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**ACQUISITION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS DEVELOPMENT BY RURAL
YOUTH IN CHANCHAGA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Acquisition of entrepreneurship skills development by rural youth in Chanchaga local government area of Niger state, Nigeria was examined in this study. Data for the study were collected using structured questionnaire administered to 120 respondents from the study area. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as Tobit regression model. The result of the analysis revealed that majority of the respondents were between the age ranges of 21 – 30 years with mean age of 29 years, 80% were males, 53.3% were single and 90.8% had household size ranging from 1 – 5 persons with a mean of 3 persons. In terms of education, 96.7% of the respondents acquired formal education with about half (45.8%) of the respondents having an income ranges between ₦10,000 – ₦30,000 monthly. The study further revealed that a majority (85.0%) of the respondents had acquired tailoring as an entrepreneurship skills which ranked 1st among other entrepreneurship skills development, this was followed by baking (79.2%) and barbing (64.2%) skills ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively. Reasons for acquiring entrepreneurship skills was for capacity building (87.5%) followed by self-development (74.2%). The Tobit regression analysis revealed that age, education, income, cooperative and access to information were significant and statistically influences acquisition of entrepreneurship skills development. The severe constraints identified by the respondents were inconsistent government policy ($\bar{x} = 3.23$), problem of corruption ($\bar{x} = 2.78$), lack of investment capital ($\bar{x} = 2.97$) and inadequate infrastructure ($\bar{x} = 2.59$). It could be concluded that Tailoring was the dominant entrepreneurship skills acquired by the rural youths in the study area. It was therefore recommended that policy makers should recognize the essence of entrepreneurship to economic development by creating enabling environment for entrepreneurs to thrive and the spirit of entrepreneurship should be encouraged among young people.

Key Words: Development, empowerment, entrepreneurship, skills, youth

Introduction

Entrepreneurship as a concept occurred many centuries ago and it has created the basis for economic growth and development (Yahaya and Nuhu, 2011). The concept refers to a creative and innovative response to economic and social ventures as it involves setting up of business ventures through willingness. Thus, it is the ability of an individual to explore investment opportunities and being able to run it successfully, through making it profitable or suffering loss of invested capital. According to the World Bank (2013), entrepreneurship education is fundamental to the construction of knowledge economy and society in all nations. It is through education that knowledge and skills are transferred to individuals, and their competencies and abilities developed. Therefore, youth entrepreneurship education has been given prominence all over the world. Through entrepreneurship education, youth are provided with knowledge; skills and innovation to encourage them develop entrepreneurial acumen in variety of settings.

According to Aremu and Adeyemi (2013), youth is a stage of between adolescent and adulthood. They are people between the age of 18 and 35 years. However, Oluwadare (2014) posited that person within the age bracket of 10 to 24 years are youth. United Nations (2011) defines youth as a person between the ages of

15 to 24 years, while World Bank (2013) reported that person between 15 to 29 years. Youth have both negative and positive attributes which are predominant and distinguish them from the adults. They are fearless (sometimes to a fault); they are generally militant, rebellious and have disregard for social norms and ethics. Yet, they remain the bedrock on which every nation's development thrives (Arogundade, 2011).

Empowerment means assisting people to overcome obstacles which might prevent them from achieving their potentials. The need for empowerment arises from the inability of an individual or group of people to actualize their dreams and reach their greatest potentials due to artificial barriers created by individuals and/or other groups within the same society (Olakulehin and Ojo, 2006). Fletcher (2005) asserted that youth empowerment means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf and on their own term, rather than at the direction of others. According to Valrus and Fletcher (2006), youth are empowered when they acknowledge that they have or can create choices of life, are aware of the implications of these choices, make an informed decision and accept responsibilities for the consequences of those actions. The concept of youth

empowerment is the futuristic focus of entrepreneurship education and the basis of a relationship with empowerment.

However, entrepreneurship skills development refers to the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution-building programs (Popoola, 2014). The acquisition of entrepreneurship skills development as it affects youth empowerment has attracted the attention of researchers, educationist and organizations (Popoola, 2014). Several factors had been observed as hindrances to rural youth empowerment. Such include the role of government in developing and promoting entrepreneurship, social and cultural attitudes of the youths, poor saving culture among youths, lack of access to finance, menace of get rich quick, the economic factors and lack of entrepreneurship skills (Nkechiet *al.*, 2012). However, the most devastating effects of entrepreneurship skills development on rural youth empowerment as witnessed in the study area lies in the nature of some youths and their perception about entrepreneurship. Most youth see entrepreneurship skills development as waste of time and would prefer to continue roaming about the streets in a search of white collar jobs.

