



ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AND RETENTION ABILITY AMONG STUDENTS OF FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.

EMMANUEL UBI OMINI AND ANIAH BERNARD BESHIGIM

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between entrepreneurial skills and retention ability among students of faculty of education, University of Calabar, Cross River States. Correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of UTME 2018/2019 academic session 200-400 level students and this was also used as sample. A validated research-made questionnaire with reliability range of 0.81-0.89 was used for data collection. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis showed that acquisition of indexing skills and book publishing skills significantly relate with retention ability. It was recommended among others that support grants from school management and government should be granted to graduates with passion and enthusiasm to set-up their own business ventures on indexing and book publishing upon graduation either from their various institutions or after graduation from the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurial Skills, Retention ability, Faculty of Education, University of Calabar.

INTRODUCTION

Majority of the graduates without jobs today originates from a number of educational institutions. One of the goals of such education is to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. They require skills that will assist them after graduation to be able to cater for themselves. This has become necessary as a greater part of graduates are seen roaming the streets in search of improved standard of living and this has created

unnecessary competitions among youths due to the limited placements in the job market and government's inability to adequately cater for the extraordinary growth and influx in the public sector of the economy (Isibor, 2016).

The increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria is worrisome and it is not surprising that the level of unemployed youth in the country is on the rise. Unemployment constitutes a serious limitation to the economic advancement of any nation and in fact, it represents an apparent waste of the nation's manpower resources. Unemployment is among the societal troubles afflicting the Nigeria

Emmanuel Ubi Omini, Department of Library and Information Science University of Calabar, Nigeria
Aniah Bernard Beshigim, College of Health Technology, Calabar Cross River State, Nigeria

nation. The adverse consequence of soaring unemployment rate on the domestic economy of the state under study cannot be quantified. The availability of the human resources when exploited can be a vehicle to economic development. But, if otherwise, it can exert negative influence on the economy. The consequence of utilized large quantum of human resources in Nigeria and Cross River State in particular, due to the unavailability of paid employment and self-employment has continued to generate great deal of general insecurity among youths. The implications as observed in the economy of the state is evidenced in the lack of cottage industries and small business to cater for the increasing number of graduates usually engineered by self-employment drives. Hence, the state is often referred to as the civil servants' state.

The apparent high rate of unemployment and its attendant accumulation of poverty may account for youths' restiveness in various communities. It is assumed that most antisocial activities including rustiness, thuggery, militancy, armed robbery, kidnaping, political-ethnic conflicts, insurgency and other societal decadence in Nigeria are traceable to the increasing youth unemployment. Statistics on unemployment made available by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2020) indicate that unemployment level has escalated from 23 percent in Q3 2018 to 27.9 percent in Q2 2020. Most of the factors causing these increase ranges from slow economic growth, low level of industrialization, lack of national labour policies, etc. The report further revealed that unemployed young adults in the bracket of 15-24 years (41%) are most affected and majority of undergraduates falls within this category. On the basis of gender, 23 percent males in the labour force are unemployed while females account for 32 percent. This is quite disturbing because the degree of joblessness is a reflection of the position of a nation's economy and growth indices.

This level of education is anticipated to equip students with necessary skills for the labour market to absorb. However, these students after graduation becomes unemployed and may not have retained the skills being taught in school. This may be as a result of the fact that the curriculum is more centered on government paid jobs rather than skills for self-employment. The rising joblessness among students during and after graduation has posed an enormous problem

not only to the Nigerian government but Cross River State in particular which has led students to indulging in cultism, kidnapping, female prostitution among others. Its impact has been felt more by the youths.

The educational system in Nigeria is structured on certificate acquisition rather than practical skills thereby leading to rural-urban migration for greener pasture. This rush has led to the profligacy of the rate of unemployment. In response to the high unemployment rate of students after graduation, the National Council on Education gave approval for a review of curriculum content as released through National Bureau of Statistics (2012). This new curriculum referred to as, "Curriculum 2007", became operational from September 2011 and comprises trade/entrepreneurship subjects of which every university school student must compulsorily offer before graduation.

The strategic intention of government was to train students on how to bring out the entrepreneurship prospects right from university so that after leaving school, they could start up their own ventures rather than wait for paid employment. The rationale for entrepreneurial skills was to equip students with the ability needed to create jobs, become self-reliant and be able to retain the skills being acquired. This will increase students' desire to learn and retain various skills, generate potentials to explore both their individual business capabilities and also venture into other business ventures as so desires. Zhou and Xu (2012) argued that with a glut of graduates facing growing competition in a tough job market, entrepreneurial skills are being presented as one possible solution. According to Eke, Igwesi and Orji (2011), entrepreneurial skills is a programme that inculcates creative innovative, productive and managerial skills needed in business enterprises for self-reliance and national development. Entrepreneurship is crucial ingredient towards economic growth and job creation (Marshall & Samuel, 2006).

