

ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS` PREFERENCE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL
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Abstract

The study assessed students' preference on entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-employment. The study was guided by one research objective and carried out in the faculty of Education, Bauchi State University Gadau. A total of 370 undergraduate students were sampled for this study using systematic random sampling techniques. The instrument used for collecting data was questionnaire. The research instrument was validated by three experts and pilot tested using 30 undergraduate students. A correlation co-efficient of 0.82 was obtained and considered high to judge the validity and reliability of the research tool. The simple percentage and frequency were used to analyse the data. The results of the study revealed that, acquisition of entrepreneurial skills such as computer literacy, phone repairs, tailoring design, aluminium works among others will lead to reduction of un-employment, poverty, crime rate and violence in the society. The study recommended that government should provide numerous skills acquisition centres in the state. It was also recommended that government should give soft loans to undergraduate students that acquired skills to enable them be self-employed.

Keywords: Undergraduate, Entrepreneurial Skills, Acquisition, Self-employment, Youth

Introduction:

The growing rate of unemployment in both developed and developing nations has become a serious cause for concerns. It is because of this social problem that has been besetting the global economy, the Federal government of Nigeria introduced entrepreneurship education to enable Nigerian students of higher institutions to acquire the appropriate skills which will make them self-sufficient even after their graduation (FRN 2013). Entrepreneurial skill as an educational programme has been designed mainly to train students of high school in different

vocations which will prepare them to be self-reliance after graduation from schools. Entrepreneurial skill acquisition always seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. It also focuses on the development of skills or attributes that enable the realization of opportunities. Entrepreneurship is however, believed to have focussed on the specific context of setting up a venture and becoming self-employed (Lackeus, 2015)..

Ferreira (2022) observed entrepreneurship as the act of creating a business while taking all the risks with the expectation at long run will gain profit. The author further explained that entrepreneurship is what people do to take their career in to their hands and lead it in the directions they want. Entrepreneurship is about building a life on your own terms. It is in recognition of this, the Federal government of Nigeria initiated many schemes mainly to reduce the rate of unemployment in the country. According to Odia and Odia (2013) entrepreneurial skills acquisition can be obtained through various avenues such as: attending entrepreneurial training classes, development programmes, seminars, workshops, etc. But over the years scholars, and some facilitators of entrepreneurial skill acquisition have excessively streamlined this skill to be a common activity and a basic skill that any individual interested in it can be given training without having the full knowledge. It is noted whether or not such a skill has been identified as part of a tiny, cottage, small, medium or large scale strategic industry within the Nigerian economy. Entrepreneurial skills acquisition according to Mbanefo and Ebola (ND) is business and skills which an individual acquires personally to function effectively in business as an entrepreneur and self-reliant. The skills comprise of effective utilization of ideas, information, and facts that helps a learner develop competencies, services, or become a productive employee of an organization. Sule (2016) observed that the high rate of unemployment in Pakistan is not unconnected with a low level of entrepreneurial development in its economy. Nigeria therefore should endeavour to develop entrepreneurship so as to fix unemployment, economic stagnation, wasting of resources to mention but a few.

Coker, Jingis and Sule (2021) observed that, 60% of the unemployed in Africa are young people. According to the African Development Bank (2016) the biggest predicament affecting African Development is the high rate of unemployment. Moreso, the United Nations in 2018, reported that, young people are experiencing incredible and life-threatening risks in the process of accessing rights, including quality of education and employment. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 2017) observed that, youth in the rural areas experience difficulties in accessing employment. Nigeria has retrogressed to become one of the 25 poorest countries at the threshold of the twenty-first century and remains the only member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) categorized among the world's poorest twenty countries (Oviawe, 2010). Most recently, Minister of Labour and Employment, Sen. Chris Ngige, said unemployment rate could reach 33.5% by 2020 (Prime Times, 2019). He said this while declaring open a two-day workshop on "Breaking the Resilience of High

Unemployment Rate in the Country.” The National Bureau of Statistics (2018) stated that the rate of unemployment among economically active Nigerians between the youthful ages of 15 and 24 was as high as 37.7 % in 2011 while among those within the age bracket of 25 and 44 years was 22.4 %. For age brackets of 45 and 59, the rate stood at 18.0 % while it was 21.4 % among those within the age bracket of 60 and 64. The translation of this is that Nigerians between the youthful ages of 15 and 24 are those mostly affected by unemployment and are, as such, more vulnerable to its attendant consequences. This finding is collaborated by the Cabel news (2021) which cited World Bank that, unemployment rate in Nigeria rose from 6.4% in 2010 to 33.3% at the end of 2020. The Bank says the significant increase affected Nigerian youth in their quest to find gainful employment opportunities.

