

Determinants of Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition among Agricultural Students in Nigeria Universities in Ogun State

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition among agricultural students in Nigeria Universities has been of major concern due to explosion rate of unemployment in the country. In the study that investigated the determinants of the entrepreneurial skills acquisition among agricultural students in universities located in Ogun State, 40 students were purposefully selected University of Agriculture, Tai Solarin University of Education and Olabisi Onabanjo University making a total of 120 students as the study sample. The findings revealed that majority of the students were in the age grade of 21 – 24 years (63.1%), male (71.7%), Christian (52.5%) and from Department of Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, Home and Hotel Management Department, Department of Animal Production, Department of Crop production Department of Soil Science and Farm Mechanization and Department of Renewable Resources. Majority of the respondents posited that they had acquired fish, pig, crop, poultry rabbit, cattle, snail and grass-cutter productions. Also, the students posited that they have leadership skill, self confidence, ability to organize resources to achieve goals, innovate and speculate, have need for achievement and success in skill acquired and lastly possess strong desire for responsibility and independence respectively. Also 70.8% of the respondents agreed that the level of the skill acquired determined their efficiency as entrepreneur. The study therefore recommended that economic policy and programs that are geared towards self reliance for individuals such as Open Apprenticeship Scheme, Graduate Employment Programs etc and other policies that encourage or make it easy for entrepreneurs to acquire the needed funds e.g.; Peoples Bank of Nigeria, Funds for Small-Scale Industries (FUSSI), co-operative societies etc must be established throughout the nation and also empowered by the Government to assist entrepreneurs in Nigeria especially graduates from Universities.

Keywords: Entrepreneur, Skill acquisition, Agriculture, Students, Universities

Introduction

Entrepreneurs have many of the same character traits as leaders, similar to the early great man theories of leadership; however trait-based theories of entrepreneurship are increasingly being called into question. Entrepreneurs are often contrasted with managers and administrators who are said to be more methodical and less prone to risk-taking. Such person-centric models of entrepreneurship have shown to be of questionable validity, not least as many real-life entrepreneurs operate in teams rather than as single individuals. Successful enterprising does not just come. It is the result of strong mental effort of thinking clearly, confidently, courageously and proactively. Entrepreneurs are people who won the battle of mind and have made right thinking away of life. Entrepreneur is an important figure in capitalist. A key element in capitalism is the undertaking of activities in the expectation that it will yield gain in the future. Because the future is unknown, the risk of loss or gain abound. This assumption of risk is a special activities of the entrepreneur (Schumpeter, 1950; Pinchot, 1985; Awe, 2005).

Every successful entrepreneur brings about benefits not only for himself/ herself but for the municipality, region or country as a whole. The benefits derivable from entrepreneurial activities include enormous personal financial gain, self-employment, offering more job satisfaction and flexibility of the work force, employment for others, often in better jobs, development of more industries, especially in rural areas or regions disadvantaged by economic changes, for example due to globalisation effects, encouragement of the processing of local materials into finished goods for domestic consumption as well as for export, income generation and increased economic growth, healthy competition thus encourages higher quality products, more goods and services availability, development of new markets, promotion of the use of modern technology in small-scale manufacturing to enhance higher productivity, encouragement of more researches/ studies and development of modern machines and equipment for domestic consumption, development of entrepreneurial qualities and attitudes among potential entrepreneurs to bring about significant changes in the rural areas, freedom from the dependency on the jobs offered by others, the ability to have great accomplishments, reduction of the informal economy and emigration of talent may be stopped by a better domestic entrepreneurship climate (Zoltan and Audretsch, 2003; Bird, 1992).

The history of entrepreneurship development cannot be discussed without considering the evolution of small and medium scale industrialist in Nigeria, the development of small scale industries in Nigeria began in 1946 when the seasonal paper No 24 of 1945 was issued A Ten year of development and welfare for Nigeria in

1946 was presented to the legislative council on 18th December 1945 by the appointed committee of development plan (Awe, 2005).

