

Educators' Rating of Strategies Considered Necessary for Motivation of Potential Entrepreneurs among Secondary School Students for Poverty Alleviation in Anambra State

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Abstract

Timely planning and strategizing for the future had remained the major strength of wealthy nations; who in a bid to unleash their full development potentials, have set up educational programmes, necessary to fight poverty in all its ramifications. This study aimed at assessing strategies considered necessary for the motivation of potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students for poverty alleviation in Anambra State of Nigeria. The study was a descriptive survey conducted with 110 business educators purposively sampled from five local government areas in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the conduct of the study and one null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance. A validated structured questionnaire with reliability coefficient of 0.94 was used for data collection. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores and z-test statistic. The findings of the study revealed among others that cash and scholarship awards, exposing students to entrepreneurship education such as interacting with small scale business owners, display of project materials and government sponsorship, were considered as highly necessary strategies. However, special gift from teachers and school authority, recognizing students through assigning of responsibilities were considered as barely necessary strategies by the business educators. It was concluded that the strategies considered fairly necessary and above should be used to motivate potential entrepreneurs in secondary schools. It was recommended among others that educators should constantly be provided with in-service training on entrepreneurship programmes to help them develop entrepreneurial skills required for effective motivation of potential entrepreneurs in their subjects.

Keywords: Poverty Alleviation, Motivation, Potential Entrepreneurs, Educators and Strategies

Introduction

Poverty has been described as a condition of being extremely poor, characterized by such poor economic and social conditions as inadequate food, poor accommodation, poor health services, poor education, unemployment, low income, poor technology and dependence among individuals and nations (Okoli & Ezenwafor 2014; Egwuoniso, 2008). Although poverty is a global problem, its menace is more pronounced in the developing nations. In these countries, fight against poverty has been a hard nut to crack.

Federal Government of Nigeria at different periods has instituted poverty alleviation programmes to improve the standard of living of its citizenry. Such programmes instituted to fight poverty include National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS) 1 and 2, Entrepreneurship development programmes among others. In spite of these efforts poverty has remained pervasive and endemic in the country (NPC, 2007). Nigeria in 2008 had a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.470 (Human Development Index Report, 2008) and 0.471 in 2013 (Guardian Mobile, 2013). This indicates an insignificant change in HDI after a period of five years, considering government efforts towards alleviation of poverty in the country. Poverty in Nigeria could be attributed to so many factors such as poor economic policies, poor value orientation, and poor provision of infrastructural and social amenities especially in rural areas; low productivity in agricultural and industrial sectors resulting from low skill possession among workers. Others are inadequate school curricula and high level of unemployment resulting from lack of saleable skills among graduates from the various educational institutions (Eya, 2000 and Okoli, 2011).

Education as a human development strategy has been regarded as the greatest facilitator of change; as there is considerable evidence that education help to empower people (Maaiké and Marguerite, 1995). It transforms individuals and nations from a poor state of involuntary deprivation to a comfortable level of need satisfaction, with the possession of required skills. This is made possible by its capacity to transmit knowledge, skills, abilities, values and attitudes necessary for an individual's development and utilization of resources for his own benefit and the society at large

Educators are professional teachers who impart knowledge necessary for effective performance in

general life affairs and in the world of work. Besides basic trainings received as teachers, educators are required to be regularly exposed to innovations in their professional areas such as in entrepreneurship education and others for provision of quality educations at primary, secondary and tertiary institutional levels for proper adjustment in the world of work.

Presently in Nigeria and world over, much emphasis is placed on entrepreneurship education among youths to fortify them with necessary entrepreneurial skills, for effective performance in the business world and to be self reliant. Nwaiwu (2009) posited that the essence of business education like other aspect of education is to turnout graduates who will become entrepreneurs tomorrow. Entrepreneurs own businesses, they are innovators, organizers and coordinators of other factors of production. Steinhoff and Burgess in Ile and Okereke (2014) noted that entrepreneurs need special characteristics and skills to succeed in business. Such characteristics include; entrepreneurship knowledge, attitudes and skills which are regarded as occupational survival skills. An entrepreneur must be willing to take risks, plan, organize and implement them. Junaid (2009) defined entrepreneurship education as aspect of the general vocational education that enables a person to develop the willingness and ability to explore and exploit opportunity, and for establishing and managing business enterprises successfully.

