

SELF EMPLOYMENT SKILLS AS CORRELATES OF SELF EMPLOYMENT JOBS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' IN IMO STATE

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Introduction

The Federal Government of Nigeria through the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2014) introduced entrepreneurship education and made it a compulsory course for all students in senior secondary schools to define and develop a business plan for any enterprise, equip them with effective managerial strategies in their chosen businesses and help them develop, expand and make their product available to markets. The overall aim of the policy is to inculcate in the students' entrepreneurial spirit that will help to curb the increasing rate of young secondary leavers' unemployment (FRN, 2013). Principals and teachers of senior secondary schools believe that the panacea to unemployment is entrepreneurship education that will equip the learners with self employment skills.

Skill acquisition according to Ibe (2010) is seen as instruction and guide provided through technical workshops to individuals aimed at equipping them with various saleable skills for sustainable national development in the world of work. Acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies is very essential in order to equip the individual with the skills to live, become self-employed and contribute substantially to the economic development of the society. This is conspicuously enshrined in the aims and objective of Nigeria's current philosophy of education. Developing self employment skills among secondary school students and beyond would contribute maximally to the reduction of unemployment in the country (Koellinger and Thurik, (2012); Nwekeaku, (2013). This will create job opportunities for many graduates and secondary school leavers. It will equip them with suitable skills that are required by employers of labour or help them to create jobs of their own. There is need to inculcate in the secondary school students and beyond the self employment skills such as buying and selling/trading; drawing and painting/dying; crafting; skill in computer usage (data processing, desktop publishing and simple cyber café service; Photographing skills; Skills in live stock keeping; Skills in fisheries; Skills in fishing; Soap making & cosmetics and Skills in confectioneries making (Constant and Zimmermann, 2014). To

enable students create, build and manage a business opportunity, mobile resources are necessary for students to exploit the opportunity for self employment which will be beneficial for community development.

According to Adiele, (2010) and Mueller and Anderson, (2014), self employment is a situation in which an individual works for himself or herself instead of working for an employer that pays a salary or a wage. These authors went further to explain that self employed individuals earn their income through conducting profitable operations from a business that they operate directly. When one becomes self- employed, it means the person is in control of what he/she does, one organizes his/her own hours and have regular income. The process of preparing for self employment begins by acquiring necessary skills and raising fund. Ollila and Williams-Middleton, (2011) describe self employment as the act of generating one's income directly from customers, clients or organizations as opposed to being an employee of a business. The following self employing jobs were examined in this study: buying and selling/trading; drawing and painting/dying; crafting; computer usage (data processing, desktop publishing and simple cyber café service; photographing; live stock keeping; fisheries; fishing; soap making & cosmetics and confectioneries making. These researchers distinguished self-employment from business ownership. A business owner is someone who owns a business or company but does not work with the day-to-day operation of the company while self employment or self employed person owns his own business and works assiduously with the day-to-day operation of his business.

Students who graduate from secondary schools have demonstrated lack of capabilities to cope with job demands in the labour market as well as showing exclusive tendency to remain in congruence with societal demands for self-employment (Scholman, Thurik and van Stel, 2015). The researcher is worried that even with the presence of vocational subjects in the school curriculum the students still leave school without having acquired skills from the vocational subjects they were exposed to while in the school. High rate of joblessness in Nigerian society, particularly, among the senior secondary school leavers who do not want to go further in higher education and also, among graduates is worrisome. The period between graduation and employment dates had continued to increase and had become a source of frustration for them and their parents. The constructivist theory is appropriate for this study because the approach provides an image of intelligence that empowers students to be successful at engaging in self employment skills. As teachers and curriculum planners, the need to create environments where students can have opportunities to construct well reasoned meanings for what they observed and experienced is very necessary. Constructivism encourages students to be

critical thinkers and problem-solvers. It involves students in the learning process and requires students to apply knowledge to a new situation. The understanding of this learning theory is very essential to know the approach suitable for instruction that will enhance the acquisition of self employment skills needed for the development of self employment. The problem of this study then posed as a question is: self employment skills as correlates of self employment in secondary schools in Imo state? The researcher raised the following objectives:

1. ascertained self- employment skills that correlate with self-employment jobs of students;
2. examined the self-employment skills of male and female students
3. determined the self- employment skills that correlate with self-employment jobs of male students and
4. determined the self- employment skills that correlate with self-employment jobs of female students.