Prior and up to 1960's entrepreneurship business became popular among the mercantilist who own, manage and run business themselves. Many people rush to small scale business which they are sure of managing and directing. The economy that time is accommodative i.e. business can be managed by only one person. According to Jhingan (2000), the pace for economic development of indigenous creation of both small scale and large scale firm came into existence when government begins to see industrialization as the only means through which a nation can be developed. Individual as an administrator were given conducive environment to establish more industries (Kirzner, 1997). In early 70's government owned business continued to multiply with huge profit realized from it as government companies increases, private establishment were given free hand to operate depending on their level of financial backup. This is prominent around middle 70's when the increment in salary as a result of oil boom, this money was judiciously used by many Nigerians for the establishment of small scale industries.

In 1980's, the concept of entrepreneur and their functions became popular as a result of the state of unemployment in Nigeria; people were encourage to organize businesses that would accommodate more of the employed youth; This prominent predicament in the country prompted the government to recognize the impact of entrepreneur in developing countries. Unlike in Nigeria, various predicaments occur to entrepreneurship because business and companies are sometimes controlled by only one person. The reason for the entrepreneurship organization in Nigeria is the style of economy that paves for both capitalist and mixed system (Ale 2001; Gold, 2005).

Over the years, entrepreneur had undergo many changes from one refurbishment to another transformation, change from one hands of economists to another. The mixed economists give room for intervention of both government and private individuals. Therefore, in any advanced country that operates capitalist economy; private entrepreneurs have played a crucial role in economic development, even for a country to attain a stage of development, entrepreneur should be given a free hand with the government assistance. The genesis of entrepreneurship arises as a result of effort of people to be more skillful in their business. The practice of entrepreneur brings out potential people and enable them to acquire skill in trading and other businesses and improve characteristics (Stevenson and Jarillo, 1990; Shane, 2003).

Anyakoha (1997) referred to these characteristics as "occupational survival skills" which relates to problems solving, human relations, decision-making, ability to take reasonable risk, self confidence, hard work, ability to set goals, innovative and effective communication. Also, the advent of improved technology that paved the way for entrepreneur to increase its ability to spread according to its usefulness in economic development is of great value that cannot be under estimated in any developing economy. Hence the need to investigate problems associated with entrepreneurial skills acquisition among Nigerian youths.

In Nigeria, there is high rate of unemployment in the country which is due to lack of job opportunities in the country on the part of the government and private entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, on the part of the graduate produced majority of which are being qualified has a half back graduate due to poor curriculum in the university level. It is often seen that most of what is being taught in the school are theoretical without an opportunities for practical application while in school and also there has not be more emphasis on entrepreneur acquisition at this level.

Recently, some state government has taken a step in order to reduce this incompetence of graduate in entrepreneur skill acquisition. A very good example is that of Ogun State government which has put in place some agency which includes; OGE GEP, OSAMCA, FADAMA etc, in order to complement the university graduate in the area of being acquire the necessary skill to be self employed by providing low interest rate credit to agricultural and non-agricultural entrepreneur, satisfy the loan demands of genuine entrepreneurs in need of fund, enhance income level of entrepreneurs and farmers and make farming more attractive and generation of employment, reduce poverty and rural-urban migration resulting from unemployment and underdevelopment (Afolabi, 2007). Despite all this attempts, changes are yet to be seen, instead of more jobs being created, the results is more graduates without jobs. The question then is " are the university students exposed to entrepreneurial skill acquisition? If yes why the surplus labour without work to do" this formed the basis for this study to investigate the entrepreneurial skill acquisition among agricultural students in Nigeria Universities in Ogun State.

Study Objectives

The study therefore assessed the determinants of entrepreneurial skill acquisition among agricultural students in Nigeria Universities in Ogun State. specifically, the study identified the socio-economic characteristics of the selected students, ascertained the entrepreneurial skill acquire in the course of their studies in the universities selected, determined the extent to which the students are expose to entrepreneurial skill acquisition, determined the perception about the skills provided to them as given in relation to becoming an entrepreneur and identify

factors hindering their choice of becoming an entrepreneur to the choosing career.