This situation has really prompted the research on the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills development by the rural youth empowerment to fill the gaps in literature and hence the objectives of the study to:

- i. describe the socio-economic characteristics of the rural youth in the study area;
- ii. identify the entrepreneurship skills acquired by the rural youth;
- iii. determine the factors influencing acquisition of entrepreneurship skills by the youth, and
- iv. identify the constraint faced to acquiring entrepreneurship skills development by rural youth in the study area.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Chanchaga Local Government Area (LGA) which is a major LGA in Niger state, Nigeria. It lies on longitude 9° 37' N and longitude 6° 33' E of the equator. It covers land area of about 8 - kilometre square and shares a common boundary with Bosso Local Government. According to National population (NPC) (2006), the LGA had a population of 202,151 (male; 105,263 and female; 96,886). However, the projected population at 2017 using 3.2% growth rate was 285,862 with males being 148,852 and females 137,010. The LGA has two distinct seasons of rainy and dry seasons. The rainy season starts around April and last until October with a mean annual rainfall of 1334mm. The mean monthly temperature is highest in March at 30.50°C (85°F) and lowest in August at 22.3°C (72°F). The

major ethnic group are Nupe, Gbagyi and Hausa, other minority ethnic groups are Yoruba, Fulani, kadas and Igbira. The major occupation of the people is farming involving crop and livestock production.

Multistage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. First stage involved random selection of seven communities (Limawa, Kwangila, Makera, Kpakungu, Sabon-gari, Nasarawa and Tundun-wada). Second stage involved stratified sampling to obtain the total rural youths in each of the selected communities. The third and last stage involved proportionate sampling of the youth by 10% from each of the communities selected to give a total of 120 rural youths sampled for the study. Primary data was collected with a structured questionnaire complimented with oral interview schedule.

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentages and mean) was used to achieve objective i, ii and iv, while inferential statistics (Tobit regression) was used to achieve objective iii. Attitudinal measuring scale such as 4-point Likert type rating scale of very severe (4), severe (3), slightly severe (2) and not severe (1) was used to measure and categorized the severity of constraints faced by the rural youth.

Model specification

Tobit regression model

Tobit regression model is a particular model referred to as censored regression because of restriction imposed by the values taken by the dependent variable. It was used to determine the factors influencing acquisition of entrepreneurship skills among the youth. The implicit form of the Tobit regression model was given as:

$$Y = f(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5, X_6, X_7, X_8)$$

The general Tobit regression model in its explicit form is expressed as below:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + e$$

Where;

Y = Acquisition of entrepreneurship skills by the rural youth (this is measured as the number of entrepreneurship skills development acquired over the total number available)

X₁ = Age (years)

X₂ = Gender (males = 1, females = 0)

X₃ = Marital status (married = 1, Otherwise = 0)

X₄ = Education (years)

X₅ = Income (N)

X_6 = Cooperative (years)
 X_7 = Access to information (number of sources)
 X_8 = Awareness (Yes=1, No=0)
 e = error term
 α = model intercept
 $\beta_1 - \beta_8$ = coefficients of the independent variables
 $X_1 - X_8$ = independent variables

Results and Discussions

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents described in this study include age, gender, marital status, educational level, household size and income. As revealed in Table 1, a majority (84.2%) of the respondents were between the age ranges of 21 – 40 with a mean age of 27 years. This implies that young people are more involved in entrepreneurship skills development acquisition in the study area. This result is in line with Ogundele and Abiola (2006) who reported that youths are involved in entrepreneurship and empowerment programmes which help them to avoid poverty and leave a better life. The majority (80.0%) of the respondents in the study area were males, while 20% were females. The male dominance in partaking in entrepreneurship skills development could be as a result of the conception in the study area that men should work to cater for the family, while more than half (53.3%) of the respondents were single and 46.7% were married which is an indication that youths in Northern part of the country do get married early. The higher percentage of single indicates that the respondents were mostly youth or young people. In terms of education, the majority (96.7%) of the respondents acquired a formal education implying that they are literate and could understand easily whatever entrepreneurship skills they decide to learn. According to United Nation (2011), it is easier for an educated person to be favourably disposed towards acquisition of entrepreneurship skills.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on their socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age (years)			
< 21	7	5.8	
21 – 30	71	59.2	
31 – 40	30	25.0	
> 40	12	10.0	27
Total	120	100.0	
Gender			
Male	96	80.0	
Female	24	20.0	
Total	120	100.0	
Marital status			
Married	56	46.7	
Single	64	53.3	
Total	120	100.0	
Educational level			
Non-formal	4	3.3	
Primary	4	3.3	
Secondary	65	54.2	
Tertiary	47	39.2	
Total	120	100.0	
Household Size			
1 – 5	109	90.8	
6 – 10	9	7.5	
> 10	2	1.7	3
Total	120	100.0	
Monthly income (₦)			
< 10,001	45	37.5	
10,001 – 20,000	38	31.6	
20,001 – 30,000	17	14.2	
> 30,000	20	16.7	21,345
Total	120	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Furthermore, the result in Table 1 revealed that majority (90.8%) of the respondents had household size between the ranges of 1 – 5 persons with a mean of 3 persons, while about half of the respondents earned income between the ranges of ₦10,001 – ₦30,000 monthly with a mean of ₦21,345 per month. It implies that most of the respondents had a small household size and earn a reasonable income from entrepreneurship skills development they have acquired. Thus, entrepreneurship skills become necessary in order to meet up with daily responsibilities and to become self-reliant. According to Nwachukwu (2012), household size has a great role to play in the provision of family labour in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. However, income earned by the respondents from the entrepreneurship skills acquired could help alleviate poverty and enhance the standard of living.

