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Impact of Skills Training on Employment among Young Entrepreneurs in Selected Local Governments in Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of skills training on employment among young entrepreneurs in selected Local Governments in Ibadan, Nigeria. There were three hundred and eighty-two young entrepreneurs in the Akinyele, Ibadan North and Ido Local Government areas of Oyo State who responded to the questionnaires on the General Effectiveness Training Skills scale and Employability Appraisal Scale. The study was anchored on Dreyfus model of skill acquisition. Two hypotheses were tested for, using the t-test for independent sample t-test. The result shows that there was a significant difference in the ability of the participants to secure better jobs between participants with high skills training and low skills training, $t(380) = 5.73, p < .05$. The result also showed that participants with high skills training had the ability to secure better jobs than those with low skills training. There was no significant gender difference in the ability of the participants to secure better jobs. This study therefore, emphasizes the need for continuous skills training among the young entrepreneurs in the areas, to reduce the menace of poverty and in order to move away from being an

underdeveloped country to becoming a developed country, and that government at all levels must do all it can to improve the skills of young entrepreneurs.

Key words: Skills training, employment strategy, young entrepreneurs.

Introduction

Literacy education is a sure way of ensuring that everyone is well developed in various capacities that can enhance their skills, thereby making them ready for the demand of the society. The society expects young entrepreneurs to be well-equipped to face the challenges of poverty which is the product of unemployment or poor job. Efficient skills acquisition through the effective training of young entrepreneurs in areas that would brighten their chances of securing better jobs is crucial to having a formidable society. The spate of unemployment in Nigeria is borne out of the fact that the schools in the country, both at the secondary and higher institution levels favour joblessness and reduce the proclivity for being self-employed. There has been a huge gap between what the schools offer in terms of developing the capacity of young entrepreneurs for skills empowerment and making them employers of labour. There has been poor access to skills training thus, reducing the ability of young entrepreneurs to have the skills needed to secure the good jobs in critical sectors of the economy.

The inability of poor urban youth to secure good and sustainable employment was due to the rate of poverty in the levels of skills acquisition by these young ones. According to the NBS report, the persons within 0-14 years was 39.6%, while those within the range of 15-64 years was 56.3% and those above 65 years were 4.2%. It was crystal clear that the active population, which falls between 15-64 years, part of which the youth are tends to be the highest in terms of unemployment. This has been a great challenge to the country and national development.

In the postulation of the International Labour Organization (1982), unemployment is the process by which people are without jobs consistently for a period of five weeks. It could also be said as

the fraction of those who are looking for jobs for about 40 hours with no luck of securing any (NBS, 2011).

A lot is being done by the Nigerian government towards empowering the youth in skills acquisition so as to create better opportunities for them in the global arena, and part of these efforts was brought to bear by the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). Despite the establishment of this scheme, the strides of the NDE have not been significantly felt among young entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Ogunlela, 2012). According to the scholar, the level at which the directorate of employment has impacted on the lives of unemployed graduates is not encouraging, therefore there is a need to reassess the functionality of the system.

The issue of skills training and knowledge acquisition should not be left for the government alone, there is a need for private individuals, corporate organizations and institutions to be involved (Ohize and Muhammed, 2009). There is also the need for skills training to be all encompassing. This calls for the contribution of the various state and local government interventions, community interventions and other critical stakeholders to come upstream and help enhance the skills and capacity of young entrepreneurs (Ogundele, Akingbade and Akinlabi, 2012). This shows that the government at the centre alone cannot unilaterally do everything; all critical stakeholders should be in support of the drive towards equipping our youth, thereby making our society the best that it is supposed to be.

In order to facilitate the best learning ability of youth and to ensure that they get the best skills needed for the demand of today's world of work, there is a need to continue exposing the youth to the best literacy programmes. This will open up their mindset to the issues of being the best in all they do and come up excellently skilled. The level of those living below the poverty line will reduce drastically if young entrepreneurs are exposed to adequate training to build up their skills (Akpama, Esang, Asor, and Osang (2011). There are different forms of programmes that are currently being introduced in higher institutions in Nigeria, especially subject to the new regulation of the National Universities Commission (NUC) that made the teaching of entrepreneurial courses compulsory in all universities

in the country. However, this has not been able to fulfill the rationale for its establishment as most of these courses do not suffice for self-sufficiency on the part of the youth. The curriculum is still designed in a way that graduates find it difficult to establish their own business or company. In a research conducted by Amadi and Abdullah (2011), a huge proportion of the participants, who are basically young entrepreneurs, asserted that they have been able to acquire some moderate and slightly advanced skills in the process of building their capacity through skills training. Therefore, the capacity they have attained, according to the respondents was not sufficient to make them self-reliant and less dependent on the government for good jobs.