Methodology

Area of the Study

Ogun state otherwise known as gateway state was located in the south west of Nigeria and was created on February 3rd 1976. The state lies within the tropics. It is bounded to the west by Benin Republic, to the south by Lagos State and Atlantic Ocean, to the East by Ondo State, and to the North by Oyo and Osun State. The land area was 16,409-26 square kilometers while, population projected estimation was 3,214,161 people. The people of Ogun State belong to Yoruba Ethnic group of south west Nigeria and also live in the parts of Benin Republic and Togo, with substantial Diaspora elements in Brazil, Cuba and Sierra Leone. The sub groups are mainly the Egba, Yewa, Awori, Egun, Ijebu, Remo, Ikale and others.

The major language in Ogun State is Yoruba and English (official language) and several dialects of the sub groups. In terms of climatic condition tropical pattern with raining season started from March and ending in November to be followed by dry season. The natural resources involve fertile soil suitable for Agriculture with savanna belt in North western part suitable for cattle rearing.

The state consists of twenty (20) local government councils with three public Universities namely;

- 1 University of Agriculture, Abeokuta;
- 2 Olabisi Onabanjo University, College of Agricultural Sciences, Ayetoro.
- 3 Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode.

Population of the Study

The population of the study will be made of Agricultural students in selected Universities in Ogun State.

Sampling Techniques and Sampling Size

The sample of the study was drawn from the three higher institutions in Ogun State. These are University of Agriculture, Abeokuta; Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu Ode and Olabisi Onabanjo University, Yewa Campus, Ayetoro. From each of the institutions, 40 students were purposefully selected making a total of 120 students using simple random technique (see Table 1). Data obtained from the selected students with the use of a well structured questionnaire were subjected to frequency, means and chi-square analysis for the purpose of the study.

Measurement of Variables

The level of entrepreneurial and skill acquisition by the students was measured on five cardinal points as follows:

- ❖ **Self confidence:** - Respondents were asked about the degree of boldness or outcome in setting the business.
- ❖ **Task-result oriented:-** Respondents were asked about the outcome of business based on input and output relationship
- ❖ **Leadership:-** Respondents were asked on the level of his acquaintance with the managerial function to others
- ❖ **Originality:-** Respondents were asked about his ability to bring about innovation or new ideas
- ❖ **Future-oriented:** - Respondents were asked about his future obligation or task so as to achieve his future returns.

Result and Discussion

Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Selected Students

Table 2 revealed the frequency distribution of some selected socio-economic characteristics of students in the study area. The table shows that 6.7 percent of respondents were up to 20 years while 28.4 percent of the students were between 21-22 years, 36.7 percent of the students falls between 23-24 years of age and 28.3 percent of students were above 24 years of Age. Also, it was shown that most of the students were male with 71.7 percent and 28.3 were female.

Furthermore, the table indicates that 52.5 percent of the students were Christians while 47.5 were Muslims. Which means that, majority of respondents were Muslims. The table indicated that 8.3 percent of the students were in the Department of Agricultural Economics, 16.7 percent were in Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, 8.3 percent were in Home and Hotel Management Department, 16.7 percent were in Department of Animal Production, 20.8 percent were in Department of Crop production and 12.5 percent were in Department of Soil Science and Farm Mechanization and 16.7 percent in Department of Renewable Resources. This indicates that the students were studying vocational-based programmes in their different Universities. Hence they are expected to be employer of labour and not seeker of labour.

Another important characteristic considered is the level of the students in the Departments. The table

revealed that, 3.3 percent of the students are in 100 levels, 40.8 percent of the students are in 200 levels, 44.2 percent falls in 300 levels while only 8 percent of students were in 500 levels.

Majority of the respondents were single with 99.2 percent while only 8 percent of the respondents were married.

