from Economics Education, Vocational Education and Measurement and Evaluation units all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Their comments were used to correct the instrument for trial testing in Oshimili North Local Government Area. The internal consistency of the data was trial testing using cronbach Alpha statistic had a reliability coefficient of 0.81, 0.77 and 0.79 for the three clusters and an overall coefficient of 0.82. The bench mark for mean on the research question were 4.00-3.50; 3.49-3.00; and 2.99 – below were used to interpret the results as; Strongly Acquired, Acquired, Not Acquired respectively. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for items whose p-value were greater than 0.05 level of significance while hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected for item whose p-value were less than 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results of this study were obtained based on the research questions answered and hypotheses tested. Both the research questions and the hypotheses are presented on Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 as follows:

Research Question One

What are the entrepreneurial innovative skills acquired among senior secondary school students in Economics?

Table 1: Mean ratings of the responses of male and female students on innovative entrepreneurial skill acquisition in Economics.

N = 353							
S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{x}M$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}F$	SD	DEC
1	I have interest in learning more things	3.78	0.32	SA	3.96	0.63	SA
2	I seek active solutions into challenging problems	3.36	0.70	A	3.64	0.72	SA
3	I think about business ventures	3.71	0.99	SA	3.20	0.42	A
4	I have particular interest in life that I could like to improve in the future	3.94	0.36	A	3.88	0.31	SA
5	Coming across difficult concepts becomes challenging and makes me seek for more solution	3.39	0.47	SA	3.88	0.80	SA
	Cluster mean	3.63	0.57	SA	3.71	0.58	SA

Key: $\bar{x}M$ = mean of male, $\bar{x}F$ = mean of female, SA – Strongly Acquired, A = Acquired and Not Acquired: N = Number of respondents; Level of significance = 0.05; S* = Significant; NS = Not Significant.

From the data presented in Table 1 show that many students possessed entrepreneurial innovative skills at the senior secondary level. However, some students do not possess few of the entrepreneurial innovative skills items 2 and 5 for male; and items 3 for female. Therefore, this indicated that students acquired entrepreneurial innovative skills at the senior secondary schools in Economics.

Hypothesis 1

Innovative entrepreneurial skills acquisition scores of male and female students of senior secondary schools will not differ significantly.

Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female economics students entrepreneurial innovative skills.

S/N	Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	Levels of sig.	t	Df	Dec
1	Male	153	18.07	1.71	0.05	0.13	351	NS
2	Female	200	18.49	1.47				

The results in Table 2 show that entrepreneurial innovative skill acquisition scores of the two groups (male and female) students of senior secondary schools did not differ significantly. In other words the null hypothesis was not rejected. This is because the t-value 0.13 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, innovative entrepreneurial skills acquisition mean scores of male and female economics students of secondary school did not differ significantly.

Research Question Two

What are the entrepreneurial communicative skills acquired among secondary school students in Economics?

Table 3: Mean rating of male and female students' respondents on entrepreneurial communicative skills in Economics

N = 353								
S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{X}M$	SD	DEC	$\bar{X}F$	SD	DEC	
1	I regularly ensure good interpersonal relationship in group work	3.68	0.39	SA	3.92	0.81	SA	
2	I can interact with my peers on economics concepts as it relates to economy situations	3.31	0.54	A	3.72	0.58	SA	
3	I am able to explain Economics terms in graphs, data and facts	3.09	0.62	A	3.28	0.61	A	
4	I like the concept entrepreneur taught as a factor of production	3.52	0.46	SA	3.91	0.31	SA	
5	I am able to apply knowledge of Economics to solve complex problems	3.62	0.44	SA	3.75	0.71	SA	
6	I can explain economics concepts and problem in terms of value creativity	3.26	0.62	A	3.33	0.56	A	
Cluster mean		3.41	0.53	A	3.65	0.60	SA	

key: $\bar{X}m$ = mean of male, $\bar{X}F$ = mean of female, SA– Strongly acquired, A = Acquired and Not Acquired: N = number of respondents; level of significance = 0.05; S* = Significant; NS = Not Significant.

The data presented on Table 3 showed the mean rating on entrepreneurial communicative skills among secondary school economics students. Many items were rated 3.50 and above indicating strongly acquired while items 2 and 6 for male

indicated acquired while items 3 and 6 showed just acquired. This indicated that male and female economics students acquired entrepreneurial communicative skills on those items. This means that majority of the students possess communicative entrepreneurial skills.

Hypothesis 2

Communicative entrepreneurial skills acquisition mean scores of male and female students of Senior secondary schools will not differ significantly.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female economics students entrepreneurial communicative skills.

S/N	Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	Levels of sig.	T	Df	Dec
1	Male	153	20.49	2.45	0.05	0.00	351	S*
2	Female	200	21.72	2.45				

The results in Table 4 show that there is a significant difference between the two groups. The t-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the result showed that communicative entrepreneurial skills acquisition means scores of the two groups (male and female) economics students of senior secondary schools was significant.

Research Question Three

What are the entrepreneurial managerial skills acquired among senior secondary schools students in Economics?

