

ASSESSMENT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS IN LIBRARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE

By

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Abstract

This paper evaluates the entrepreneurial skills acquired by students of library schools in Enugu state after undergoing a course of study in the schools. Data were collected from final year students of the school who are considered as the target population. The analyses of data were carried out using a statistical package. The result shows that students that passed through the school did not acquire entrepreneurial skills commensurate with the thought courses in the library schools.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Skills, Assessment, Students, library school

Introduction

The creation of nation's wealth and dynamism to a large extent depends on the competitiveness of her firms. This in turn depends on the entrepreneurial nature of her citizens. Ojidu (2011) as cited in Daluba and Odiba (2013), noted that the economic development of any nation depends solely on the interrelatedness of learners on entrepreneurship, vocational and technical education and training. This is because it creates business and employment opportunities for the teaming population. As was exemplified in the work of Du Toit (2000), that parts of the world that foster entrepreneurial culture are characterized by economic wealth, which is something that is necessary for social and political stability. An entrepreneur creates wealth and reduces unemployment, produces creativity and innovation, and increases the total production of a country.

Entrepreneurship according to Venkataraman (1994) is a scholarly field which seeks to understand how opportunities to bring into existence "future" goods and services are discovered, created, and exploited, by whom, and with what consequences. European Commission (2006) stated

that entrepreneurship involve creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives while European Commission (2012) noted that it is vital to promoting innovation, competitiveness and economic growth.

The fundamental issue in entrepreneurship is the understanding of how, in the absence of current markets for future goods and services, these goods and services manage to come into existence. This might be the reason why Venkataraman, (1997) maintains that entrepreneurship involves the nexus of two phenomena: the presence of lucrative opportunities and the presence of enterprising individuals. The distinguishing characteristic of entrepreneurial endeavour is innovative capabilities, awakening of spirit at any slightest opportunity, and growth in businesses and employment of strategic management practices in the business.

It is good to understand that specific knowledge by itself may only be a sufficient condition for the exercise of successful enterprise. But the ability to make the connection between specific knowledge and a commercial opportunity requires a set of skills which is not either uniformly or widely distributed. A skill is an ability to perform an act in a competent manner. Attewell (1990) noted that at the core center of all definitions of skills is competency or proficiency, that is, the ability to do something well. The author affirms that the term encompasses both mental and physical proficiency. This may suggest that skills involve understanding and knowledge and at the same time connotes physical dexterity. The implication is that skills should be embedded on a particular venture. Entrepreneurship as a concept requires skill to turn ideas into action. Nonetheless, Schoof, (nd) stated that entrepreneurship skills provide benefits regardless of whether a person sees their future as starting a business. Cooney (2012) noted that they can be used across individual's working lives while European Commission (2013) stated that it encompass creativity, initiative, tenacity, teamwork,

understanding of risk, and a sense of responsibility. Though an economic term, entrepreneurial skills are not related to a specific occupation, discipline or qualification. It combines a range of technical, management and personal skills. As such, there is no established, simple definition of the entrepreneurial skill set. This notwithstanding, as identified by OECD (2014), there are three main groups of skills required by entrepreneurs. These include: Technical – communication, environment monitoring, problem solving, and organizational skills among others. Business management includes planning and goal setting, decision making, human resources management and compliance with regulations skills. Personal entrepreneurial skills include self-control and discipline, risk management, innovation, persistence, leadership, change management, network building, and strategic thinking.

The acquisition of this appropriate skill and the development of mental, physical, and social competencies according to Mbanefo and Eboka (2019) are necessary for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of any society. Ekpe, Razak and Ma (2012) stated that skill acquisition is the most critical factor in the utilization of entrepreneurial opportunity for self-employment. As noted by Ikeagwu (2014), people become gainfully employed through vocational training and skill acquisition. This implies therefore that skills are not hereditary, but people acquire them through training.

