

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT NEEDS BY GRADUATES OF METALWORK TECHNOLOGY FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND SELF-RELIANCE IN CROSS RIVER STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the importance of entrepreneurship Development needs of Graduates of Metalwork Technology in the three educational institutions in Cross River State for Economic Empowerment and self-reliance. Entrepreneurship Development is a process of helping people get more knowledge about starting a business. Also help current business owners access their expertise and experience and learn fresh idea, methods and concept of their business. The study was guided by three specific purposes, three research questions and corresponding hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 130 self-employed graduates. The entire population was used for the study. A structured questionnaire with 16 items designed by the researcher was used for data collection. Percentage count was used to answer the research questions while Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis was employed to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that graduate of Metalwork Technology had entrepreneurship knowledge and skills that can influence job creation for Economic Empowerment and self-reliance. Based on the findings, it was concluded that entrepreneurship knowledge and skills acquisition had effect on entrepreneurship Development for Economic Empowerment and self-reliance among graduates of metal technology in Cross River State. It was recommended among others that; Graduates at all levels should be encouraged to acquire relevant entrepreneurship skills that would make them self-reliance and employer of labour.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship development, metalwork technology, economic empowerment and self-reliance

Introduction

A nation living standard is determined by the productivity of its economy which is measured by the value of goods and services produced. Most advance nations of the world are productive through entrepreneurship, that is, private driven economy, ability of individual to earn a living and make a profit by being productive and managing businesses and services. In Nigeria up to the eighties job opportunities were easier and readily available. The story is not the same today where graduates are much more than job opportunities, as result of economic downturn coupled with emergence of technology where particular skills and jobs are made obsolete and many graduates are finding it difficult to get jobs. The resultant effect of unavailability of jobs for the teaming graduates of our educational institutions, according to Atanwu (2010) is unemployment with its attendant increase in crime such as armed robbery, arson, theft, kidnapping, among others. The Nigeria policy on education made it clear on the need for functional, practical acquisition of skills and development of competencies as equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute to the development of the society (Elogbo & Okponganam, 2018,). The education system in the country has tilted towards

entrepreneurship and its conscious development provide solution for employment opportunities.

Entrepreneurship as viewed by Ogumbe (2014) is the acquisition of skills, ideas and managerial ability necessary for self-reliance. It is the willingness to seek investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities. Through entrepreneurship education graduates are exposed to a wide range of business skills and management competencies. To Hisrich and peters (2002) entrepreneurship is the ability to perceive and undertake business opportunities, taking advantage of scares resources utilization. It is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effect assuming the accompanying financial, psychic and social risk and reserving the resulting monetary reward and personal satisfaction and independence.

Entrepreneurship Development in the words of Zeeshan (2020) is a process of enhancing entrepreneurial skill and knowledge through structured training and institution building programme. It is aimed to enlarge the base of entrepreneurs to speed up the pace at which

new ventures are created. Entrepreneurship Development is a process of helping people get more knowledge about starting a firm. It also helps the current business owners assess their expertise and experiences and learn fresh ideas methods and concepts of their business (Blog, 2021). Entrepreneurship Development is the means of enhancing the knowledge and skill of entrepreneurs through several classroom coaching programmes and training. The main point of development process is to strengthen and increase the number of entrepreneurs. This entrepreneurship development process helps new firms or ventures get better in achieving their goals, improve business and the nation economy. Another essential factor of this process is to improve the capacity to manage, develop and build a business enterprise keeping in mind the risks related to it.

Zeeshan (2020) submitted that entrepreneurship development process is about supporting entrepreneurs to advance their skills with the help of training and coaching classes. It encourages them to make better judgment and take a sensible decision for all business activities. The below are steps illustrated by Zeeshan (2020) on how to build an effective entrepreneurship development programme for an entrepreneur to organize and launch the new venture.

Discover: Any new process begins with fresh ideas and objectives, wherein the entrepreneur recognizes and analyses business possibilities. Analyzing of opportunities is a risk task and entrepreneurs look out for inputs from other persons, including channel partners, employees, technical people, consumer etc. to reach an ideal business opportunity.

Evaluation: Evaluation of an opportunity can be done by asking several questions to oneself. For instance, questions like whether it is worth taking a chance and investing in ideas; will it attract consumers, what are the competitive advantages and the risk linked with it, are asked. A reasonable and sensible entrepreneur will also analyze his skills and whether it matches his entrepreneurial objectives or not.

Developing a plan: After identification of opportunity, an entrepreneur has to build a complete business plan. It is considered the most important step for new business as it sets a standard and the assessment criteria and see if a company is working towards the set goals.

