

PERCEIVED AREAS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND THE STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AMONG SANITARIANS IN JOS SOUTH LGA OF PLATEAU STATE.

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Abstract

The paper investigates perceived area of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and the strategies for the development among sanitarians in Jos South LGA of Plateau State. The study made use of the survey design of descriptive research through the use of structured questionnaire. The sample for the study consisted of 41 male and 27 female sanitarians. Two (2) research questions and hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study identified the areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and the strategies for the development of these entrepreneurial skills were equally identified. It was recommended out of many that government should establish craft and innovation centers in all local government areas to empower sanitarians in realizing the dream of becoming selfreliance.

Keywords:*Entrepreneurial Skills; Environmental Health; Strategies for Development and Sanitarians.*

Introduction

The twenty first century has been tagged as the “entrepreneurial age.” This is because entrepreneurship is seen as one of the basic means of stimulating economic growth and development through the generation of greater employment opportunities, development of local technological base and conservation of foreign exchange earning of national governments (Ekele, and Davou, 2009). The issue of developing entrepreneurial skill cannot be over emphasized when considered in the light of the present rate of youth unemployment in most African countries, including. Ekele, and Davou (2009) further stated that youth unemployment in most African countries has reached alarming proportions due to increased population growth, rapid expansion of the education system, high level of rural-urban migration, political conflicts and worsening economic performance. Consequently, Agusta and Constance (2022) reported the unemployment rate in Nigeria has hits 35% as at 2021. In an attempt to salvage the current situation, the African government where Nigeria is a member, adopted the vocational system of Education in line with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2005 Education Summit (Uwa, 2009). Thus, interdisciplinary entrepreneurial education in Nigerian was incorporated into the school curriculum.

Entrepreneurial skills is all about the acquisition of skills that would enable individual to be self-employed and self-reliant, thereby, creating job and wealth through rendering public services that are unique and essential; thus, contributing to National development.

According to the New York State Education Department (1995) Entrepreneurial skills are related to identifying business opportunities and receiving a sustainable income from these opportunities. Entrepreneurial skills include both cognitive abilities needed to make informed judgments, leading to creative arts and sustainability and the disposition to meet environmental challenges (New York State Education Department, 1995; Ekele, 2009).

From the foregoing definition of entrepreneurial skills, environmental health is an aspect of public health with high rate of entrepreneurial opportunities that when fully identified and developed could serve as a veritable and sustainable source of income to the unemployed youths. Some experts in the field of environmental health, Gimba (2018) identified some areas in environmental health that have potentials for improving entrepreneurial skills to include operating a patient medicine store, setting up a clean-up company, reuse and recycling of waste, small/large waste management service, supplying of potable water services, fumigation of premise, offering consultancy services, construction of simple sanitary tools, production of sachet water, production of household products, evacuating filled-up sock-away and providing commercial mobile toilet services. Invariable, Koli (2019) enumerated key approaches that support entrepreneurship development in Nigeria to include formation and implementation of practicable policies, provision practical equipment to schools, establishment of craft centers and availability of funds to entrepreneurial minded individuals in field of endeavors. It is therefore clear that environmental health is one area of entrepreneurship, that if carefully harnessed and if exploited (developed) can help in addressing the high rate of youth unemployment amongst Nigerians.

The study evaluates the development of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health among sanitarian in Jos South Local Government of Plateau State. Specifically, the study identified the perceived areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and the strategies for the development of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship is seen as one of the basic means of stimulating economic growth and development through the generation of greater employment opportunities, development of local technological base and conservation of foreign exchange earning of national governments. Developing entrepreneurial skill cannot be over emphasized when considering the light of the present rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria especially in Plateau State. Youth unemployment in Plateau State, more especially Jos South local government area has reached alarming proportions due to increased population growth, rapid expansion of the education system, high level of rural-urban migration, political, tribal and religion conflicts have even worsening economic activities in the area. It is in against this background that this study is being carry out to investigate the perceived area of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and the strategies for the development among sanitarians in Jos South LGA of Plateau State

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study is to:

1. Find out the perceived areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health
2. Find out the strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health

Research Questions

The following research questions are stated:

1. What are the perceived areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health?
2. What are the strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypothesis were formulated for this study:

1. There is no significant influence on the perceived areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health
2. There is no significant influence on the strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health among sanitarians in Jos South LGA of Plateau State.