Library schools are one of the schools that train students with necessary skills for self-employments. There are many categories of skills in library schools as noted in the work of (Gerolimos, 2009). Some of them include collection development skills, evaluation of library services skills, information architectural skills, and web programming skills, financial resources management skills, Geospatial information management skills, digital reference and information retrieval skills, reference services and indexing and abstracting skills, P/C software microcomputer applications skills,

information brokerage skill, database management skills, information search and retrieval skills, cataloguing skills, book publishing among others. These skills if acquired by students of library schools are capable of transforming graduates of the schools into entrepreneurs.

The library school specifically manages the information resources and knowledge assets of all fields of study and professions, for continuous existence, intellectual enrichment and sustainability of man. The school tries to inculcate in her students the practical skills and expertise required to excel in an increasingly competitive world. Little wonder Igwe, Ugwuogu, Unagha, Nnadozie, and Ijebor (2014) stated that the general drive for entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions, and specifically as it concerns the librarians' demands that the profession trains infopreneurs. This, Nnadozie, Okeke and Egwim (2014) described as persons who can identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities around information-based activities. This caliber of people can stand on their own or collaborate with other professional body, to identify knowledge-deficient situations and exploit the economic opportunities therein. This shows the authenticity of the adage that there is no unemployed person but unemployed ideas.

It is on this note that this study seeks to assess the students' rating of entrepreneurial skills available in the courses thought in the library schools in Enugu State and the entrepreneurial skills acquired by the students in the schools.

Rationale for the Study

Students of library schools are receiving training meant to prepare them for self-reliance. The training is embodied in the courses offered in the library schools. An assessment of the entrepreneurship skills embodied in the courses as well as the actual entrepreneurship skills acquired from the courses becomes

necessary. This is because a graduate of library school should be equipped with entrepreneurship skill that can make him or her stand on his/her own and become an employer of labour.

Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey research design. The area of the study is Enugu State, South East Nigeria comprising the library schools at University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The study involved all the final year students of the two library schools. The number of respondents in this study is one hundred and thirty five (135) with very few non-responses. The final year students were purposively sampled in both library schools because they are at the verge of graduating and have undertaken most of the courses in the curriculum that will prepare them for the needed entrepreneurial skills. Hence, they were better suited to be the target population for the supply of answers to the questionnaire items. The responses on entrepreneurial skills are rated as Very High (VH) – 4, High (H) -3, Low (L) -2, Very low (VL) -1 giving a criterion mean of 2.5.

The data collected were analyzed using SPSS version 21 and the means and standard deviations for the rating of entrepreneurial skills by students of the library schools were obtained. A paired t-test of the difference in the mean rating of entrepreneurial skills based on thought courses and the rating on acquired entrepreneurial skills was also obtained. A test was conducted on the correlation coefficient of the two ratings of the entrepreneurial skills

Results and Discussion

The result of the analysis of data collected is shown on table 1. It reveals the mean rating of entrepreneurial skills based on the courses offered in Library Schools hereby referred to as available

skills. Collection development is the highest rated entrepreneurial skill followed by indexing and abstracting, while Compilation of Directory and Guide is the least rated. However the mean rating of the acquired skills got reduced in all the entrepreneurial items listed.

Table 1: The mean rating for available and acquired Entrepreneurship skills by students in the library school. (Standard error in parenthesis)

Entrepreneurship skills	N	Mean for available skills	Mean for acquired skills	Comment
1. Collection Development	135	3.45 (0.870)	1.66 (0.920)	High/moderate
2. Indexing and Abstracting	135	3.27 (0.885)	1.61 (0.922)	High/moderate
3. Bibliography and Library Consulting	135	3.20 (0.700)	2.64 (0.967)	High/high
4. Cataloguing	135	3.15 (0.768)	1.47 (0.731)	High/low
5. Information Search and Retrieval	135	3.14 (0.916)	2.66 (1.080)	High/high
6. Book Publishing	135	3.11 (0.895)	1.86 (0.924)	High/moderate
7. Desktop Publishing	135	3.05 (0.964)	1.14 (0.673)	High/low
8. Current Awareness Services	135	2.93 (0.816)	2.36 (1.143)	High/moderate
9. Web Designing	135	2.93 (0.816)	2.07 (0.979)	High/moderate
10. Networking/internet services	135	2.89 (1.170)	2.01 (1.103)	High/moderate
11. Information Brokerage	135	2.57 (0.877)	2.20 (0.983)	High/moderate
12. Digitization	135	2.57 (0.877)	2.15 (0.943)	High/moderate
13. Data base Production and Distribution	135	1.67 (0.977)	1.33 (0.667)	Moderate/low
14. Compilation of Directory and Guide	135	1.57 (0.797)	1.33 (0.584)	Moderate/low

In Table 2 we find the mean differences in the second column, t is the calculated paired t-test and Sig is the P-values which indicate significance of the mean differences.