Resources: the next step in the process of entrepreneurial development is resourcing. Here the entrepreneur recognized the source of finance, from where the human resources can be managed. In this

step, the entrepreneur also tries to find investors for his new business.

Managing the Company: After funding is now time to start the operation to accomplish the desired goals. Entrepreneurs will decide on the management structure that will be assigned to resolve the operational problems whenever it occurs.

Harvesting: The last step in this process is harvesting where an entrepreneur determines the future growth and development of the business. Here real-time development is compared with the projected growth and then the business Security.

An entrepreneur, according to Ruei (2021) is an individual who has an exclusive idea to initiate and establish a new venture and bring a change in the world. An entrepreneur is highly creative and innovative, takes a risk and endures the unpredictability of the business. An entrepreneur is an integral part of the operation who builds and deploys the other functions of the operation, such as labour, land and capital. Entrepreneur creates a market, is a market leader, takes high risk, focus on employees, customers and the general public satisfaction. Duke, (2020) posited five roles of entrepreneurship development.

- It accelerates economic growth by creating new products and services, they stimulate new employment which ultimately result in the acceleration of economic growth. Also public policy that encourages and supports entrepreneurship should be considered important for economic growth.
- Create new jobs: a large number of new jobs are created by entrepreneurship. Creates a huge amount of entry-level jobs that are very much important to turn unskilled jobholders, into skilled ones. It also prepares and provides experience workers for large industries.
- Entrepreneurship promotes innovations through the right practices of research and development. Entrepreneurs bring new innovations that open the door of new venture, market, products and technology.
- Entrepreneurship development has the characteristics of self-reliance. This goes with self-satisfaction where others will trust you only when you trust oneself. This is the most important trait of an entrepreneur, who should have the confidence to take one's own decisions.
- Risk taking ability: for those wanting to become entrepreneurs should know that business is all

about taking risks and experimenting, especially in this era of technology.

Wikipedia (2023) defined technology as the application of knowledge for enhancing practical goals in a reproducible way. Technology is the product of transferring scientific knowledge to practical use. With different forms of technology people try to find more efficient ways to do things and testing new ideas. Examples are communication technology, Electrical technology, Building technology, Energy technology, medical and transportation technology, mechanical technology, and more. Metalwork which is a subset of Mechanical technology used by people in a wide range of varieties in manufacturing mostly in metal fabrication.

Metalwork technology, according to Aluwong (2004) is the application of scientific knowledge in the activities of making objects out of metal in an artistic and skillful way. It is the totality of all the processes involved in the production of metal articles. Metalwork technology is a handsome curriculum that provides an in-depth course of study in the technological design process. Graduates of Metalwork Technology are exposed to the current technology, used industry and prepared for careers that offer them economic empowerment.

Economic empowerment as opined by Golla, (2011) is the ability to make and act on decisions that involve the control over allocation of financial resources. The important of economic empowerment is that it enables people who have been empowered to have direct effect on quality. It gives them the freedom to decide over their own lives bodies and future. It also affects peoples' political participation and influence in the society. When one is empowered there is livelihood that he would experience self-reliance.

Merian webster (2023), defined self-reliance as one's own efforts and abilities. It is one's own powers and resources rather than those of others. Self-reliance is the quality of depending on oneself for things instead of relying on others.

Osuala (2010) in Ogbiji (2020) listed the objectives of entrepreneurship development to include:

- To provide meaningful education for graduate which could make them self-reliant and subsequently encourage them to be independent.
- To provide graduates with the training and support necessary to help them establish businesses on their own
- To provide youths with training skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the Society.

- To provide graduates enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy.
- To stimulate industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed areas.
- To provide graduate enough training that will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities
- To provide small and medium size companies with the opportunity to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to management of the business centres.

Empowering graduates in the different field including metalwork technology towards wealth creation, employment generations, poverty reduction and value orientation is a foremost cardinal point for strategic macro-economic framework (National Planning Commission, 2005)

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship development, identified as a necessity for employment generation, economic empowerment, poverty reduction and self-reliance is bedeviled by a number of factors. One major issue is poor skill development among young graduates which is serious concern in the academic environment. The influx of graduates in the labour market now seeking white collar jobs has worsen situations. Many of these graduates do not have entrepreneurial skills needed to go into private ventures. If they had had that entrepreneurship development skill right in school, the narrative would have changed. Another impediment to entrepreneurship development, growth, empowerment and self-reliance is financial capital to establish businesses whereby graduates would become Self-employed, enjoy economic empowerment and also become in job creators. It is factual because the beginning and success of any business depends on finance where business owner would use to employ the services of business expert, expansion of the business, location and advertisement. The knowledge of entrepreneurship has not been acquired by most graduates which will give them the foresight on how to setup business ventures. The lack of knowledge on entrepreneurship render graduates inactive and less proactive. This has resulted in turning out half-baked graduates from our institutions who found it difficult to cope maximally in the labour market. It is in recognition of this defective state of affairs that this research work was designed to determine how entrepreneurship

development can enhance economic empowerment and self-reliance.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study is to determine how entrepreneurship development can enhance economic empowerment and self-reliance of graduates of Metalwork Technology. Specifically, the study is intended to:

1. Determine entrepreneurship knowledge acquired by graduates of Technology in Cross River State.
2. Ascertain the entrepreneurship skill acquired by graduates of Metalwork Technology in Cross River State.
3. Determine the level of accessibility to funds by graduates of Metalwork Technology to setup businesses.

Research Questions

1. What entrepreneurship Knowledge has been acquired by graduates of Metalwork Technology.
2. What entrepreneurship skills have been acquired by graduates of Metalwork Technology.
3. How funds are accessible to graduates of Metalwork Technology to setup businesses.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship knowledge and entrepreneurship development
2. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship skills and entrepreneurship development
3. Significant relationship does not exist between entrepreneurship fund acquired and entrepreneurship development.

Research Methodology

The descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. Survey is a generalized means of data collections through the use of interviews or questionnaire. Osuala (2004) opined that Survey designs answers questions pertaining to characteristics

of people, their belief, opinion, attitudes and behaviours. Cross River State is used as a case study to determine the efficacy of entrepreneurship development needs among graduates of Metalwork Technology for economic empowerment. Cross River State is located in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The state has three public education tertiary institutions offering technical education programmes namely University of Cross River State, Federal College of Education Obudu and Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

Population of the Study: The population comprises all graduates of the three tertiary institutions offering Metalwork Technology option from 2015/2016–2019/2020 academic years which is 130 graduates. There was no sampling, as the entire population was of manageable size.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled, "Entrepreneurship development need among graduates of Metalwork Technology questionnaire (EDNAGMTQ)". The questionnaire contained 16 items bearing response continuums of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was divided into two Sections, A and B. Section A was for personal data of the respondents. While Section B was to examine the variables under investigation.

Method of Data Collection: Data were collect using questionnaire which was distributed by the researcher and three research assistants, one from each institution was founded that the return rate was 100 percent.

Method of Data Analysis: Data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

Data analysis and presentation of results.

This section presents the analysis of the data gathered for the purpose of answering research questions and testing the null hypothesis formulated for the study. The results were presented in the following tables:

Research Question 1: Percentage analysis of entrepreneurship knowledge acquired by Graduates of metalwork Technology. The analysis is presented in table I below;

Table 1		N=130
Responses	N	%
Strongly Agree (SA)	80	61.5
Agree (A)	30	23.1
Disagree (D)	12	9.2
Strongly Disagree (SD)	8	6.2

Table 1: Shows the percentage score of Strongly Agree and Agree are 61.5% and 23.1 % respectively; Disagree 9.2 and Strongly Agree 6.2 %. The high percentage rate indicates that entrepreneurship Knowledge had already been acquired by graduates of metalwork technology.

Responses	N	%
Strongly Agree (SA)	75	57.7
Agree (A)	40	38.8
Disagree (D)	10	9.7
Strongly Disagree (SD)	5	3.8

The Table above shows the percentage score of strongly Agree 57.7% and Agree 30.8% whereas Disagree and Strongly agree are 7.7% and 3.8% respectively. The result shows that graduates of Metalwork Technology have acquired entrepreneurship

Responses	N	%
Strongly Agree (SA)	45	34.6
Agree (A)	40	30.8
Disagree (D)	30	23.1
Strongly Disagree (SD)	15	11.5

The Table3 above shows that Strongly Agree and Agree have the percentages scores of 34.6 % and 30.8 % respectively whereas Disagree and Strongly Agree are 23.1 and 11.5 respectively. The result reveals that graduates of metalwork Technology can acquired fund for entrepreneurship development.

Table 4: Pearson Product moment Correlation analysis of significant relationship between entrepreneurship knowledge and entrepreneurship development.

Variables	N	X	SD	r-cal	SIG
entrepreneurship knowledge	130	24.83	8.60	3.86	0.002
Entrepreneurship development.	130	23.97	7.95		

Significant at 0.05, df = 498, Critical r-value = 1.965.

The result of the analysis presented in the table 4 above shows that calculated r-value of 3.86 is greater than the critical r-value of 1.965 at 0.05 alpha level with 498 degree of freedom. With this result, it is concluded that there is significant relationship between entrepreneurship knowledge and entrepreneurship

Research Question 2: Percentage analysis of entrepreneurship skills acquired by graduates of Metalwork Technology. The analysis was shown in table two below;

skills with the high percentage, resulting from strongly Agree and Agree.

