

## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILL NEEDS FOR REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT AS PERCEIVED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES IN IDEMILI NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study assessed the entrepreneurship skills for reduction of unemployment as perceived by secondary school students in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. It was guided by three research questions. The study employed a descriptive survey research design and was carried out in public secondary schools in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. A sample of 500 students was drawn from the population of 5205 SSIII students in 14 public secondary schools in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. A 15 item questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts and the reliability ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. An overall reliability co-efficient of 0.82 was obtained and this was deemed high enough, thus the instrument was considered suitable for the study. Mean scores were used to answer the research questions. The result of findings showed that entrepreneurship skills for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates include: creative thinking skill, financial management and technical management skill needs. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government should periodically train and retrain vocational and prevocational subject teacher in various skills such as: initiative capacity building and financial management.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Skills, Unemployment, Secondary Education

### **Introduction**

Unemployment seems to be one of the major challenges most post basic and higher education leavers especially the secondary education leavers face after graduation in Nigeria. It is important to lay emphasis on entrepreneurial education so as to enable secondary school students acquire basic skills that would enable them become productive; thereby reduce unemployment. Secondary education is a strategic level of education that prepares an individual for self –realization and development. According to Federal Government of Nigeria in National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013) secondary education is an education children received after primary education and before the tertiary education. More importantly, secondary education curriculum was structured to be pre-vocational, vocational and academic. There are various specific goals of secondary

education, among them as identified in FGN (2013) include to: provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education at a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background; offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles; provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub professional grades; inspire students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence; provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

From the above, it is clear that secondary education aimed at preparing its students to become entrepreneurs. An entrepreneur is a person who organizes a business venture and assumes business associated risk. Thus, effective business related skills are acquired through entrepreneurship education. According to Johnson (2015) entrepreneurship education is a conscious and purposeful effort by an educator that is geared towards inculcating entrepreneurial skills and attitudes to enhance the success of the learners in the world of business.

Despite the structured secondary education goals which targeted at preparing students with necessary entrepreneurial education and skills, it appears that most students who graduate from Nigerian secondary schools today seems to lack the basic creative skills, business innovative ideas and capabilities at that level for effective functioning in the society.

Moreover, it appears that the rate of increase in unemployment could be as a result of the lapses in acquiring entrepreneurial skills in secondary school. Unemployment is defined as a situation in which persons of working age, able and willing to work are unable to find a paid employment. In other words, unemployment could be referred to as a situation in which people who are capable of working and who are qualified by age to work cannot find employment.

Presently, unemployment among the youths is a serious issue confronting our nation today. It seems the root cause of poverty, youth restiveness, cultism, killings, gangsterism, armed robbery, kidnapping, assassination, lawlessness, harlotry, extorting, child trafficking, cultism, drug peddling and all sorts of deviant behaviours. In addition, the increase in cyber crimes such as hacking, copyright infringement and unwarranted mass-surveillance still point to the state of lacking entrepreneurial skill such that will gain graduating students basic skills that will help them gain employment thereby increasing the problem of unemployment.

In view of the above problems, therefore; identifying the entrepreneurial skill needs becomes paramount in order to effectively groom students into becoming entrepreneur after graduation. According to Madu and Okunna (2019), entrepreneurship skill needs are the necessary requirement which an entrepreneur acquires to enable him to manage an enterprise. There are various entrepreneurial skills students should acquire in order to be

employable after graduation. Among such skills include; creative thinking, financial management and technical skill (Offorma, 2011, Madu and Okunna 2019). Creative thinking skill is the ability to create something new or original. It involves logical thinking and reasoning in any business enterprise. Creativity helps students to be innovative and also be able to face business challenges.