If the P-value ≤ 0.05 , it indicates significant mean difference. Observe that the mean difference in the rating is significantly different in all the entrepreneurial skills. .

Table 2: Paired t-test of difference between the mean rating for available and acquired entrepreneurial skills by students in the library school.

Entrepreneurship skills	mean	t	Df.	Sig
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1. Collection Development	0.793	6.907	134	.000
2. Indexing and Abstracting	1.659	16.903	134	.000
3. Bibliography and Library Consulting	1.193	10.376	134	.000
4. Cataloguing	1.081	8.754	134	.000
5. Information Search and Retrieval	0.785	6.258	134	.000
6. Book Publishing	1.252	11.923	134	.000
7. Desktop Publishing	1.637	16.092	134	.000
8. Current Awareness Services	0.778	6.938	134	.000
9. Web Designing	1.452	12.781	134	.000
10. Networking/internet services	0.252	2.809	134	.006
11. Information Brokerage	0.370	5.519	134	.000
12. Digitization	0.889	7.793	134	.000
13. Data base Production and Distribution	0.341	3.815	134	.000
14. Compilation of Directory and Guide	0.244	4.519	134	.000

Table 3 shows the correlation coefficient of the ratings on the entrepreneurial skills based on the courses thought and the ratings on the acquired entrepreneurial skills. With a P-value < 0.05, it shows significant correlation. The result shows that Indexing and Abstracting, Cataloguing, Web Designing, Networking/internet services, Information Brokerage, Data base Production and Distribution and Compilation of Directory and Guide have significant correlation in the ratings. This implies consistency in the rating of the students of the library schools.

Table 3: The correlation coefficients of the rating for available and acquired Entrepreneurship skills by students in the library school.

Entrepreneurship skills	N	Correlation	Sig.
1. Collection Development	135	0.078	.370
2. Indexing and Abstracting	135	0.204	.018
3. Bibliography and Library Consulting	135	-0.050	.562
4. Cataloguing	135	-0.341	.000
5. Information Search and Retrieval	135	0.009	.919
6. Book Publishing	135	0.100	.247
7. Desktop Publishing	135	-0.010	.905
8. Current Awareness Services	135	-0.092	.287
9. Web Designing	135	-0.453	.000
10. Networking/internet services	135	0.538	.000

11. Information Brokerage	135	0.654	.000
12. Digitization	135	-0.088	.312
13. Data base Production and Distribution	135	0.248	.004
14. Compilation of Directory and Guide	135	0.624	.000

From the result of the analysis on table 1; the following are the major Entrepreneurial skills acquired by LS students: Information Search and Retrieval, Bibliography and Library Consulting and Current Awareness Services while the least acquired skill is desktop publishing.

The result of the analysis of the data on table 1 further shows that majority of the respondents rated the entrepreneurial courses offered to LS student higher than the acquired entrepreneurial skills. The reasons may be from the students who may not agree that majority of the entrepreneurial courses are offered to inculcate entrepreneurial skills on them.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study have great important education implications for library school students, lecturers in library schools and librarians. It has been established that the teaching of courses leading to entrepreneurship skills in LS are not impacting the required knowledge on the new graduates being produced. Lack of competency on the part of students will not only make them unemployable but ill-prepared to engage in self-employed careers and even employ others. The implication of this study is that the study has revealed the low competent level of students in entrepreneurship.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the curriculum be beefed up and some information services included in order to help prepare students for self-employment after school. More practically oriented programs should be inculcated in the courses to help the students practice what they learn.

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