Potential entrepreneurs as used in this study are secondary school students who exhibit some creative and innovative characters for ownership of business early in their school age. They are seen as students with entrepreneurship potentials. Awojobi (2006) posited that these entrepreneurial characteristics are viewed as behavioural characteristics and could be used in identification of potential entrepreneurs. Others are; dream and desire, status and prestige, challenge, freedom and financial independence. Secondary school is an educational level in Nigerian system of education, attained after successful completion of primary education. This is of two tiers; 3 years Upper Basic (Junior Secondary) and 3 years Senior Secondary. Students at this level are found between 11 and 18 years. Students at this stage of development build values and skills required for their future success. The objectives of secondary education are to prepare students for useful living in the society and for higher learning (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

Omoniyi (2006) noted that government introduced entrepreneurship education into secondary school curriculum to prepare the students for useful living in the society and to enable them make positive contributions to the development of the nation. Motivation of these students with promising entrepreneurial potential are essential for timely planning of human resources; and building up skills in them that will help them become successful entrepreneurs in future. The sense of vocationalism is inculcated among the students to make them develop a positive feeling about being a part of a work, occupation and the employer group. Oku (2006) noted motivation as the inner drive that results from the individual innate desires, instinct and environmental stimuli. Motivation of potential entrepreneurs therefore refers to measures in the form of rewards and teachings that are expected to reinforce entrepreneurial spirit and interest among secondary school students for acquisition of more skills and abilities they required for successful entrepreneurship after graduation. Such measures include teachings on entrepreneurial skills as spirit of hard-work, competence and dedication to duty. Others are praises, exhibitions of project works, gifts etc. (Awojobi, 2006). Development of these entrepreneurial skills early in the life of the Nigerian child will make him develop values for ownership of successful business in future. This will also make them to appreciate government efforts towards the funding of entrepreneurial projects for national development.

It is against this background that this study was conceived to ascertain the strategies considered necessary for motivation of potential entrepreneurs in secondary schools of Anambra State.

Strategies for Motivation of Potential Entrepreneurs

The integration of entrepreneurship education into subjects and courses at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in Nigerian educational system is a major strategy in the motivation of potential entrepreneurs. Earl and Kathleen (1994) indicated that many entrepreneurs were influenced early in life by role models whose attitude and achievement they tried to replicate. They went further to outline the activities that can strengthen entrepreneurial characteristics. Such include; reading articles and books about entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activities, watching films about business people or others who are achievement orientated, writing about individuals who overcome obstacles to achieve success, working through case studies that involve goal oriented behavior, creativity and moderate risk taking.

Onyechi and Obiekezie (2010) outlined strategies that could be used in teaching entrepreneurship education and that which could be used to motivate potential entrepreneurial students in secondary schools to becoming successful entrepreneurs in future. They are; teacher career talks on how to run small scale business, use of slides and transparencies on business ideas, film display of shows on how to conduct board meetings; Others are self instruction on entrepreneurship, formation of business clubs, class discussion on entrepreneurship teachings, teaching students entrepreneurship skills in class and giving students assignment on entrepreneurship.

Theoretical Framework Work

This study is strengthened by the behaviour modification theory of B.F Skinner. The theory holds that behavior is caused primarily by externally induced stimuli. Skinner propounded that all behavior is shaped and maintained by its consequences. A man does something because of reinforcement he receives from similar behavior in the past. If the outcome of his action is pleasing to him, the likelihood of repeating that same action is high. Reinforcement is something that increases the probability of behavior occurring again. It is a reward or incentive to behave in a certain way. This may be tangible or intangible as in praises and approvals. This study is interested in the positive reinforcement.