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition and relevancy

The table 3 above shows various entrepreneurial skills acquired by the respondents. On the part of fish production techniques 100.0 percent of the respondents opined that they were exposed to fish production techniques, while 31.7 percent of the respondents agreed that the techniques have relevant while 68.3percent were of the opinion that they are very relevant techniques. Hence, it is expected that the students should be able to put to use fish production techniques acquired to improve and meet the nations demand for fish. Also, 96.7 percent of the respondents were exposed to pig production techniques, however, 60.0 percent of the students posited that the techniques were relevant to those that may want to embark on it as a business. Furthermore, the table indicated that all the students (100.0%) were exposed to various techniques in crop production and were of the opinion that the techniques were very relevant. In the same vein, 98.3 percent of the students posited that they acquired poultry production techniques which 62.5 percent believed to be very relevant to their needs. For skills in rabbit, cattle, snail and grass-cutter production, majority (74.2%, 74.2%, 88.3% and 93.3%) of the students were exposed and believed to be relevant.

Determinants of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition

Table 4 above represents the responses of the respondents on the determinant of skills acquired. Majority of the students strongly agreed that they have leadership skill (62.5%) and self confident in the skills acquired (70.8%). Also 60.0 percent, 59.2 percent, 71.7 percent and 57.5 percent of the students strongly agreed that they have ability to organize resources to achieve goals, innovate and speculate, have need for achievement and success in skill acquired and lastly possess strong desire for responsibility and independence respectively.

Also the respondents agreed that; they are goal oriented (80.0%) and task oriented (90.8%). About 53.3% agreed that they have capacity to adapt to changing condition while 75.0 percent of respondents agreed that they profit oriented. However, 1.7 percent of the respondent disagree that they capacity to adapt to changing condition and 2.5% have ability to innovate and speculate and 1.7% of the respondents disagreed that they have ability to risk while 8% disagreed that, they posses strong desire for responsibility and independence.

Students' Perception of the Entrepreneurial Skills they have Acquired

Table 5 shows the responses of the students on their perception of skills they acquired. The table indicates a strong and positive perception about the entrepreneurial skills they were made to posses in the university. It shows that the students strongly agreed that skills acquired from entrepreneurial training has help them to posses necessary ability to establish on their own (100.0%), have good relationship with the skill acquired to future problem (99.2%), acquired the basic knowledge to become an entrepreneurial in agricultural alone (57.5%), can fully participate in entrepreneurial activities with out fear of being able to meet up with future challenges (100.0%), the level of the skills acquired determined efficiency in entrepreneur (100.0%), have deep perception to solve entrepreneurial problem in another aspect apart from agriculture (90.0%), can gather experiences through industrial training in government establishment farm (95.0%), can gather enough capital through the experiences gained in an entrepreneurial skill to establish business (97.5%), have theoretical experiences of entrepreneurial job through lectures (100.0%) and can handle business effectively (100.0%).

Conclusions

It is therefore recommended that economic policy and programs that are geared towards self reliance for individuals such as Open Apprenticeship Scheme, Graduate Employment Programs etc and other policies that encourage or make it easy for entrepreneurs to acquire the needed funds e.g.; Peoples Bank of Nigeria, Funds for Small-Scale Industries (FUSSI), co-operative societies etc must be established throughout the nation and also empowered by the Government to assist entrepreneurs in Nigeria especially graduates from Universities.

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TABLE 1: Summary of Sampling Procedure and Sample size

University	Department	No of respondent
TASUED	Crop Production	10
	Animal Production	10
	Agric extension	10
OOU	Animal production	10
	Home and Hotel Magt	10
	Crop production	10
	Agric economics	10
	Soil Science and Farm mechanization	10
	Renewable Resource	10
UNAAB	Crop Production	10
	Agric ext. and rural development	10
	Soil science and farm mechanization	10

TABLE 2: Distribution of the Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Selected Students (n = 120)

Socio-economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Up to 20 years	8	6.7
21-22years	34	28.4
23-24 years	44	36.6
Above 24 years	34	28.3
Sex		
Male	86	71.7
Female	34	28.3
Religion		
Christianity	63	52.5
Islam	57	47.5
Department		
AEC	10	8.3
AXR	20	16.7
HHM	10	8.3
ANP	20	16.7
CRP	25	20.8
SOM	15	12.5
RRS	20	16.7
Level		
100	4	3.3
200	44	40.2
300	53	44.2
400	13	10.8
500	1	8
Marital Status		
Single	119	99.2
Married	1	8
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2009