Entrepreneurship skills development acquired by the respondents

Different entrepreneurship skills development acquired by the respondents in the study area was presented in Table 2. The majority (85.0%) of the

respondents were into tailoring implying that entrepreneurship skill development through tailoring is the most dominant in the study area. This is followed by baking representing 79.2% of the respondents. This implies that baking is another means by which the respondents developed their entrepreneurship skills by participating in different training. Barbing constitutes 64.2% of the respondents implying that many people are also involved in barbing as an entrepreneurship development skill. Others include mechanics (48.3%), craftsmanship (46.7%), carpentry (36.7%), hair stylist (17.5%), brick laying (16.7%), trading (12.5%) and the least indicated entrepreneurship skill development is blacksmith (8.3%) of the respondents. This implies that majority of the respondents participated in different entrepreneurship skill development identified in the study area. This finding is in line with Thaddeus (2012) who reported that for any economic growth to be achieved, there is need to develop small and traditional enterprises, hence the superiority of entrepreneurial skills development in promoting growth through employment generation.

Table 2: Respondent's entrepreneurship development skills acquired

Skills	Frequency*	Percentages
Tailoring	102	85.0
Baking	95	79.2
Barbing	77	64.2
Mechanics	58	48.3
Craftsmanship	56	46.7
Carpentry	44	36.7
Hairstylist	21	17.5
Brick laying	20	16.7
Trading	15	12.5
Blacksmith	10	8.3

Source: Field Survey, 2017***Multiple response**

Furthermore, reasons, why the rural youth acquire different entrepreneurship skills in the study area, were presented in Table 3. As revealed in the Table, majority (87.5%) of the respondents acquired entrepreneurship skills for capacity building, followed by 74.2% of the respondents who acquired entrepreneurship skills for self-development and 60.0% acquired entrepreneurship skills to support the family and society. This implies that most of the respondents' reasons for acquiring entrepreneurship skills development was to enhance their capacity in order

to stand on their own where they will be useful to the family and society at large. Other reasons why people acquire entrepreneurship skills are to gain financial freedom (55.0%) and passion (28.3%). The main objective of every entrepreneur is to be independent where they are managers of their own businesses and financially free. However, only a few people as indicated by the result ventured into entrepreneurship skills for passion. This could be individual who is financially buoyant and wants to use the acquired entrepreneurship skills to help others in the society.

Table 3: Respondents' reasons for acquiring entrepreneurship skills development

Reasons	Frequency*	Percentages
Capacity building	105	87.5
Self-development	89	74.2
To help my family and society	72	60.0
To gain financial independence	66	55.0
Individual passion	34	28.3

Source: Field Survey, 2017***Multiple response**

Factors influencing the respondents' acquisition of entrepreneurship skills

Tobit regression model in Table 4 was used to determine the factors that could likely influence the respondents' acquisition of entrepreneurship skills in the study area. Tobit model revealed pseudo R^2 of 0.7008, which implies that 70.1% of the variation in the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills by the respondent was explained by the independent variables included in the model, while the remaining 29.9% could be due to the absence of some variables not included in the model or as a result of error. The χ^2 value of 323.57 was positive and statistically significant at 1% probability level. This confirmed the goodness of fit of the overall model. Out of the eight variables specified in the

model, five variables (age, education, income, cooperative and information) were found to be statistically significant and influences the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills. From the result, the coefficient of age (-0.0025) was negative and statistically significant at 1% probability level. This implies that as the age of the respondent's increases, their participation in entrepreneurial skills decreases. Generally, skills are acquired within the youthful ages. At older ages, people may no longer have interests to acquiring skills, probably because they feel they had spent a greater part of their lives; therefore may not see or have any need for additional entrepreneurial skills.