The objectives were turned into the following research questions and hypotheses.

- 1) What are self- employment skills that correlate with self-employment jobs of students?
- 2) How are the relationship between male and female students' self-employment skills ?
- 3) What are the self- employment skills that correlate with self-employment jobs of male students?
- 4) How do self- employment skills correlate with self-employment jobs of female students?

The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance and they include:

1. There is no significant relationship between self- employment skills and self-employment
2. There is no significant relationship between self-employment skills of male and female
3. There is no significant relationship between self- employment skills with self-employment
4. There is no significant relationship between self- employment skills with self-employment

Method

The design of this study is a correlational design. The population for the study consists of all the senior secondary school students in public

secondary schools in Imo state, made up of 5,732 students in SS2 classes (SEMB, 2017). There are 2,182 male students and 3,550 female students respectively. The sample comprised of 300 students selected by simple random sampling technique. The instrument used to collect data was a rating scale titled ‘‘Self Employment Skills and Jobs (SESJ) which was in two sections. Section ‘One’ elicited information on the bio data such as gender of the subjects. Section ‘Two’ elicited information on Self employment skills possessed by students (Cluster A) as well as self- employment jobs students would like to engage in after graduation (Cluster B). The response pattern and weightings are: Very Great Extent-(VGE) -4, Great Extent-(GE)-3, Low Extent-(LE)-2 and Very Low Extent -(VLE)-1.

Face validity of the instrument was ascertained by three specialists: one Curriculum specialist, one specialist of Business education and one specialist of Educational Measurement and Evaluation. These specialists scrutinized the instrument using the purpose of study and ensured the instrument covered the research questions raised. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained with the use of Cronbach Alpha reliability statistic that ascertained the internal consistency of the instrument. The instrument was administered to 30 SS2 students who were not part of the study sample. The co-efficient obtained was 0.72. The data collated were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics (Pearson-r) to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with t-test .

Results

Table 1: Relationship between self- employment skills with self-employment jobs of students

Variables	N	r	Remark
self- employment skills	300	0.70	Strong, positive Relationship
self-employment jobs			

Data presented on Table 1 show coefficient of relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs as 0.70. This shows that self-employment skills correlate positively with self -employment jobs and the coefficient of relationship is high. The result was further ascertained by the corresponding hypothesis.

Table 2: t-test of no significant relationship between self- employment skills with self-employment jobs of students

Variables	N	r	Df	t-cal	tcrit	Remark
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self-employment skills	300	0.70	298	22.00	1.96	Reject
self-employment jobs						

Data on table 2 show the t-cal (22.00) was greater than table t-crit (1.96). This shows that there is a significant relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of students. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative accepted.

Table 3: Relationship between male and female students' self-employment skills

Variables	Gender	\bar{X}	N	r	Sig
self-employment skills	M	66.96	150	0.38	0.00
	F	63.78	150	0.32	

Data presented on Table 3 show r values of 0.38 and 0.32 for the male and female students' self-employment skills respectively. These values indicate that the level of relationship is in the positive direction between the self-employment skills of male and female students. It also shows male students' self-employment skills mean score (66.96) is higher than the female students self-employment skills mean score (63.78). Thus, male students have higher self-employment skills mean score. The result was further ascertained by the corresponding hypothesis.

Table 4: t-test of no significant relationship between self-employment skills of male and female students

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Std. Error	t-cal	t-cit	Decision
M	150	66.96	9.12	296	.56	5.03	1.96	Significant
F	150	63.78	8.38					

Data presented on Table 4 show that the calculated value of t is 5.03 which is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between self-employment skills of male and female students' is rejected. This means that there is

significant relationship between male and female students' self-employment skills.

Table 5: Relationship between self-employment skills with self-employment jobs of male and female students

Variables	N	R	Remark
Gender			
self-employment skills	150	0.33	moderate, positive relationship
M	150	0.30	
self-employment jobs	F		

Data presented on Table 5 show coefficient of relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of males as 0.33 while those of females as 0.30. This shows that self-employment skills correlate positively with self employment jobs of males as well as the females and the coefficient of relationship are moderate for both. The result was further ascertained by the corresponding hypothesis.