Similarly, National Bureau of Statistics (2020) reported that, Nigerian`s unemployment rate raised to 33.3% in the fourth quarter of 2020 from 27.1% recorded in the second quarter of same year. In recent report submitted by NBS which highlighted that, 23.18 million people in Nigeria either did not or worked for less than 20 hours per week turning them unemployed during the fourth quarter of 2020. This is supported by StatiSense, a data company which indicated that with 33.7%, Nigeria ranked top among the list of countries with highest unemployment rate in the whole world. The unemployment rate in Nigeria saw no significant differences in 2020 in comparison to previous years. Nevertheless, 2020 still remains a peak in the unemployment rate in Nigeria with 33.7%.

Self-employment is a state or condition of working for oneself. People who are determined to work for themselves can earn incomes from a trade or profession or businesses which they establish, manage and operate. This state will enable the self-employed person to be in a better position of creating jobs for others. As the demand for white collar job is increasingly growing even where none exists, there is therefore need to find ways of addressing this social problem and it is often seen, Nigeria should copy from its sister developing countries that spur their students of high schools to learn some trades so that they become self-employed. Dawaki (2019) also observes that in Bauchi state Nigeria, there are about 75 thousand students of high schools pursuing different programmes and over 85% of these populations lack any skills and thus can only graduate joining the army of unemployed graduates in the labour market. It is important to note that the figures above may not have captured in totality the youth unemployment situation in Nigeria, however, they are pointing to the fact that the phenomenon is a very critical issue with far-reaching implications for stability of democracy, good governance and socio-economic development. The high rate of unemployment among youth has indeed contributed to insecurity, banditry, insurgency, violence, poverty among others in Nigeria. Hence, this sets the contemporary contexts and provided the impetus for this study.

Objective of the Study:

- The study was guided by this objective:
- ✓ To assess the undergraduate students` preference of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Self-Employment.

Literature Review

Numerous studies were conducted on preference of entrepreneurial skills acquisition across the globe. For instance, a study was carried out by Purusottama (2020) on preference of entrepreneurial skills acquisition among University students. The objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of EEP towards entrepreneurial skills acquisition in Indonesia. Finding of the study revealed that EEP is indeed effective and in line with the students entrepreneurial preference. A post-school preference of entrepreneurship or paid job of undergraduate in Nigerian Universities was carried out by Adebakin and Adelabu in the year 2020. The objective of the study was to assess the post-school entrepreneurship preference of undergraduate. The study employed survey design sampling 12,890 male and 13,966 female students to participate in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select three universities and 1500 final year students were sampled using criterion purposive sampling techniques. Questionnaire was employed as data collection instrument. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer research question s and to calculate hypothesis. Findings of the study revealed that, most of the participants preferred paid employment more than other skills. The study further indicated a significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills acquisition and measures of undergraduates' job preference. It was finally recommended in the study that, contents of entrepreneur be incorporated in every field of endeavour to shape the students job preference after graduation.

Another study on entrepreneurial skills and job preference among agriculture students was conducted by Alexandar, coker and Sule (2019).The study indicated that, 69% of undergraduate students that participated in the study choose crop production, livestock and fishery as their most preferred entrepreneurial skills. Other preferred skills were ICT, marketing and culinary skills. A study on analysis of entrepreneurial skills and job preference among undergraduate students of agriculture was conducted by Coker, Jirgi and Sule in 2021 in University of agriculture, Minna. The study used mixed analytical tools comparing descriptive analyses. It was recommended in the study that, regular sensitization at the pre-tertiary levels should be made on the opportunities entrepreneurial skills acquisition.

Nahar, Sarma and Thakur (2022) carried out a study on preference for entrepreneurial skills acquisition. The objectives of the study were to assess certain personal cultural aspects which may lead to preference for entrepreneurial skills acquisition among millennial generation. Questionnaire was adopted in collecting data from the respondent of the study. The results of the study indicated that, there are certain that determines preference of entrepreneurial skills acquisition. A study on effects of career decision on entrepreneurial intention levels of University students studying sports science in Turkey was carried out by Yildiz in 2018. The objective of the study was to test the potentials effects of career preference on entrepreneurial intentions. A sample of 340 University students studying sports science was randomly taken. The study's finding indicated that there is significant effect of conscious career preference on entrepreneurial prosperity. Iwu, Muresherwa, Nehu

and Eriesies-Eke (2020) carried out a study on preference of University students on entrepreneurship skills acquisition in South Africa. Data was collected using cross-sectional manner from a non-probability sample comprising 220 students drawn from a university. The study used descriptive statistics to analyse the data. Finding of the study revealed that, most of the students have limited knowledge of entrepreneurship.

