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SKILLS ACQUISITION AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT IN BILLIRI LGA, GOMBE STATE.

***MAKOP, MASOK DANLADI; *KAMSIT, GODWIN JAMES; & **MAPAC, UHATAT BENJAMIN**

*Department of Business Administration and Management, Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi. **Department of Marketing, Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi.

Abstract

Unemployment has become a major challenge in the country Nigeria today. This is owing to the fact that the economy is experiencing galloping inflation thus calling for skills acquisition that would make citizens especially the youths to be self employed. The objectives of this study were to: examine the influence of technical skills on self employment and determine the effect of managerial skills on self employment in Billiri LGA, Gombe State. Survey design . The population of the study for this study was 113 skilled acquisition workers registered in Billiri LGA of Gombe state out of which 88 were drawn through Taro Yamane formular as sample size. The findings of the study were that: technical skills and managerial skills have significant positive effect on self employment in Biliri LGA of Gombe State, Nigeria. The recommendations were: acquisition of technical skills which is practical knowledge translating ideas into product or value should be emphasis more than the class room knowledge and managerial skills that enable the self employed to successfully run his/her enterprise in the midst of competing demands and growing it into a large conglomerate should be acquired.

Key Words: Skills, skills acquisition, self employed, technical skills, managerial

Introduction

Background of Study

The Nigerian youths have not been exposed to opportunities to develop in varied area of human endeavours; intellectual dearth, mediocrity and ineptitude have become the tripod seal of the Nigerian Youths. In a national survey jointly sponsored by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Education Trust Fund (ETF) in 2004, 61% of 20 organization rated Nigerian science graduates poor in skills needed in the work environment such as a literacy, technical, oral communication, information technology, entrepreneurship, analytical, problem-solving and decision making (Okafor, 2011).

According to Okeke M. N. et al., (2019) certain skill can be considered acquired when a person can perform it without thinking about the technique of performing this action or dividing a process into conventional parts. Skill acquisition is the process of mastering skills characterized by applying them in particular situations.

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The problem is that many people undertake business devoid of the essential skills for success in their choice of business; the far-reaching result is business crumble. Lack of technical, managerial and practical knowledge of proposed businesses has led to the failure of most businesses in Nigeria with particular reference to Biliri LGA of Gombe State. It is against this backdrop that the researcher intends to write on effect of skills acquisitions on self employment in Billiri LGA, Gombe State.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the influence of technical skills on self employment in Billiri LGA, Gombe State.
2. To determine the effect of managerial skills on self employment in Billiri LGA, Gombe State.

Statement of Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between technical skills and self employment in Billiri LGA, Gombe State.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between managerial skills and self employment in Billiri LGA, Gombe State.

Concept of Skills Acquisition

Skill is noteworthy in everybody's life. Many technicians earn more than some school graduates because they acquire more practical skills than the theories unlike graduates who were sustained with theoretical encounters while in the universities. Skill acquisition is the ability to be prepared on a particular task or work and become expert in it.

Skill is the ability to acquire practical knowledge in new conditions and on the basis of the abilities and experiences a person had previously. It is an action that is put together by an individual in a process of time itbecomes regular in terms of performing the required task seamlessly.

Uranta and Nlerum, (2017) stated that skills Acquisition Training is an adult education program which is intended to give different skills on the participants, and address immediate issues, for example, employments, independence and control restiveness among young people. Mike (2014) declares that skill acquirement is the capacity to be prepared on a specific task or capacity. Likewise, Magbagbeola as refered to in Idoko (2014) posits that skill acquirement requires the gathering of various abilities that enhances task execution through the coordination of both theoretical and practical form of knowledge.

Concept of Self Employment

Self-employment is an effective tool for reducing the rate of unemployment and poverty (Goetz et al., 2012) that might arise from global economic meltdown and job insecurity. In Nigeria, the banking industry regulatory authority in response to the global financial crises had to introduce policies to salvage the banking industry from imminent failure, which led to workers retrenchment (Kurebwa, 2011).