In a research conducted by Adofu and Ocheja (2013) to determine the influence of skills training and acquisition on unemployment in Kogi state the result shows that the highest proportion of the respondents were of the opinion that inadequate skills training was responsible for the high poverty rate and unemployment in Nigeria. It is clear, according to the scholars, that since the beneficiaries of the skills training have been able to enjoy self-sustenance and live relatively above the poverty line, government and other critical stakeholders should do something towards expanding the scope and coverage of the skills training and entrepreneurial acquisition programme. The crucial role of skills training is worth considering owing to the fact that a lot of young people have been able to reduce their level of reliance on government, parents and significant others for their daily sustenance and upkeep. They have been able to embark on so many reasonable projects that they would not have done if they were working with the government or private sector. There is nothing as good as being on your own, it opens up your mind to see the world with limitless possibilities. There is the possibility for creativity and ingenuity when you are on your own. You are able to take decisions having considered the possibilities around you, weighing the cost and benefit of your action. The core value of the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS) is making the youth and others within the active population self-reliant and useful tools for ensuring a workable economy (Isike, 2008). This goes to show that if every

youth is a powerful tool and is contributing to the economy, the economy no doubt will move forward and employment generation will consequently improve. There is a need to empower the youth, when this is done, the nation is empowered, the economy is powered and the future of the country is secure. There will be reduction in social vices like thuggery, armed robbery and other malaise that could affect the country adversely if our youths are skilled in various professions.

In a study conducted by Ola-Adebayo (2013), he found that in the acquisition of skills, gender has no significant influence and that skills training could be best instilled in the schools, be it polytechnics, universities or colleges of education. The scholar further opines that there is a need to make skills training in the higher institutions a must for all learners. This is crucial as it will reduce the gap between the haves and the have nots in the society. The poverty gap will also be bridged if there is skills acquisition and training. Also, the problems bedeviling the country in terms of social, economic, political, financial issues and the likes, will be reduced drastically if every youth is made to acquire a particular skill or the other that can put food on their table (Ezeji and Okorie, 1999). This is due to the fact that an idle hand is the devil's workshop. When everyone is busy with what to do productively, no one will have time to cause social crises, armed robbery, financial corruption, and other vices that can be seen in the society today. There is a need to continue to lay emphasis on the need for the proliferation of skills training in Nigeria by promoting literacy programmes in all spheres of our national life. This will awaken the consciousness of all and sundry towards knowing that equipping themselves through skills acquisition will, ultimately, reduce their reliance on others and make them self-sustaining.

Theoretical Framework

This paper was anchored on the Dreyfus model of acquisition of skill training. According to the model, in the process of being trained, one goes through any of these five typical levels: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and/or expert. These levels show typically dual changes in the broad areas of the performance of

skills. The first step is a change from abstract thinking to concrete evidence and the second has to do with changing how we perceive the world around us, seeing everything from a holistic point of view and focusing on the salient part that will add value to our world (Benner, 1982). Based on the Dreyfus model, at the novice level, beginners tend to be without experience in the assignments they are exposed to and in order to facilitate their learning, they are taught how to do it properly. The advanced beginner shows some level of knowledge in what is to be taught and such a person is able to handle a limited number of things in the area he/she is seeking skills. At the competent level, the learner has been on the training for about two or three years and is able to envision long term plans and what he/she intends to achieve in the near future, while being able to develop an analytical and abstract approach to whatever problems he/she is up against. At the proficient level, the learner is able to view the situations around him as a meaningful whole and truism is the source of direction to presentation. At the expert level, there is an intuitive grasp of the situation and the ability to demonstrate accuracy in understanding the possible solution to a problem. Therefore, the model states that the expert performance tends to be somewhat total and not fragmented or technical, and is built on incremental steps.

Statement of the Problem

The inadequate skill training of young entrepreneurs in Nigeria is a major cause for concern. The relevant stakeholders, government, parents, schools administrators at all levels, community leaders, religious organizations, seem to be less concerned about the level of poverty that our youth face daily as a result of a lack of skills training. The inability of our youths to be highly skilled and proficient in line with the demand of employers has made them perpetually jobless, and this is a serious issue that demands urgent attention. Therefore there is a need to consider the way to improve the entrepreneurial skills of our youth, so as to increase the number of young entrepreneurs in Nigeria, who are skilled and proficient to handle all manners of tasks; thus reducing unemployment to the minimum.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine if the young entrepreneurs who are high in skills training will have more significant opportunities to secure better jobs than those who are low in skills training.
2. Investigate if there is a significant gender difference in levels of jobs among young entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested for this study:

1. Young entrepreneurs who are high in skills training will not have significant more opportunities to secure better jobs than those who are low in skills training.
2. There is no significant gender difference in levels of jobs among young entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

Methodology

The population of this study was drawn from the young entrepreneurs in three local government areas in Ibadan. These local governments are the Akinyele, Ibadan North and Ido Local Government areas of Oyo State. The total sample of the study was 384 participants (153 male, 231 female), aged between 18 and 40 years ($M = 23.10$, $SD = 7.20$) and they were all selected randomly from across Akinyele, Ibadan North and Ido Local Government areas of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Design

In carrying out this study, the researcher used the descriptive survey design. This involves the use of a questionnaire to collect data from the participants. Appropriate analysis was carried out to analyse the data collected.