Table 4: Estimate of factors influencing acquisition of entrepreneurship skills

Variables	Coefficient	Standard error	t-value
Age	-0.0025	0.0008	-3.27***
Gender	0.0030	0.0117	0.25
Marital	0.0042	0.0133	0.32
Education	0.0051	0.0023	2.24**
Income	3.42e-06	6.84e-07	5.00***
Cooperative	-0.0456	0.0162	-2.82***
Awareness	0.0150	0.0293	0.51
Information	0.0990	0.0111	8.93***
Constant	-0.1015	0.0384	-2.64
Chi ²	323.57***		
Prob > chi ²	0.0000		
Pseudo R ²	0.7008		
Log-likelihood	182.79225		

Source: Field Survey, 2017

*** Significant at 1%, ** Significant at 5%, * Significant 10%

The coefficient of education (0.0051) was positive and statistically significant at 5% probability level. This shows that as the educational level of the respondents' increases, it tends to increase zeal on acquiring entrepreneurial skills. The majority of the entrepreneurs have acquired one form of formal education or the other. They are always willing to further their education, so as their level of education increases, the reason to venture and improve their entrepreneurial skills increases. Income coefficient (3.42e-06) was positive and statistically significant at 1% probability level. It implies that an increase in the income of the respondents encourages them to participate in entrepreneurship skills development to be self-employed rather than waiting for white collar job. More so, the coefficient of cooperative (0.0150) was positive and statistically significant at 1% probability level. This implies that as the respondents' involvement in cooperative societies increases, the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills also increases. Participation in cooperative exposes one to various opportunities to have fund to promote entrepreneurship skills. Lastly, the coefficient of access to information (0.0990) was positive and statistically significant at 1% probability level. This shows that as access to information of the respondents' increases, it tends to increase opportunities for acquiring entrepreneurial skills. This explains that most of the respondents might have heard about entrepreneurship skills development program and are aware of the positive effects it will have on them and the economy at large.

Respondents' constraints in acquiring entrepreneurship skills

Respondents face various challenges in acquiring of entrepreneurship skills. These challenges are outlined in Table 4 based on 4 – point Likert type rating scale of very severe (4), severe (3), less severe (2) and not severe (1). The decision rule was that any constraints with a computed mean score of 2.50 and above are considered as severe, while the one of less than 2.50 is considered not severe. However, the severe constraints identified by the respondents in the study area were inconsistent government policy (Economic factors such as policy reversals, high and double taxation, difficulty in procuring licenses, high inflation and unstable exchange rates are some concern areas for potential entrepreneurs. Most government's policies favour friends and associates leading to a system of corruption which dissuades many people from venturing into business. Potential entrepreneurs in Nigeria go through many hardships trying to access credit for their businesses, while infrastructure can be deemed to be a nightmare to both entrepreneurs and the rest of the country's population. This result is in agreement with that of Nkechi *et al.* (2012) who reported that lack of finance, stringent laws and regulations, and poor infrastructural development are the variables impeding entrepreneurial success and growth.

Table 5: Constraints faced by respondents in acquiring entrepreneurship skills

Constraints	VS	S	LS	NS	WS	WM	Remark
Inconsistent government policy	70	21	16	13	388	3.23	Severe
Lack of capital investment	47	37	21	15	356	2.97	Severe
Corruption	55	14	20	31	333	2.78	Severe
Poor infrastructure	40	25	21	34	311	2.59	Severe
Poor savings	28	34	19	39	291	2.43	Not severe
Inadequate credit	27	34	21	38	290	2.42	Not severe
Social, economic and political factors	33	23	22	42	287	2.39	Not severe
Low standard of education	25	26	30	39	277	2.31	Not severe
Problem of gender	20	15	38	47	248	2.07	Not severe
The issue of patent law	29	12	12	67	243	2.03	Not severe
Poor and improper planning	14	24	25	57	235	1.96	Not severe
Inadequate training	20	14	24	62	232	1.93	Not severe
Problem of laziness and laxity	16	14	28	62	224	1.87	Not severe
Poor product and service	16	13	29	62	223	1.86	Not severe
Problem of time consumption	6	18	37	59	211	1.76	Not severe

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Note: VS=Very Severe (4), S=Severe (3), LS=Less Severe (2), NS=Not Severe (1),

WS=Weighted sum and WM=Weighted Mean (≥ 2.00 implies severe, while < 2.00 implies not severe).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that most of the respondents were single and educated, thus could easily participated in entrepreneurship skills development. Tailoring, baking and barbing were the dominant entrepreneurship skills acquired by the respondents. Capacity building and self-development were the main reasons for acquiring entrepreneurship skills. Age, education, income, cooperative and access to information were some of the factors influencing rural youth entrepreneurship skills acquisition, while inconsistent government policy, corruption, poor capital investment and poor infrastructural development were the severe constraints faced in the study area. The study recommends that policy-makers should recognize the importance of entrepreneurship development by creating enabling environment for its survival. The government should foster the spirit of entrepreneurship through the Universities and other institutions of higher learning.

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