Goetz et al., (2012) averred that it is globally established that self-employment is an effective tool for reducing the high rate of unemployment and poverty People embark on self employment due to forced retirement, retrenchment, desire for freedom, inability to compete in the oversaturated labour market, lack of job contentment, family background and knowledge (Audretsch et al., 2005). Carsrud & Brannback (2011) posit that this may take the form of a sole

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proprietorship, partnership or limited liability, operating as small scale or medium scale enterprises. Self-employment could be driven by push or pull factor or by necessity and opportunity also referred to as the intrinsic and extrinsic driving force. While, Virick et al., (2015) reveal that, it is possible for a person to switch to self-employment by pull and push factors at a time. According to Pitt-Catsouphes et al., (2017), self-employment is a situation where an individual establishes and runs a new business in the form sole proprietorship, partnership or limited liability company, operating as small business enterprise or small and medium-sized enterprise.

Concept of Technical skills

Technical skills are the acquired knowledge, expertise, and interactions expected to carry out a particular task, as well as the mastery of expected materials, technologies or tools.

Fashua, (2016) submitted that technical skills are those skills necessary to produce the business's product or service; which are: Operations Specific to Industry, Communications, Design, Research and Development and environmental Observation. Technical skills are traits obtained by utilising and gaining proficiency in carrying out corporal or digital tasks or responsibilities. Customarily, individuals working in computer science, mathematics, a information technology and mechanics use a range of technical skills. Today, however, many more industries rely on employees with technical knowledge. For example, retail and foodservice workers often need to know how to use point-of-sale (POS) software (Ajayi, 2017).

A technical skill is the practical development of individual potentials in different socioeconomic activities targeted at enhancing value addition. Ikupolati et al., (2017), sees technical skills include mastery of the methods, techniques and equipment involved in specific functions such as engineering, manufacturing or finance. They further accentuate that it include specialized knowledge, analytical ability and the competent use of tools and techniques to solve problems in that specific discipline. In this regard, every entrepreneurs venturing into Small and Medium Enterprises should have some innovative and technical skills to enhance the efficient management of their enterprise.

Concept of Managerial skills

Skills can be seen as the capacity of a person to execute a specific task or responsibility obtained through training or experience that showed itself both physically and mentally. Mănăilă et al., (2014) stated that managerial skills comprises of a mixture of traits that allow enhanced results to be realised, the means and techniques of management efficiency, and the management style used in terms of strategies, techniques, and tools to achieve expected results. According to Hamsani et al. (2020) managerial skills are reflected in a person's conceptual abilities, human relational skills, and technical skills. Ardiana et al. (2010) posit that the "indicators of skills include communication, production skills, supervision, teamwork and organization, finance, administration and accounting". However, while skills are critical for improved performance, the relationship between skills and performance is nonlinear and they cannot be understood by the linear theories. According to Bratianu & Vasilache, (2009) this is so because factors such as knowledge, corporate values, change, excellence, innovation, quality and many others are highly non-linear concepts that cannot be tackled with linear thinking because the effects are no longer proportional to their

causes or efforts. Therefore, the issue of organizational learning becomes important for the development of MSMEs (Bratianu et al., 2020).

Aliyu, 2015; Mehralian et al., 2020) submit that managerial skill is the ability of an individual to wisely make use of the available resources to start and run a business successfully. It is as well the enterprise resources needed for on the whole business operations. Griffin et al., (2016) said that managerial skills that drive self-employment success and generally referred to as managerial functions are planning, organizing, leading and controlling skills.