It is based on these ideas that potential entrepreneurs are motivated and are encouraged to become successful entrepreneurs in future. In the light of the above, the behaviour modification theory is therefore considered the best in this work.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship education was introduced in Nigerian schools as a measure to inculcate skills among students to own their own business after graduation for self employment; also as a short term programme organized for those already in business to ensure success of their businesses for increased earnings. This is expected to alleviate poverty among Nigerian populace for improved standard of living.

Unfortunately, against these expectations unemployment rate in Nigeria has continued to rise as many of its graduates roam around the street looking for white collar jobs which are not available (Chibuike, 2014). They are also unable to establish their own businesses. Even when some of them do so, they end up prematurely (Ezenwafor & Okoli, 2014).

This unsatisfactory state of affairs has created worry in the mind of the researchers as to whether the graduates are not interested in owning their own businesses? And as to whether the entrepreneurial values and skills were not imparted early enough in their lives, to enable them develop necessary characteristics required for success in their businesses? It is this gap that this study seeks to fill, to find out strategies considered necessary for motivation of the potential entrepreneurs early enough from their secondary school age.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain the strategies considered necessary for the motivation of potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students in Anambra State.

Specifically the study was sought to:

1. Find out the extent reinforcement of students' efforts was considered as a necessary strategy for motivating potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students.
2. Find out the extent exposing students to entrepreneurship education was considered as a necessary strategy for motivating potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the conduct of the study. In the opinion of business educators in secondary schools of Anambra State:

1. To what extent do you consider reinforcement of students' effort as a necessary strategy for motivating potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students?
2. To what extent is exposure of students to entrepreneurship education considered as a necessary strategy for motivating potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students?

Hypothesis

One null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance

Business educators in senior and junior secondary schools do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of extent to which exposing students to entrepreneurship education is considered as a necessary strategy for motivating potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students in Anambra state.

Method

This study was a descriptive survey. The sample comprised 110 business educators in public secondary schools in five local government areas of Anambra State, namely; Awka North, Awka South, Aniocha, Dunukofia and Njikoka.

Data were collected with a structured questionnaire of five points scale response categories of Very Highly Necessary (VHN), Highly Necessary (HN), Fairly Necessary (FN), Barely Necessary (BN) and Not Necessary (NN).

Two research assistants were trained on the content and purpose of the study. They helped in the administration of data for the study. The questionnaire was validated and Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used

to test reliability which was established at 0.94. Out of 110 copies of questionnaire distributed, 105 were returned and were found usable.

The data collected were analyzed with mean scores and z-test statistics. In determining the strategies considered necessary, the responses obtained were weighted as follows:

Very Highly Necessary -	4.50 – 5.00
Highly Necessary -	3.50 – 4.49
Fairly Necessary -	2.50 – 3.49
Barely Necessary -	1.50 – 2.49
Not Necessary	0.50 – 1.49

Results

The results of this study are presented in tables 1 to 3.

Table 1: Respondents' Mean rating of the extent to which reinforcement was considered a necessary strategy for motivation of potential entrepreneurs in the secondary school

N = 105

S/N	Items on Reinforcement as a Strategy	Mean X	Remarks
1	Cash rewards for good performance	3.75	HN
2	Scholarship award for good performance before other students	3.65	HN
3	Verbal praise for good performance before other Students	3.93	HN
4	Display of project materials during exhibition or seminar	3.50	HN
5	Government sponsorship to participate in state/federal competition	3.68	HN
6	School sponsorship to participate in national school competition	3.61	HN
7	Sponsorship of private enterprise	3.22	FN
8	Special material gift from teachers and school authority	2.25	BN
9	Discussing students achievement in newspapers and magazines	2.34	BN
10	Recognizing students through assigning responsibilities to them.	2.17	BN

The data contained in table 1 shows that out of the 10 reinforcement strategies rated five were considered as highly necessary, one was considered as fairly necessary and four were considered barely necessary for the motivation of potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students.