Another entrepreneurial skill needed by students is financial management skill. This skill enables the entrepreneur to manage his or her finances adequately. Madu and Okunna (2019) asserted that financial management skill is important for successful entrepreneurial development. Financial management is a skill that enables the entrepreneur to control his business by keeping accurate bookkeeping, measuring and interpreting the financial results of the business by the preparation of certain statistics called accounting ratios. Lastly, technical skills which involve having specific knowledge and techniques in a specific area of business to guarantee effective performance. However, if the stated goals of secondary education are to be achieved, the secondary education sector should equip its graduates with adequate skills such that would enable them gain employment, which would in turn reduce unemployment among students after graduation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The rate of unemployment in Idemili North Local Government Area today particularly among secondary school graduates has become a source of concern to the researchers. Despite all the laudable national secondary educational goals which particularly aimed at equipping students with essential skills that would enable them become self-reliance and semi self-employed among secondary school leavers in Nigeria. It appears that graduates from secondary school lack entrepreneurial skills or attitudinal disposition for gainful employment. This observation correlate with the views of Ocholi (2011) that students upon graduation roam the street looking for white collar jobs because they lack the skills that will enable them to be self-reliant. This worrisome situation prompted this research on the entrepreneurial skills needs for reduction of unemployment tendencies among senior secondary students in Idemili North Local Government.

The main purpose of this study was to find out the entrepreneurial skill needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary student graduate in Idemili North Local Government Area. Specifically, the study sought to determined:

4. The creative thinking skill needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area, of Anambra State
5. The financial management skill needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area, of Anambra State

6. The technical skill needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area, of Anambra State

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

4. What are the creative thinking skills needed for reduction of unemployment among senior secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area?
5. What are the financial management skills needed for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area?
6. What are the technical skills needed for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area?

### **Method**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Nworgu (2015), in a descriptive survey, data collected from few people considered to be representative of a population is analysed and generalizations made from it about the population.

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Idemili North Local Government Area comprises ten towns namely Abacha, Abatete, Eziowelle, Ideani, Nkpor, Obosi, Ogidi, Oraukwu, Uke and Umuoji.

The population of the study consists of all 5205 SSIII students in the 257 public secondary schools in Idemili North government area in Anambra State. The data are as collected from the Statistics Departments of Post Primary School Services Commission at Awka in (PPSSC) in May, 2020.

A sample 500 out of 5205 SSIII students were involved in the study using simple random sampling technique. A 15 itemed questionnaire was used for data collection. It was structured in a 4-point rating scale. The questionnaire consisted of three parts A, B and C. Part A of the instrument elicited information on the creative thinking skill needs, Part B on financial management skill needs and Part C on technical skill needs. The response categories were rated as Strongly Disagree (SD) =1, Disagree (D) =2, Agree (A) =3, strongly Agree (SA)

The questionnaire was validated by three experts and the reliability ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. This yielded an overall index of 0.82. Data were collected by the researchers with the help of one research assistant who was a secondary school teacher in Idemili North Local Government Area. A total of 500 copies of questionnaire were distributed but only 470 copies representing 94% were returned and used for data analysis.

Mean scores were used in answering the research questions. Any item with mean score of 2.5 and above was regarded as being in agreement while any item that had below 2.5 was regarded otherwise.

## Results

**Table 1: Mean Scores of students on the Creative Skills needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area in Anambra State.**

S/N	The creative skills needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates include:	N	Mean	Remark
1	Ability to recognize and evaluate appropriate business opportunities	470	3.32	Needed
2	Insightful knowledge to create something new	470	3.76	Needed
3	Ability to analyze business information effectively	470	3.18	Needed
4	Ability to transform innovative ideas into profitable ventures	470	3.45	Needed
5	Ability to evaluate business information	470	3.2	Needed
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>			<b>3.38</b>	<b>NEEDED</b>

Data in Table 1 reveal the grand mean scores of 3.38. The mean score is above the decision level of 2.50 indicating that the items in table 1 are creative skills need for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area.

**Table 2: Mean Scores response on the Financial Management Skills for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area**

S/N	The Financial Management Skills for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates include:	N	Mean	Remark
6	Ability to effectively utilize available financial resources	470	3.75	Needed
7	Ability to effectively handle cash transaction to avoid financial loss	470	3.20	Needed
8	Maintaining accurate record keeping for accounting for every transaction	470	3.15	Needed

9	Ability to prepare financial statement	470	3.09	Needed
10	Ability to maintain a steady cash flow	470	3.32	Needed
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>			<b>3.30</b>	<b>NEEDED</b>

Data in Table 2 shows the grand mean score of 3.30. The mean score is above the decision level of 2.50 indicating that secondary school students in Idemili North agreed that the items in table 2 are the financial management skills need for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area.