Empirical Review

Technical Skills Awareness and Self- Employment Technical skills are skills required to get a specific task accomplished. Abinu (2012) averred that technical skills are know- how peculiar to an occupation or group of occupations. Robinson (as cited in Ogbuanya et al., 2018) inferred that technical skills are specific to a job and relates to skills required to perform the particular job. It is skills that are specific to what the organization does, e.g. the technical skill required to run a University is lecturing skills. In business parlance, those with technical skills are called technicians in their field of work. It will be difficult for an entrepreneur to achieve his vision without technical skills. Okorie and Ezeji (as cited in Ogbuanya, et al, ibid) stated that "technical skills call for understanding and proficiency in a specific activity, particularly one involving methods, processes, procedures and techniques". Mmadumere- Obike and Abraham (as cited in Usman et al., 2018) suggested that entrepreneurship training improves the participants technical and vocational skills; and enhances the abilities that are essential for self reliance. Cooney (2012) is of the opinion that technical skills are necessary skills required to produce the business product or service. Odewale et al., (2019) investigated the impact of technical knowledge on self employment in Malaysia and found that technical education influences students' views on self- employment. The researchers thus recommended that educational policy makers should prioritize technical education and training, amongst other entrepreneurial skills to enhance emergence of nascent entrepreneurs. Supporting this assertion, Nwekeaku (2013) opined that technical education and training is necessary for business creation as it makes the nascent entrepreneur more dynamic in the business world.

Olowu and Aliyu (2015) carried out a study on the impact of managerial skills on small scale businesses performance and growth in Bauchi State, Nigeria, using 58 small scale businesses,while linear regression was adopted to test the hypotheses. It was revealed that managerial skills has significant effect on small scale business performance, however, lack of managerial skill may hinder business success.

Ahmad and Ahmad (2021) conducted a study on the effect of managerial skills on the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Pakistan using stratified proportionate probability sample technique to choose the sample size of 265 SMEs, while Structural Equation Model was adopted for the analysis of the research hypotheses. The outcome of the study revealed that managerial skills have significant and positive effect on small and medium-sized enterprises performance in Punjab, Pakistan. The authors further argued that individuals who intends to start a new enterprise must be adequately trained on managerial skills to be successful in their chosen line of business.

Al-Madhoun and Analoui (2003) in their study on managerial skills and SMEs' development in Palestine, which was carried out to solve the issue that dwells on the non-possession of

managerialskill by small and medium sized business owners. A survey research technique was used to select managers of SMEs for managerial skills acquisition programs in Palestine. The findings of the study revealed that managerial skills are germane for SMEs growth.

Theoretical framework

Skill acquisition theory

The fundamental claim of Skill Acquisition Theory, as per Dekeyser (2007), "is that the learning of a wide variety of skills shows an exceptional similarity in development from introductory representation of knowledge through starting changes in conduct to eventual fluent, unconstrained, to a great extent, and profoundly gifted behaviour, and that this phenomena can be accounted for by a lot of essential principles regular to acquisition of skills". Overall, as referenced by Speelman (2005), skill acquisition can be considered as a particular type of learning, where learning has been characterized as "the representation of information in memory concerning some natural or psychological event". Thusly, as indicated by him, skill acquisition is a type of learning where "skilled behaviours can become routinized and even programmed under certain conditions". What's more, as a general theory of learning, it guarantees that adult starts learning something through largely unequivocal procedures, and with subsequent adequate practice and exposure, move into verifiable procedures. Subsequently, the study is hinged on this theory.

Research Methodology

Survey design was used in this work. It investigated the effect of skills acquisition and it identified whether there is any relationship between the skills (technical and managerial) and self employment. A survey focused on skills acquisition such as carpentry, welding and fabrication, baking, tailoring, technicians, etc. The population of the study for this study was one hundred and thirteen (113) respondents were selected at random and eighty eight (88) respondents (which represented the entire population) representing the total number of the selected skilled acquisition workers registered in Billiri LGA of Gombe state which was gotten through the use of Taro Yamane formula. The data for the study was collected by the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contains three(3) parts including personal information, entrepreneurial competencies and firm's performance. The questionnaire comprised of nineteen (19) questions. The questions asked were rated on a five (5)-point Likert scale (where 1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= about the same, 4= strongly disagree and 5= disagree). Inferential statistics methods were used and it consisted of both simple and multiple linear regression technique in testing the hypotheses, using SPSS version 20.

Data presentation and analysis

Out of eighty eight (88) administered questionnaires to respondents, seventy five (75) were filled and returned for analysis. Thus the response of eighty five (85%) was achieved.