Research Question 3: Percentage analysis of entrepreneurship fund acquired by graduates of Metalwork Technology. The analysis was presented in table three below;

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurship Knowledge and Entrepreneurship Development. Statistical fool used in testing the Hypothesis was Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient analysis. The result of analysis was presented in table 4 below;

development. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: The hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship skill and entrepreneurship development. The result of the analysis was presented in table 5 below.

Table 5: Pearson Product moment correlation analysis of significant relationship between entrepreneurship skills and entrepreneurship development (N=130)

Variables	N	X	SD	r-cal	Sig
entrepreneurship knowledge	130	23.74	7.68	3.88	0.000
entrepreneurship development.	130	26.03	9.11		

Significant at 0.05, df = 98, critical r – value = 1.865

The result of the analysis presented in table 5 shows that the calculated r-value of 3.88 is greater than the critical r-value of 1.865 at 0.05 with degree of freedom 98. Since the calculated r-value is higher than the critical r – value, it means that there is significant relationship between entrepreneurship skill and entrepreneurship

development. The stated null hypothesis above was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: Significant relationship does not exist between entrepreneurship fund acquired and entrepreneurship development. The result of the analysis was presented in table 6 below

Table 6: Pearson Product moment correlation analysis of significant relationship between entrepreneurship fund and entrepreneurship development (N = 130)

Variables	N	X	SD	r-cal	Sig
entrepreneurship knowledge	130	21.23	8.60	4.02	0.000
entrepreneurship development.	130	20.17	5.35		

Significant at 0.05, df=18, critical r-value = 1.642

The result of the analysis presented in table 6 revealed that the calculated r-value of 4.02 is greater than the critical r-value of 1.642 at 0.05 alpha level with degree of freedom 18. With this result, it was concluded that significant relationship exists between entrepreneurship fund acquired and entrepreneurship development. The null hypothesis which states that significant relationships does not exist between entrepreneurship fund acquired and entrepreneurship development was not accepted.

Metalwork Technology. The finding on the entrepreneurship skills acquired was shown in the answer to research question two where 75 respondents representing 57.7 % accepted having acquired entrepreneurship skills. In consonance with the finding of Ulaka and Ejinkonye (2010) on entrepreneurial education training for job creation, argued that when youths acquired the necessary skills and knowledge through entrepreneurship, the greater chance of using the skills to create something new with value.

Discussion of the Findings

The result of research question one shows that a greater percentage of 61.5% of Metalwork Technology graduates of the three tertiary education institutions in Cross River State have entrepreneurship Knowledge for entrepreneurship development. The finding on hypothesis one was in agreement with significant relationship exist between entrepreneurship knowledge and entrepreneurship development. This is in line with the view of Hayes (2021) finding on entrepreneurship development where it was stated that entrepreneurship development is a process of helping people get more knowledge about starting a business. He went further to say, entrepreneurship development is the means of enhancing the knowledge of entrepreneurs through class room coaching.

The finding on hypothesis 3 shows that significant relationship exists between entrepreneurship fund acquired and entrepreneurship development for economic empowerment by graduates of Metalwork Technology in the three educational institutions in Cross River State. There was also funding of entrepreneurship development through personal investment, Government assistance and loans from commercial banks as revealed in the answer to research question 3 where 45 respondents representing 34.6 % were in Support of entrepreneurship fund can be accessed for entrepreneurship development.

In agreement with this finding, Akeke and Opone (2018) maintained that availability of loans from commercial banks, where entrepreneurs are able to borrow when needed can help in enhancing entrepreneurship development.

The finding on hypothesis two indicates that there was significant relationship between entrepreneurship skills and entrepreneurship development and Self-reliance by graduates of

Conclusion

This study examines the entrepreneurship development needs by graduates of Metalwork

Technology for economic empowerment and self-reliance in Cross River State. Based on the research findings, it was concluded that entrepreneurship knowledge and skill acquisition had effect on entrepreneurship development for economic empowerment and self-reliance among graduates of Metalwork Technology in Cross River State. It is pertinent to state here that improved sustainable economic development hinges on encouraging the youths to engage in entrepreneurship skill acquisition programmes irrespective of academic qualification in order to create jobs for themselves and other citizens of the county.

Recommendations

1. Youths should be encouraged to acquire entrepreneurship Knowledge that would significantly help them to go into business ventures.
2. Graduates of all Levels should be encouraged to acquire relevant entrepreneurship skills that would make them self-reliance and employers of labour
3. Government at all levels should create intervention to entrepreneurs by giving them financial assistance to ensure stability in their businesses

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