Table 6: t-test of no significant relationship between self-employment skills with self-employment jobs of male and female students

Variables	Gender	N	r	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Gender							
self-employment skills	M	150	0.33	148	7.42	1.96	Reject
self-employment jobs	F	150	0.30	148	6.98	1.96	

Data on table 6 show the t-cal (7.42) was greater than table t-crit (1.96). This shows that there is a significant relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of male students. Equally, t-cal (6.98) was greater than table t-crit (1.96). This also shows that there is a significant relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of female students. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative accepted.

Discussions

Relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of students'

Findings from the study revealed that self-employment skills correlate positively with self-employment jobs and the coefficient of relationship is high. Also, there is a significant relationship between self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of students.

The acquisition of the entrepreneurial skills through practical training and effective instruction equip the students to be self-employed and can help them start their own business after school and not relying on the government or the private sector to employ their service. Students feel happy to start up small scale industries or businesses to enable them earn a living and become good managers and decision makers. Constant and Zimmermann, (2014) noted that photographing equipment are too expensive to procure and unavailability of electricity also demoralize students from acquiring photographing skill. Also Nwekeaku, (2013) noted the need to acquire interpersonal skills because it is the most important skill students will acquire in their preparation for entrepreneurship, followed by information, financial management skill, time management skill and risk taking skill. This finding also agreed with the works of Adiele, (2010), Fristch, Kritikos and Pijnenburg, (2014), who reported that entrepreneurial skills prepare student for the future, equip them for self-employment and transform them as problem solvers, effective communicators, independent learners and creative thinkers. Skills in livestock keeping and skills in fishing also scored low. Also this finding is in consonance with the works of Scholman, Thurik and van Stel (2015), who stated that self-employment skill acquisition is an effective means of bringing rapid economic development in developing and underdeveloped countries. This implies that economic development requires not only an increase in per capita income, but also the transformation of a traditional and static society into a dynamic, complex and highly organized one. The scholars continued that self-employment skill acquisition yields sociological, psychological and economic satisfaction.

Relationship of male and female students' self-employment skills and self-employment jobs

The result revealed that male and female students self-employment skills is moderate and in the positive. There is significant relationship between male and female students' self-employment skills. Students' positive attitude and high commitment to entrepreneurship education are essential for raising the standard of living in the country. Male and female students who embrace entrepreneurship education will do well in all endeavours while students who reject it only express anxiety and did not perform well in their endeavours.

This finding is in line with the findings of Koellinger and Thurik (2012), who revealed that entrepreneurship education enhanced self-employment. The students depend more on their self-created jobs than on white collar jobs. The white collar jobs are scarce. Any student or youth who hopes strongly on the government job may remain idle for years or forever. The study also found out that the entrepreneurship education is geared towards empowering students and youths with requisite skills yielding gainful employment, job creation, higher productivity and improvement of life. The study also indicates that entrepreneurship education is a major agent for the needed change and adaption to challenges of the new millennium and sustainable development because it stimulates wealth creation, technological advancement, raise standard of living, reduction in poverty level, and promotes economic, political and social instability of the society.

Conclusion

The results revealed that there is significant relationship between: self-employment skills and self-employment jobs of students; male and female students' self-employment skills; self employment skills and self-employment jobs of male students as well as self employment skills and self-employment jobs of female students. It is therefore concluded that self-employment skills are very essential for acquisition of self employing jobs by students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Teachers should teach entrepreneurship education subjects that are very necessary for students' acquisition of self-employment skills.
2. Government should establish workshops and skill acquisition centres in secondary schools to avail the students with practical training;
3. Government should provide basic infrastructures to schools because teaching and learning entrepreneurship education require conducive environments;
4. Curriculum planners and school administrators should supervise entrepreneurship education and allocate more time to entrepreneurship education for students to acquire relevant and adequate skills.
5. Government, philanthropists and relevant financial institutions should give soft loan to young school leavers to enable them start their own business.

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