Instruments

1. **General Effectiveness Training Skills (GTES):** The training skills of the participants were measured with a general effectiveness training skills tool by Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, and Mathieu, (1995). It is a 10-item scale which

ranges from strongly agree = 5 to strongly disagree = 1. It measures the level of general effectiveness of the skills needed for a given job. A pilot study for the revalidation of the scale was conducted and the Cronbach's alpha reliability was .769.

- 2. Employability Appraisal Scale.** It is a 5-item likert scale, ranging from strongly agree = 5, to strongly disagree = 1. It was developed by by Llinares-Insa, González Navarro, Zacarés-González and Córdoba-Iñesta (2018). It is a scale that measures all the fundamental elements of employability. A pilot study for the revalidation of the scale was conducted and the Cronbach's alpha reliability was 684.

Procedure

Before the start of the study, the researcher obtained a consent form which was given to every participant to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to each of the participant in their various departments and their responses were collected.

Data Analysis

The data obtained for this study was analyzed with the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS). The statistic that was used was the independent sample t-test. Two hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis one states that, young entrepreneurs who are high in skills training will not have more significant opportunities of securing better jobs than those who are low in skills training.

Table 1: Showing independent t-test of skills training on better job of participants

Skills Training		N	df	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Sig.
Better Job	Low	176	380	103.21	15.75	5.73	.00
	High	206		112.36	15.41		

Source: Field work (February, 2019).

Table 1 shows that between the participants with high skills training and low skills training, there was a significant difference in the ability of the participants to secure better jobs; $t(380) = 5.73, p < .05$. This implies that the average ability of the participants with high skills training to secure better jobs (Mean = 112.36, SD = 15.41) was significantly different from that of the participants with low skills training (Mean = 103.21, SD = 15.75). Based on this result, the null hypothesis is rejected. The implication of this is that there is a higher tendency for participants who are high in skills training to secure better jobs than those who are low in skills training.

Hypothesis two states that, there is no significant gender difference in the levels of jobs among young entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

Table 2: Showing independent t-test of gender on better jobs among participants

Gender		N	df	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	Sig.
Better Job	Male	186	380	108.09	15.97	-.036	.97
	Female	198		108.15	16.46		

Source: Field work (February, 2019).

Table 2 shows that there was no significant gender difference in the ability of the participants to secure better jobs between the participants who are male and those who are female; $t(380) = -$

.036, $p > .05$. This implies that the average ability of the participants who are male (Mean = 108.09, SD = 15.97) was significantly different from participants with low skills training (Mean = 108.15, SD = 16.46). The result shows that gender has no significant effect on the ability of the participants to secure better jobs. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. *

Discussion

The basic objective of this study was to assess the impact of skills training on securing better jobs among the young entrepreneurs in Oyo State, Nigeria. The sample for this study was selected from the Akinyele, Ibadan North and Ido Local Government areas of Oyo State, Nigeria. Two hypotheses were tested for this study using an independent sample t-test.

The result from the hypothesis showed that skills' training makes a significant difference on the ability of the young entrepreneurs to secure better jobs. This implies that young entrepreneurs, that are well trained have the propensity to secure good, better and reliable jobs, which can take care of family and others, thus reducing the level of poverty. This position was corroborated by Adofu and Ocheja (2013), who believe that the major way to reduce poverty is access to entrepreneurial skills training. There is a need to also elucidate further that when young entrepreneurs are empowered, through skills training, the wealth of the nation can be better converted into productive use, which further lays credence to the essence of skills training towards securing better jobs. This was further confirmed by Uloko and Ejinkonye (2010), who asserted, in their study, that skills training will reduce economic waste and increase the productive base of the economy.

The second hypothesis that was tested in this study states that gender will not make a significant difference in the ability of young entrepreneurs to secure better jobs. This shows that gender has less impact on the level at which young entrepreneurs secure good and better jobs in Nigeria. This was the position maintained by Ola-Adebayo (2013), who was of the opinion that gender has no significance in the acquisition of skills, and thus anyone may decide

to acquire any skill fundamentally in order to aid their ability to secure good jobs.

Conclusion

Therefore, it is important at this point to note that skills acquisition is the key to securing the future of our young entrepreneurs in Nigeria. There is no amount of resource endowment that we may have access to as a country, without the requisite skills, we will remain underdeveloped unless we increase the capacity of our young entrepreneurs and make them skillful.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is a need to increase the capacity of our young entrepreneurs towards skills training.
2. There is need for the skills training of the young entrepreneurs to be inculcated in the literacy education in this country,
3. Every institution of higher learning should mandate every student to learn at least a skill before graduation and this can also be used as part of the requirements for graduation clearance.
4. There is need to increase the credit facilities to the young entrepreneurs who are skilled in an area or the other to increase their capacities for further expansion.

Limitation of the Study

The number of respondents and sample areas limited the generalizability of the research findings. Also, gender was a limitation as the researcher could not have access to equal numbers of male and female respondents, thus tilting the research findings towards having more female respondents. The independent variable of this study was limited to one and this is a major constraint.

Suggestion for Further Study

The researcher, therefore, on the basis of the above limitations, suggests that further studies could be carried out on securing better jobs for poor urban young entrepreneurs.

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