Methodology

This is a descriptive survey study. According to Daramola (2006) descriptive survey is a systematic attempt to describe the characteristics of a given population or areas of interest factually. The design is suitable because it allows researchers to translate the findings concerning the variables under study in different statistical tools that will give a simple and clear understanding (Daramola, 2006). Similarly descriptive survey design is regarded as best method of assessing opinions, thoughts and feelings of the respondents Orhodo (2005). A total of three hundred and seventy undergraduate students out of three thousand seven hundred and forty students in the Faculty of Education, Bauchi State University Gadau were sampled for this study using simple random sampling techniques. Simple random sampling was used to arrive at the sample for participants in the study. The copies of the questionnaires were used in this study in order to free the response from bias and did not have time constraints compared to interview because the respondents can fill at their own time (Nachiam & Nachiams, 1990). This is because the respondents can fill them at their own time. The instrument was given to 3 experts from the Faculty of Education to validate it. They made corrections and offered suggestions which were used to make modifications in the questionnaires. The research instrument was Pilot tested in different institution to established the validity and reliability of the tool where the unclear instructions, insufficient writing space, vague questions and wrong numbering were revealed and corrected, thus improving the questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated through application of content validity. According to Gay (1981), content validity is a matter of judgment by the researcher and professionals. Test-retest reliability was adopted to ensure the reliability of the instrument. In order to avoid influence of familiarity of the research instrument, an interval of two weeks was given before the administration of the retest. Copies of the questionnaires were administered to respondents. The answered copies of the questionnaires were scored manually. The same questionnaires were re-administered to same respondents after a period of two weeks. The questionnaires responses were scored manually. A comparison between answers obtained was made. Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula for test-retest was used to compute the correlation coefficient in order to establish whether the content of the questionnaire was consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument is administered. A correlation coefficient of 0.82 was obtained and considered high enough to judge the reliability of the instrument. The simple percentage and frequency were used to analyse the data.

Results

Table I: Undergraduate Students` Preference of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Self-Employment.

Data collected were computer analysed, using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer programme which allowed for use of descriptive analysis in the form of frequency counts and percentages to describe sample sizes and quantifiable factors.

Items	Preferred		No Preferred	
	f	%	f	%
Computer literacy	359	(97.3%)	11	(2.7%)
Barbing/Hair dressing	136	(36.76%)	234	(63.24)
Catering	80	(21.62%)	290	(78.38%)
Events Decoration	48	(12.97%)	322	(87.3%)
Photography	150	(40.54%)	220	(59.46%)
Phone repairs	298	(80.54%)	72	(19.46%)
Tailoring design	218	(58.91%)	152	(41.09%)
Aluminium works	280	(75.68%)	90	(24.32%)

Source: Respondents views: 2022

The results in table 1, revealed that, majority of students that participated in the study preferred computer literacy for self-employment with 97.3% as against 2.7% of students that did not prefer computer literacy. This could be attributed to the fact that, most people in the society turn to be computer literate. The study further revealed that most of the students (80.54%) preferred phone repairs as their prefer skill acquisition after graduating from the university with only 19.46% who did not chose to work as phone repairers. The result of this study reveals that, 75.68% of the students that participated in this study preferred aluminium works as skill to be acquired after graduating from the university. Only 24.32% of the students did not prefer aluminium works. Another trade which was most preferred by the students was tailoring design. Table I reveals that, out of 370 students that participated in the study, 58.91% preferred tailoring design as against 41.9% who did not. Results of the study also indicates that, photography 40.54%, barbing saloon and hair dressing, 36.76%, as well as Catering, 21.62% were preferred by minority of the students. This entails that, computer literacy; phone repairs, aluminium works and tailoring design were the most preferred entrepreneur skills for self-employment among undergraduate students of Bauchi state university Gadau. This could be associated to the fact that, the skills can make them become self-reliant and reduce unemployment rate in the society. This result concur with a study carried out by Dawaki (2019) who reported that if youth are engaged in entrepreneur skill acquisition, the rate of unemployment,

poverty, crime, violence and other social vices will be drastically reduced. This is also supported a study by Sule, Bello and Dawaki (2020) who opined that entrepreneur skills acquisition remains the only business opportunities in Nigeria which students should acquire as these would not only make them self-employed but help greatly in developing the nation's micro economy.

Conclusion

The study revealed that, entrepreneurial skills acquisition cannot only serve as a tool for reducing the high rate of un-employment among the undergraduate but will be used as an avenue to improve nation`s economy. Thus, computer literacy, barbing/hair dressing, catering, decoration, photography, phone repairing, tailoring design, aluminium works were preferred by majority of undergraduate students of Bauchi state university as entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.

Recommendations

- Based on the findings above, the study therefore, recommended that:
- That government should provide numerous skills acquisition centers in the state to enable teaming undergraduate students to participate in one skill or the other.
- It was also recommended that government should give soft loans to undergraduate students that acquired skills to enable them be self-reliant.

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