Table 1: Administered Questionnaires

SMEs	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire duly filled and Returned	Percentage (%)
SMEs	88	75	85

Source: Researcher's Computation (2023)

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Table 1 above shows that a total of eighty eight (88) questionnaires were administered out of which seventy five (75) representing eighty five percent (85%) of the response rate were filled and returned. The remaining fifteen percent (15%) non-response rate is not sufficient to invalidate the result of the survey. Therefore, the returned questionnatres would serve as adequate representation for the research work.

Multiple Regression Results

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	R Square Std.	Error of the Estimate	DurbinWatson
1	.655[a]	.429	.424	.01427	2.284

Predictors:(Constant), Technical skill, Managerial skill
Dependent Variable: Self Employment

Source: Researcher's Computation (2023)

The above table shows an adjusted r square value of 0.424 which indicates that 42.4% of the dependent variable (self employment) was explained by the independent variables (technical skill and managerial skill) and therefore, 57.6% of other factors (technical skill and managerial skill) affects self employment. However, based on the adjusted r square result, skills acquisiton appeared to be a strong variable for predicting the self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State.

Table 3: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.052	3	.017	84.452	.000[b]
	Residual	.069	337	.000		
	Total	.120	340			

a. Dependent Variable: Self Employment
b. Predictors: (Constant), technical skill, managerial skill
Source: Researcher's Computation (2023)

The above table (ANOVA) shows significant level of 0.00 which is far below the established significant level of this paper (0.05). Therefore, the F-statistic (84.452) is high enough for this paper to infer that all the independent variables (technical skill and managerial skill) have significant effect on the self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State. The implication is that an increase in the effectiveness of the independent variables will lead to an increase in self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State.

Table 4: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.009	.005		1.630	.104
Skill comp	.228	.116	.092	1.962	.051

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1 Personality Com	.387	.088	249	4.392	.000

Dependent Variable: Self Employment
Source: Researcher's Computation (2023)

The result from the table above shows that technicalskills have significant positive effect on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State. This is indicated from the beta coefficient of .092 which is significant at p value of 0.05. This suggests that, when technkcal skills increase by 1%, self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State also increases by 9%. The paper therefore infers that skills competencies have positive significance on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State. The results from the table above show that manaderial skills have significant positive effect on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State; this is indicated from the beta coefficient of .249 which is significant at p value of 0.00. This suggests that, when managerial skilss increase by 1%, self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State also increases by 24.9%. The paper therefore infers that managerial skills have positive significance on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State.

The Research Findings

The research work found that technical skills have significant positive effect on the performance of self employment in Nigeria; the study therefore infers that technical skills have positive significance on self employment in Biliri LGA of Gombe State, Nigeria. This finding is however in conformity with that of Akinruwaet al. (2013) whose study found that managerial skills, government policy, education and facilities were significant related with performance at 5% significance level.

The paper also found that managerial skills have significant positive effect on self employment in Biliri LGA of Gombe State, Nigeria. The finding therefore infers that managerial skills have positive significance on self employment in Nigeria. This finding is however in conformity with Nusratand, (2014) whose study found that all the competencies (including personality competencies) are required by entrepreneurs of manufacturing industry to enhance the performance of their firms.

Conclusion

The study found that technical skills have significant positive impact on the performance of self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State; this is indicated from the beta coefficient of .092 which is significant at p value of 0.05. Therefore, the paper concludes that technical skills have significant positive effect on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State. The paper further posits that managerial skills have significant positive impact on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State; this is indicated from the beta coefficient of .249 which is significant at p value of 0.00. Therefore, the paper concludes that managerial skills have significant positive effect on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State. Based on these findings, the paper concludes that skills acquisition have significant effect on self employment jn Biliri LGA of Gombe State.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings and conclusions, the researcher recommends that:

- Acquisition of technical skills which is practical knowledge should be emphasis more than the class room knowledge that breeds ideas that lack the capacity or the enabling impetus to translate into a product or value to be exchanged for another value.

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- Managerial skills enable the self employed to successfully run his/her enterprise in the midst of competing demands and grow it into a large entrepreneurial conglomerate and so the self employed should acquire such a skill in order to thrive well..

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