Table 5: Mean ratings of the responses of male and female students managerial entrepreneurial skills in Economics

N = 353								
S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}_M	SD	DEC	\bar{X}_F	SD	DEC	
1	I feel business risk is meant for businessmen or big organization	2.94	1.11	NA	2.72	0.81	NA	
2	I like being involved in organizing activities	3.57	0.58	SA	3.56	0.68	SA	
3	Having failure in life makes it more challenging	3.20	0.97	A	3.24	0.77	A	
4	The inconsistent nature of changing market conditions reduces my interest.	2.63	1.05	NA	2.80	0.68	NA	

5	I can logically think of economics concepts to deductive and inductive measures	3.05	0.57	A	3.44	0.51	A
6	I can identify difficult situations through making them become effective and creative	3.63	0.56	A	3.64	0.52	SA
7	Economics trends around give me opportunity to practice technical ability	3.41	0.61	A	3.72	0.60	SA
Cluster mean		3.20	0.78	A	3.30	0.65	A

key: \bar{X}_m = mean of male, \bar{X}_F = mean of female, SA – Strongly Acquired, A = Acquired and Not Acquired: N = number of respondents; level of significance = 0.05; S* = Significant; NS = Not Significant.

The results in Table 5 show the mean ratings of students' entrepreneurial managerial skills. The table showed that both items 1 and 4 having means of 2.94, 2.63 for male respectively and 2.72 and 2.80 for female respectively indicated that the mean score is below 2.99 by both male and female student. The result indicated that managerial entrepreneurial skills items were all not acquired by students. Also, the data showed that other items 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 showed managerial entrepreneurial skills were acquired by economics secondary school students.

Hypothesis 3

Managerial entrepreneurial skills acquisition mean scores of male and female students of senior secondary schools will not differ significantly

Table 6: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female economics students entrepreneurial managerial skills.

S/N	Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	Levels of sig.	t	Df	Dec
1	Male	153	22.46	2.70	0.05	0'02	351	S*
2	Female	200	23.12	2.82				

The results in Table 6 show that there is a significant difference between the two groups. The t-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the result showed that managerial entrepreneurial skills acquisition means scores of the two groups (male and female) economics students of senior secondary schools was significant.

Research Question four:

What is the proportion of students that indicate interest for self-employment?
The below data answers research four in table four below

Table 7: Frequency and percentage of students that indicate interest for self-employment.

N = 353					
S/N	Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	I would like to own or start my own business when I finish school	337	16	95.5	4.5
2	My interest in starting a business is because I would have time for myself	289	64	81.9	18.1
3	I want to be a master of my business	329	64	95.5	4.5
4	New ideas makes me have interest in starting a business	337	16	95.5	4.5
5	Making profit interest me in starting a business	332	16	95.5	4.5
6	Taking risk interest me in starting a business	240	113	68.0	32.0
7	Economics as a subject interest my starting a business	313	40	88.7	11.3

The Table 7 show that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 have high percentage of 95.5% to 81.9%, this indicates that students have high interest for self-employment. On the other hand, item 6, had a slightly high percentage of 68.0 indicating that students taking risk interest had influence on their starting up a business.

Discussion of Results

The findings on entrepreneurial innovative skills acquired by secondary school Economics students identified; having interest in learning more things, seeking active solutions into challenging problems, thinking about business ventures, having particular interest in life that could like to improve in the future and coming across difficult concept that becomes challenging were possessed by male and female students. These findings agreed with the observations of Ahamad, Abdulkarim and Mallanta (2014) that students acquired business planning, development environment opportunity and network competencies as a result of the knowledge from their area of specialization. In addition the findings agreed with Sarboland, Moosavi, Manati, Begzadeh and Ghaemlam (2013) who revealed that knowledge could increase skill training in entrepreneurship by providing new ideas and by systematic and scientific investigation. In other words, education should be all rounded including knowledge

and skill of the learner. The learner should be able to utilize their maximum opportunities, viabilities and quality outcomes.

The findings of the study identified entrepreneurial communicative skills acquired by secondary school Economics students to include: good interpersonal relationship in group works, interact on economic concepts, like concept of entrepreneur as a factor of production, knowledge of Economics graphs, complex problems, explains economics concepts and problems. The findings are in agreement with Abul (2018) that identified communicative skills as one of the three skills that increase sales and competitive advantage. Also Johansson (2015) identified that communicative entrepreneurial skills are some of the five foundation of entrepreneurial success because they apply to every area of entrepreneurship. Thus, communicative entrepreneurial skills should be top most skills that a student must acquire before becoming an entrepreneur.

The findings of this study identified entrepreneurial managerial skills acquisition of students to include: being involved in organizing activities, identifying difficult situations through making them become effective and economic trends that give opportunities to practice technical ability. Also, it was identified that students feel business risk is for businessmen, inconsistent nature of changing market condition and identify difficult situations through making them become effective and creative showed low response. The findings were in line with Kabiru (2017) that carried out a study indicating there was no significance in the mean responses of male and female on the managerial skills required for entrepreneurship.

The findings of this study also identified that 95 percent of the students had interest on being self-employed but only 68 percent do not like business that involves risk. Risk taking makes an entrepreneur. Harriet (2017) explained that a successful entrepreneurship involves taking risks. This could be a factor that may be the cause of high unemployment, students are afraid of taking risk in establishing a business.

Conclusion

The nature of the Nigerian economy calls for drastic steps towards reducing the unemployment problem in the country. The development of a nation depends on its workforce which increases the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The establishment of firms and organizations are necessary for boosting the economy. Therefore, students' acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is a stepping ground towards identifying their potentials, self employment and self actualization. It could be concluded that students identified entrepreneurial skills should be enhanced to ensure that they become inventive and innovative.

Recommendations

1. It could be recommended that the teacher should focus on specific essential skills that would help develop the students to become entrepreneurs.

2. Government should create the enabling environment for Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) so as to encourage more firms and organizations into business.
3. Finally, appropriate pedagogy should be regularly used to ensure that the potentials of the learners are actualized. Thus making the learner active to exhibit the skills for the future.

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