University institutions have designed different skill-based courses and training through which they could acquire proficiencies in setting up their own businesses and also have at the back of their hand the intent of establishing their own business after graduation. This will create a mind-set on students that after graduation they are required to retain the various skills already acquired rather than waiting for several years after graduation in search of government paid jobs.

In line with this, the University of Calabar has put in place several entrepreneurship development programmes, including the introduction of entrepreneurship courses and the establishment of entrepreneurship centres in various departments in the university in order to train aspiring entrepreneurs and the faculty of education students are amongst these beneficiaries. For instance, library and information science department courses such as indexing and book binding, computer operation, information brokerage, book publishing, reprography, etc are meant to train students on various skills for self-reliance. The aim of such programs was to impact skills, attitudes, aspirations and competencies mostly among students before graduation, to enable them practice entrepreneurship and create jobs for themselves even when they are still in school as well as help generate employment for others.

Many students though possess business ideas but lack the capacity and ability to turn their thoughts into viable business ventures. Skills on indexing and book publishing are curriculum courses offered in the department of library and information geared towards entrepreneurial opportunities in academic institutions (Ikegwu, 2014; Onuoha 2013; Samian & Buntat, 2012). Students can index for some libraries, work as freelancers while some are hired by authors, book publishers and some independent businesses which manages the production of books. Issa, Uzuegbu and Nwosu (2014) study on the opportunity to venture into entrepreneurship as an indexer. The study revealed significant relationship between acquisition of indexing skills and entrepreneurial retention ability. One can become a book publisher, an editor or a reference book critic and providing indexing services for a fee to libraries and organisations that requires such services.

With proper skills in book publishing, students can be better disposed to undertake ventures in book publishing. The book publishing skills can be e-mail publishing also known as newsletter publishing where news items, articles and short newsletters are sorted out and sent to clients' e-mail box; and web publishing where students can provide original content on the internet to users for a fee. The process involves building and uploading websites, updating the associated webpages and posting content to webpages online while desktop publishing involves the creation of documents using page layout skill on a computer for print. Desktop publishing

generates layouts through the use of software that produces typographic quality text and images. Students can acquire these skills thereby make out a living for themselves. Batthini (2012) asserted that book publishing and printing, book distribution agency, periodical subscription agency, newspaper dealership, book shop, binding workshops, reprographic services, etc. are all library entrepreneurs where interested graduates may explore the possibilities to start a new venture, become successful and fulfil their entrepreneurial dreams.

Studies have shown that skill acquisition is the most critical factor in the utilization of entrepreneurship opportunity for self-employment in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic ravaging the entire society where job retrenchments are eminent (Ekpe 2012). Entrepreneurial skill acquisition could not lead to self-employment practice without considering entrepreneur's characteristics or attitudes such as self-motivation and attitude. In the study by Zhang (2013), revealed that indexing skills directly relates with entrepreneurial retention ability. Skill has been identified as one of the most important alternatives required to become successful as an entrepreneur. Retention ability is a key concept when it comes to understanding the reason for individual's careers. This is particularly true for explaining the decision to set up new venture, where the retention ability has been considered a chief element. The decision to start a new business is usually assumed to be planned for some time and then preceded by the retention ability to actually replicate what you have learnt in the past.

Nevertheless, in some cases, the retention ability of these skills is a strong predictor of actual behaviour of interest in the skills being acquired; the decision and choice to become an entrepreneur and careful planning and thinking process which requires highly retention abilities. The stronger you retain, the more possible to sustain a business, hence the more likely that the intention will become a catalyst for action.

The focus of this study therefore, is to find out relationship between entrepreneurial skills on areas of acquisition of indexing skills and acquisition of book publishing skills and retention ability among students of faculty of education, University of Calabar, Cross River States.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to examine relationship between entrepreneurial skills and retention ability among students in faculty of education, University of Calabar, Cross River States. Specifically, the study was to:

1. Determine the relationship between acquisition of indexing skills on retention ability;
2. Find out the relationship between acquisition of book publishing skills on retention ability.

Research hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between acquisition of indexing skills on retention ability;
2. There is no significant relationship between acquisition of book publishing skills on retention ability.

METHODOLOGY

Correlational survey design was adopted for this study. This design was appropriate for this study because it aimed at finding out the relationship between acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and retention ability among students in faculty of

education. This research was carried out in two selected departments (Department of Library and Information Science and Department of Curriculum and Teaching), University of Calabar, Cross River States, Nigeria. Census procedure was used to select the entire UTME 2018/2019 academic session 200 to 400 level students in the selected departments. The justification for this category of students is based on the fact they are the ones who have been taught these skills and may likely be in the labour market soon. A research instruments titled "Entrepreneurial Skills and Retention Ability Questionnaire (ESRAQ)" was used to gather data for the study. The validity of the instrument was determined by two experts from measurement and evaluation, university of Calabar. Data was obtained after a trial test was conducted on 40 respondents from Department of Library and Information Science, University of Cross River State, Calabar that was not part of the main study area. Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient was used to determine its internal consistency. The reliability figures for the different sub-scales range from 0.81-0.89 showing that the instrument was high enough for it to be used for the study.