TABLE 3: Distribution of the Students by type of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquired and Relevancy

Techniques Practices	Types		Relevance of the techniques			
	YES	NO	Not Rel Freg (%)	Low Rel Freg (%)	Rel Freg (%)	Very Rel Freg (%)
Fish production techniques	120(100.0)	-	-	-	38(31.7)	82(68.3)
Pig production techniques	116(96.7)	4(3.3)	4(3.3)	40(33.3)	72(60.0)	4(3.3)
Crop production techniques	120(100.0)	-	-	2(1.7)	19(15.8)	99(82.5)
Poultry production techniques	118(98.3)	2(1.7)	2(1.7)	15(12.5)	28(23.3)	75(62.5)
Rabbit production techniques	89(74.2)	31(25.8)	30(25.0)	59(49.2)	26(21.7)	5(4.2)
Cattle production techniques	88(74.2)	32(26.7)	32(26.7)	63(52.5)	18(15.0)	7(5.8)
Snail production techniques	106(88.3)	4(11.7)	9(7.5)	41(34.2)	46(38.3)	24(20.0)
Grass cutter production techniques	112(93.3)	8(6.7)	3(2.5)	43(35.8)	49(40.8)	25(20.8)

TABLE 4: Determinants of Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition

Determinants	SA Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	U Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	SD Freq (%)
I have leadership skill	75(62.5)	45(37.5)	-	-	-
I have goal oriented	24(20.0)	96(80.0)	-	-	-
I have self confidence	85(70.8)	35(29.2)	-	-	-
I am task oriented					
11(9.2)	109(90.8)	-	-	-	
I have the capacity to adapt to changing condition	54(45.0)	64(53.3)	2(1.7)	-	-
I have the ability to take risk	34(28.3)	72(60.0)	10(8.3)	2(1.7)	2(1.7)
I have profit oriented	29(24.2)	90(75.0)	1(8)	-	-
I have ability to organize resources to achieves goal	72(60.0)	48(40.00)	-	-	-
I have the ability to innovate and speculate	71(59.2)	46(38.3)	-	3(2.5)	-
I have high need for achievement and success	86(71.7)	33(27.5)	-	-	-
I posses strong desire for responsibility and independence	69(57.5)	50(41.7)	-	1(8)	-

TABLE 5: Students' Perception of the Entrepreneurial Skills they have Acquired

Perception of Entrepreneurial Skills acquired	SA Freq(%)	A Freq(%)	U Freq(%)	D Freq(%)	SD Freq(%)
Skill acquired from entrepreneurial has help the student to posses necessary ability to establish.	38(31.7)	82(68.3)	-	-	-
I have good relationship with the skill acquired to future problem.	23(19.2)	96(80.0)	1(8)	-	-
I have acquired the basic knowledge to become an entrepreneurial in agricultural alone.	21(17.5)	48(40.0)	1(8)	4(3.3)	46(38.3)
I can fully participate in entrepreneurial activities with out fear of being able to meet up with future challenges	14(11.7)	106(88.3)	-	-	-
The level of the skill I acquired determined efficiency in entrepreneur	35(29.2)	85(70.8)	-	-	-
I have deep perception to solve entrepreneurial problem in another aspect apart from agriculture.	82(68.3)	26(21.7)	-	-	12(10.0)
I can gather experiences through industrial training in government establishment farm	16(13.3)	98(81.7)	1(8)	-	5(4.2)
I can gather enough capital through the experiences gained in an entrepreneurial skill to establish business	3(2.5)	114(95.0)	2(1.7)	-	1 (8)
I have theoretical experiences of entrepreneurial job through lectures.	21(17.5)	99(82.5)	-	-	-
I can handle business effectively	71(59.2)	44(40.8)	-	-	-

Source: field survey, 2009.

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