Methodology

The study made use of the descriptive research design through the use of questionnaire. The target population of the study comprised of all the Sanitarians in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau state. The population was finite, thus the whole licenced environmental health officers in Jos South comprising of 41 male and 27 female sanitarians was used for this study. The instrument used for data collection was a Self-developed-Strategy in Developing Entrepreneurial Skill in Environmental Health Questionnaire (SDESEHQ). The instrument contained 22 test items, divided into (3) sections. Section "A" contained two sociodemographic variables of sex and level of education. Section "B" contained 10 items on perceived areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and Section "C" contained 10 items on strategies for the developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health.

The questionnaire items were a modified Likert scale of five point rating response format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree(A), Undecided(UN), Strongly Disagree(SD), Disagree(D) with numerical values of 5,4,3,2,and 1, respectively. Mean score statistics was used for analyzing the research questions. A mean score of 3.0 was used as the decision mean. Thus, a mean response was considered an area of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and a strategy for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health when it is 3.0 and above. Conversely, it was not considered an area of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health and a strategy for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health when it is less than 3.0 Chi-square statistics was employed to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Table 1: Perceived Areas of Entrepreneurial Skills in Environmental Health

S/N	Perceived areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health	Mean (x) (Sanitarians)
1	Providing consultancy services.	2.86
2	Re-use or recycling of waste material.	2.49
3	Production of sachet water.	3.37
4	Commercial Supply of potable water.	3.36
5	Fumigation of premises.	3.46
6	Operating a patient medicine service.	3.62
7	Construction of simple sanitary tools.	2.60
8	Wastes evacuation services.	2.63
9	Operating a clean-up company.	3.08
10	Providing commercial mobile toilet services.	3.43
	Decision Mean	3.00

Table 1 revealed that Production of sachet water ($x=3.37$), Commercial supply of potable water ($x=3.36$), Fumigation of premises ($x=3.46$) Operating a patient medicine service ($x=3.62$), Operating a clean-up company ($x=3.08$) and Production of commercial mobile toilets ($x=3.43$) were the perceived areas of environmental health.

Table 2: Strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health

S/N	Strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health	Mean (x) (sanitarians)
1	Parents should encourage their wards to engage in innovative business activities particularly the one that could charge waste to wealth.	3.26
2	Practical lessons should be emphasized in the teaching of environmental health in schools and colleges to better equipped students on hand at work. Environmental health training in colleges should be supported by providing adequate equipment and standard learning facilities.	3.08
3		3.22
4		3.21
5	Undergraduate students of environmental health at all level should undergo Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in all the sensitive areas of environmental health so as to acquire more practical skills.	3.63
6	Practicable policies by governments at all level should be formulated to stimulate entrepreneurial growth and development. Manufacturing and production of environmental materials and equipment be made component part of the environment health curriculum at all level of education.	3.54
7		3.38
8	Establishment of environmental health craft centers in all the State and LGA to enable youth acquire skills for the production of sanitary equipment and household materials.	3.08
9	Marketing should be made a component part of the environmental health curriculum both at ND, HND and Degree. This would bring about exposure and awareness of the various marketing strategies.	3.29
10	Starter packs should be made available to support graduate students of environmental health.	3.75
	Banks and other financial house should provide loan facility at low interest rate to environmental health entrepreneurs	
	Decision Mean	3.00

Table 2 revealed that banks and other financial houses should provide loan facility at low interest rate to environmental health entrepreneurs ($x = 3.75$); practicable policies by governments at all level should be formulated to stimulate entrepreneurial growth and development ($x = 3.63$) and manufacturing and production of environmental materials and equipment be made component part of the environment health curriculum at all level of education ($x = 3.54$) among others were all strategies for the development of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health. The result agrees with Koli (2019) who identified key approaches that could support entrepreneurship development in Nigeria to include formation and implementation of practicable policies,

provision practical equipment to schools, establishment of craft centers and availability of funds to entrepreneurial minded individuals in field of endeavors

Table 3: X² summary on strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health.

	Strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health.	Cal x²	Table x²	Level of significance	df	Decision
1	Parents should encourage their wards to engage in innovative business ventures particularly the one that could charge waste to wealth.	3.24	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
2	Practical lessons should be emphasized in the teaching of environmental health in schools/colleges to better equipped students on hands at work.	2.69	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
3	Environmental health training in colleges should be supported by providing adequate equipment and standard learning facilities.	3.67	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
4	Undergraduate students of environmental health at all level should undergo Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in all the sensitive areas of environmental health so as to acquire more practical skills.	4.27	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
5	Practicable policies by governments at all level should be formulated and implemented to stimulate entrepreneurial growth and development.	3.65	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
6	Manufacturing and production of environmental materials and equipment be made component part of the environment health curriculum at all level of education.	7.93	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
7	Establishment of environmental health craft centers in all the State and LGA to enable youth acquire skills for the production of sanitary equipment and household materials.	3.33	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
8	Marketing should be made a component part of the environmental health curriculum both at ND, HND and Degree. This would bring about exposure and awareness of the various marketing strategies.	1.78	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
9	Starter packs should be made available to support graduate students of environmental health.	1.48	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted
10	Banks and other financial house should provide loan facility at low interest rate to environmental health entrepreneurs.	2.78	9.488	0.05	4	Ho accepted

						Ho accepted
	Average (Av)x ²	3.48	9.488			Ho accepted

Table 3 revealed that the calculated chi-square values for all the strategies were less than the table chi-square values. In the same vein, the average calculated chi-square value is less than the table chi-square value (Cal.x=3.48 < tab=9.488, P < .05). This however translated to the fact that statistically there is significant influence on the strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health among sanitarians in Jos south LGA of Plateau State.

Discussions

The result findings revealed that operation of patient medicine service, fumigation of premises and production of sachet water among others are perceived as areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health among sanitarians in Jos South LGA, this findings concurs with Gimba (2018) who enumerated that operating patient medicine store, setting up a clean-up company, supply of portable water services, fumigation of premise, production of sachet water and providing commercial mobile toilet services are potential areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health. The findings also supported Sule, (2014), who viewed education as a means to liberate the mind and raise people's socioeconomic standing. It also follows that by giving people the information and skills to increase their output, income, and wealth, education and training assist people in becoming empowered and escaping poverty (Aliu, 2007). UNDP (1999), entrepreneurs can be found in all fields. Incorporating entrepreneurship development in the professional training and practice of P.E. professionals would provide the missing link in productivity and invariably contribute substantially to economic growth and development of our Nation because the growth of an individual measures very well with the growth of the nation.

Another findings of this study revealed that banks and other financial houses should provide loan facility at low interest rate to environmental health entrepreneurs; practicable policies by governments at all level should be formulated to stimulate entrepreneurial growth and development, manufacturing and production of environmental materials and equipment be made component part of the environment health curriculum at all level of education) among others were all strategies for the development of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health. The result agrees with Koli, (2019) who identified key approaches that could support entrepreneurship development in Nigeria to include formation and implementation of practicable policies, provision practical equipment to schools, establishment of craft centers and availability of funds to entrepreneurial minded individuals in field of endeavors. Entrepreneurship, according to Omolayo, (2016) viewed entrepreneur as the act of starting a company, arranging business deals and taking risks in order to make a profit through the education skills acquired. Another view of entrepreneurship education is the term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities. Entrepreneurship education serves as a panacea to social economic problems. The present situation in Nigeria posed serious threats and challenges to both government and well-meaning citizens. These socio-economic problems call for different strategies and action for it to be ameliorated. Entrepreneurship education has been embraced by almost all the developed countries and its capabilities and efficacy in springing up economies is not in doubt. It is believed that refocusing education system will immensely contribute in developing the spirit and culture of entrepreneurship in country.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it has been concluded that:

1. The operation of patient medicine service, fumigation of premises and production of sachet water among other are perceived as areas of entrepreneurial skills in environmental health among sanitarians in Jos South LGA
2. Banks and other financial houses providing loan facilities at low interest rate to environmental health entrepreneurs, formulation of practicable policies by governments at all level to stimulate entrepreneurial growth and development and manufacturing and production of environmental materials/equipment be made component part of the environment health curriculum at all level of education among others are the basic strategies for developing entrepreneurial skills in environmental health among sanitarians.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it has been recommended that:

1. Schools/Colleges should give attention on developing practical skills that would assist graduate of environmental health in changing waste to wealth.
2. Government and other financial houses should offer more effective and robust financial empowerment programmes to entrepreneurs of environmental health.
3. Government should establish craft and innovation centers in all local government areas to empower sanitarians in realizing their entrepreneurial dreams of becoming selfreliance.

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