TABLE 1

Distribution of population in the study area

Names of Departments	200 level	300 level	400 level	Total
Library and Information Science	79	51	50	180
Curriculum and Teaching	47	40	33	120
Total	126	91	83	300

Source: Offices of the various Heads of Departments (2019)

RESULTS**TABLE 2**

Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between acquisition of indexing skills and retention ability. (N=300)

Variables	Mean	SD	$\frac{\sum X^2}{\sum Y^2}$	$\sum XY$	r	P-Value
Acquisition of indexing skills	12.49	2.59	2691.96			
Retention ability	66.96	6.23	15495.36	607.84	0.194	0.020

P<0.05, df=300

The Table 2 above, acquisition of indexing skills has a mean of 12.49 and SD of 2.59 and retention ability with mean of 66.96 and SD of 6.23 have $P < 0.05$ and produced an $r = 0.194$ at df of 300 showing that acquisition of indexing skills is positively correlated with retention ability among students of faculty of education. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that acquisition of indexing skills is significantly related with retention ability. When

students are properly taught the step by step ways of indexing skills with practical on-the-spot facilities, it may help students to not only understand it but also have passion for such skills thereby retaining such skills when there have left school knowing fully well the dearth of government paid job and the importance of acquiring such skills that may sustain them thereby making a living out of it.

TABLE 3

Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between acquisition of binding skills and retention ability (N=300)

Variables	Mean	SD	$\frac{\sum X^2}{\sum Y^2}$	$\sum XY$	r	P-Value
Acquisition of book publishing skills	11.51	2.48	2459.96			
Retention ability	66.96	6.23	15495.36	2.646	.17	0.001

$p < 0.05$, $df = 300$

Table 3 shows that acquisition of book publishing skills has a mean and standard deviation of 11.51 and 2.48 respectively and retention ability has a mean of 66.96 and standard deviation of 6.23. The correlation coefficient obtained from Pearson product moment correlation between acquisition of book publishing skills and retention ability is $r = .17$ at df of 300 is significant at $P < 0.05$. The result indicates that acquisition of book publishing skills has a positive correlation with retention ability among students in faculty of education. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that acquisition of book publishing skills related with retention ability among students in faculty of education. Adequate teaching gadgets with practical oriented training, attitudes of students towards entrepreneurship drive through innovations and creativity and availability of equipment will help students to develop interest in acquiring book publishing skills, exploit new channels of opportunities in book publishing and also retain such skills for self-sustainability.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the finding shows that there is a relationship between acquisition of indexing skills and retention ability. The result of this finding is in consonance with that of Ikegwu (2014), Onuoha (2013), and Samian and Buntat (2012) study revealed that indexing skills and book binding

skills are related to entrepreneurial opportunity in academic institutions. Also, study by Eke, Igwesi and Orji (2011) study revealed that entrepreneurship skills inculcates creative innovative, productive and managerial skills needed in business enterprises for self-reliance among students. Entrepreneurship is crucial ingredient towards economic growth and job creation (Marshall & Samuel, 2006). The result of the finding also shows that there is a relationship between acquisition of book publishing skills correlates with retention ability. The finding is in line with Batthini (2012) who found that book publishing and printing, book distribution agency, periodical subscription agency, newspaper dealership, bookshop are library entrepreneurs where interested graduates explore the possibilities to start a new venture and become successful and fulfil their entrepreneurial dreams.

CONCLUSION

In the course of this study, two hypotheses were tested, and it was discovered that acquisition of indexing skills is positively correlate with retention ability among students in faculty of education. Acquisition of book publishing skills has a positive correlation with retention ability among students of faculty of education.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that acquisition of indexing skills and book publishing skills enables students in university of calabar to engage in businesses during and after graduation. Gone are the days where students will graduate and be waiting for white-collar jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Support grant from schools and government should be granted to school leavers that have passion and enthusiasm to set-up their own business ventures on indexing skills upon graduation either from their various institutions or after graduation from the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). This may help to encourage them to sustain the entrepreneurial skills they might have learnt during their course of study in the university.
2. Adequate teaching gadgets with practical oriented training should be given to students and those that the teachers have seen their passion for entrepreneurship drive should be monitored and assisted. This can be done through encouraging their business idea by financing their business plans and linking them with well-established companies. This will encourage more students to embrace entrepreneurial initiatives.
3. The school curriculum content should be reoriented towards entrepreneurship drives where entrepreneurship skills such as indexing and publishing skills will be taught and made attractive for students. This will bring about re-invigoration of self-employment skills among students knowing the current dearth of government paid jobs across Nigeria.

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