Table 2: Respondents' Mean Rating on the Extent Exposing Students to Entrepreneurship Education is considered a Necessary Strategy for Motivation of Potential Entrepreneurs among Secondary School Students

N = 105

S/N	Items on Exposing Students to Entrepreneurship Education	Mean X	Remarks
11	Role playing	2.20	BN
12	Organizing group fund raising activities leading to profit making	2.35	BN
13	Developing a class model business of successful entrepreneurs	2.30	BN
14	Interacting with small scale business owners	3.53	HN
15	The study of biography of successful entrepreneurs	3.66	HN
16	Formation of business club e.g young farmers clubs, cooperative societies etc.	3.16	FN
17	Interaction with successful business though excursion	3.50	HN
18	Use of slides and power point to teach business ideas being expressed by successful entrepreneurs	3.75	HN
19	Teachers talk on how to run business	3.95	HN
20	Pep talk which builds self confidence in students	2.99	FN

The data in table 2 shows that out of the 10 items rated on exposing students to entrepreneurs education, five were considered highly necessary, two was fairly necessary and three considered barely necessary in the motivation of potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students.

Table 3: Z-test summary of senior and junior secondary school business educators' mean rating of the extent exposure of students to entrepreneurship education is considered a necessary strategy for motivation of potential entrepreneurs.

N = 105							
Business Educators	N	X	SD	DF	z-cal	z-crit.	Sig. Level
SSS Educators	57	3.50	1.39				
JSS Educators	48	3.02	1.09	103	1.54	1.960	P < 0.05

The results presented in table 3 show that the calculated z-value 1.54 is less than the critical z-value of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Discussion and Implications of the Study

The findings of this study revealed some reinforcement strategies that were considered necessary for motivation of potential entrepreneurs in secondary school. They are cash awards, scholarship award for good performance, verbal praise for good performance, displaying of project materials during exhibition, government sponsorship to participate in competitions, and sponsorship to participate in national school competition. The above findings is in agreement with Ikeagu (2007) findings that scholarship awards, verbal praise of students before others and giving material gift to students in reinforcement of good performance could be potential ways of motivating students to exhibit entrepreneurial characteristics.

The findings of this study also discovered that exposing students to entrepreneurship education were considered as a necessary motivation strategy to potential entrepreneurs in secondary schools. They include: studying the biography of successful entrepreneurs, interacting with successful businessmen during excursion, using slides and power point to teach business ideas of successful entrepreneurs, and teacher's career talk on how to run business. The above findings agree with the findings of Chikeobi and Ezenduka (2011) that discovered that potential entrepreneurs in secondary schools can be exposed to entrepreneurial skills and ideas through teaching them the biography of entrepreneurs; and organizing excursions for them to interact with successful business men and their operations.

Senior and junior secondary school business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on exposing students to entrepreneurship education as a strategy considered necessary for motivating potential entrepreneurs.

The findings have some implications for the principals who should not only recommended their teachers for in-service training programmes in entrepreneurship development but also encourage them to attend the programmes. Principals should guide their teachers to grow professionally in entrepreneurship development. The educators also need to motivate their students entrepreneurially and maintain good working relationship with them.

The findings of this study also have implications for secondary school subject curriculum planners in the setting of objectives and organization of learning experiences, necessary to motivate and encourage the characteristics required for the development of potential entrepreneurs in secondary schools.

Conclusion

From these findings the researcher concluded that reinforcement strategies and exposure to entrepreneurship education were considered as necessary strategies for the motivation of potential entrepreneurs among secondary school students. However strategies considered fairly necessary and above should be used in the motivation of potential entrepreneurs in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Educators in Anambra State secondary schools should be sponsored by federal and state governments for in-service training programmes on entrepreneurial skill development. This will enable them identify and motivate potential entrepreneurs in their subjects
2. Different strategies for motivating potential entrepreneurs in classrooms should be used by secondary school educators during delivery of their lessons.
3. Regular seminars, workshops and symposia should be organized for educators in secondary schools, with a view to helping them acquire entrepreneurial skills and inculcating in them new approaches to entrepreneurship development.

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