**Table 3: Mean Scores response on the Technical Skills needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area**

S/N	The technical skills needs for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates include:	N	Mean	Remark
11	Ability to effectively understand all factors in the production of goods and services	470	3.79	Needed
12	Ability to identify the appropriate location of the business	470	3.08	Needed
13	Ability to calculate the material requirements for the business	470	3.19	Needed
14	Ability to evaluate technical problems	470	3.21	Needed
15	Ability to acquire in-depth technical competence in a particular business	470	3.40	Needed
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>			<b>3.33</b>	<b>NEEDED</b>

Data in Table 3 reveals the grand mean score of 3.33, this being above the decision level of 2.50, indicating that senior secondary school students in Idemili North agreed that the items in table 3 are the technical skills need for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North Local Government Area.

## Discussion

The results of the study revealed that the creative skill is a needed for reduction of unemployment among secondary school graduates. Among the creative skill need include: the ability to recognize and evaluate appropriate business opportunities, insightful knowledge to create something new or improve upon existing one, ability to analyze business information effectively, ability to transform innovative ideas into profitable ventures and ability to evaluate the truthfulness of business information. The above finding is consistent with Madu and Okunna(2019) who observed that creative skills is among the

entrepreneurial skills needed by final year students of the faculty of education. Similarly, the findings of this study is in line with Abiola (2008) who opined that engaging in creativity activity could improve one's self esteem, self motivation and self-achievement. Creativity will help students to be innovative, and also be able to face challenges. Also the creative skill could give the students the ability to brainstorm solution which is very important for successful management of small scale business enterprise. This will be of great help to students so that they can be successful entrepreneurs after graduation

The study also revealed that secondary school graduates need to acquire financial management skills in order to reduce unemployment tendencies. Among such skills include acquiring to: ability to effectively utilize available financial resources, Ability to effectively handle cash transaction to avoid financial loss, maintain accurate record keeping for accounting for every transaction, Ability to prepare financial statement and Ability to maintain a steady cash flow. The above finding concurs with Madu and Okunna (2019) who observed that financial management skills are needed to make students acquire knowledge to manage assets and monetary resources. The findings are also in line with Igboke (2005) who asserted that financial management skill need is important for successful entrepreneurial development. This finding is an indication that students need to acquire financial management skill to reduce unemployment tendencies among secondary schools. More importantly, it therefore implied that financial management skills acquired through entrepreneurship education would aid to direct the energies of prospective secondary school graduates towards being fruitful in economic endeavours.

The study also revealed that the technical skill needs for senior secondary students to be successful entrepreneurs include: Ability to effectively understand all factors in the production of goods and services, Ability to identify the appropriate location of the business, Ability to calculate the material requirements for the business, Ability to evaluate technical problems and Ability to acquire in-depth technical competence in a particular business. This finding is consistent with Obi (2005) who noted that without students especially graduating ones possessing enough technical skills in their various trades, other abilities cannot withstand the test of time. The study revealed that the technical skill needs of senior secondary students are: ability to effectively understand all factors in the production of goods and services, identify appropriate location for the business, and calculate material requirements for the business, among others.

## **Conclusion**

It was concluded that creative skills, financial management and technical skills are the needed entrepreneurial skills for reducing unemployment among secondary school graduates in Idemili North local government area. In this regard therefore, vocational and prevocational subject teachers should direct their energies towards imparting these

entrepreneurial skills to students in order to reduce unemployment and be more fruitful in economic endeavours.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. Government should take necessary measures to create more awareness through empowerment schemes and programs on the need for entrepreneurship. These must be practical, pragmatic and proactive.
2. Qualified and business oriented teachers should be recruited in our secondary schools for proper transmission of right entrepreneurship knowledge.
3. Senior secondary students, especially the SS III students should be encouraged to utilize their creative thinking abilities and potentials in order to help them to identify business opportunities after graduation.

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