

Factors Hindering the Emerging Technology in Clothing and Textiles Enterprise Among Home Economics Graduates in Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the factors hindering emerging clothing and textile enterprise among Home Economics graduates in Ebonyi State. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 191 Home Economics graduates of Ebonyi State University. A sample size of 160 was randomly selected. A validated structured question was used for data collection. Data were statistical analyzed using frequency, mean and standard deviation. The study identified 11 factors hindering acquisition of clothing and textiles skills among Home Economics graduates including; inaccessibility of adequate facilities needed by Home Economics graduates, Home Economics graduates lack traits necessary for the skill acquisition and lack of financial assistants from the government. Identified by the study also were 11 strategies for promoting and sustaining entrepreneurship skills for clothing and textiles among Home Economics graduates. These strategies include: Forming cooperatives by the Home Economics graduates, low interest rate for loans from government and other corporate bodies and motivation of young entrepreneurs by patronizing their products. The study concludes that Home Economics is a field of study that can promote viable businesses. Therefore, recommendations that Clothing and textiles entrepreneurship education is made a compulsory and a core subject in all tertiary institutions in the state was made.

Keywords: Clothing, Textile, Entrepreneurship Skill, Creativity, Core subject

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking as well as the ability to plan and manage a business in order to make profit. Entrepreneurship can also be described as a continuous process of utilizing resources to produce new goods and services. The people who create these businesses are called entrepreneurs. Dabson & Malkin (2013) defined an entrepreneur as a person who makes money by running a business especially when it involves taking financial risk. Ode (2006) defined an entrepreneur as a person who creates and manages a business undertaking, assuming the risk for the sake of profit. An entrepreneur should be self-confident; that is, should

believe in self, self-reliant, innovative, creative, and hardworking and be able to take risks from financial investment.

In this study, entrepreneurship implies the investment of one's resources in planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating clothing and textile businesses in order to generate wealth for one's economic survival. The goal of entrepreneurship education, therefore, is to equip students to become self-reliance in the present dispensation where government jobs are inadequate and the focus of government is for economic dependency of its citizens.

Clothing and textile, as one of the major areas of Home Economics, is studied at tertiary level and emphasizes skill acquisition for its graduates with a view

to enhancing their capability for self-employment ventures after graduation. This branch of Home Economics is concerned with the design, manufacture, marketing of clothing, foot wears and other textile products. Choosing clothing and textiles as a course of study involves learning about fabrics, other materials, weaving, dyeing, printing, pattern making, sewing and maintenance of clothes, (Lemchi, 2001).

Clothing and textile as a skill oriented course helps to equip individuals with saleable skills needed for self-reliance. It equip individuals for enormous employment opportunities in occupations relating to clothing and textile which include dress making/clothing construction, designing, laundering, Tie-dye and batik, beauty care, hair dressing, fashion merchandising and pattern illustration.

The realization of the laudable objectives of clothing and textile education depend largely on the implementation strategies employed for students to be able to perform adequately in clothing and textile course contents. It implies that this course should be effectively taught.

Anozie (2003) indicated that the extent to which the rate of learning among students or learners generally can be accelerated depends often on the teacher and teaching devices available. Anyakoha (2006) remarked that the greatest challenge of Home Economics is to determine those issues that pose various forms of threat to individuals, families and society at large and then address them most appropriately. The society is faced with such problems as increasing unemployment, corruption and poverty.

Unemployment is one of the greatest challenges facing Nigeria. The number of people seeking for employment opportunities in Nigeria continues to be

on increase. Youths graduate out of tertiary institutions in their thousands every year and everybody depends on the Nigerian government for employment. This had led to the moral decadence of the Nigerian society because individuals who are willing to work do not have work to do. Unemployment has profound effect on individuals and families, the implications are particularly significant for young people, because they are at a point in where issues of identity, differentiation from parents, sense of self and autonomy are paramount. The overall effect is an increase level of frustration which leads to an increase rate of crime such as kidnapping, prostitution, armed robbery and other social vices.

There are cases of lack of financial support from government or parents to assist young textile and clothing entrepreneurs. Also peer pressure and the lack of support from government and parents due to the 'government job' mindset are also challenges which young entrepreneurs in Ebonyi State face, leading to many leaving their business plans in early stages to pursue careers in the public sector. There are also cases of young entrepreneurs who ventured to start a business despite the lack of support from parents and governments but ended up not having access to finance for their textile and clothing establishments.

In view of the above, it became necessary that the challenges facing entrepreneurs in clothing and textile graduates in Ebonyi State, be identified and appropriate measures for promoting businesses be identified.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to

examine the factors hindering the emerging technologies in clothing and textile enterprise among Home Economics graduates in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study ascertained:

1. The factors hindering the acquisition of clothing and textile skills by Home Economics graduates in Ebonyi State.
2. Identify the strategies for promoting and sustaining entrepreneurship skills in clothing and textile among the Home Economics graduates in Ebonyi State.

Methodology

Research Design

Survey research design was adopted for the study. Survey research design uses interview and questionnaire to determine the opinion, perceptions and attitudes of people about issues. Generalizations can be made at the end of the study to a wider population.

Area of study

The study area is Ebonyi State is home to four higher institutions of learning: Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki (EBSU); Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo (FUNAI); Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana; College of Health Sciences, Ezzamgbo and Federal College of Agriculture, Ishiagu respectively. These are tertiary institutions that train students in various professions including Home Economics.

Population for the Study

The population for the study comprised 191 graduates of Home Economics from Ebonyi State University for a period of ten

years (2006-2016) (**Source:** Office of the Head of the Department of Home Economics for 2016/2017 academic session). The whole population was studied because the population size is manageable.

Instrument for Data Collection

A validated structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed by hand with the help of two trained research assistants. The questionnaire was categorized in three (3) sections; A, B and C. Section A: provided information on basic biodata information, Section B: Sought information on the factors hindering the acquisition of clothing and textile skills by Home Economics graduates in Ebonyi State. Section C elicited information on the strategies for promoting and sustaining entrepreneurial skills opportunity in clothing and textile among the Home Economics graduates. A four point rating scale of Strongly Agree [SA], Agree [A], Disagree [D], Strongly Disagree [SD] with values 4, 3, 2, and 1 assigned respectively was used for rating mean responses. The data was collected from the Home Economics Post Graduate Association in Ebonyi State University.

Data Analysis Techniques

The statistical tools used for data analysis were frequency, mean and standard deviation. Frequency was used to organize the data collected while mean was used to analyze the responses to the research questions. The cut-off mean adopted was 2.50. Therefore any value below 2.50 is regarded as disagree while any mean from 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed response.

Findings and Discussions

Table 1: Mean Response on Factors Hindering the Acquisition of Clothing and Textiles Entrepreneurship Skills among Home Economics graduates in Ebony State.

S/N	Factors are hindering the acquisition of clothing and textile skills by Home Economics graduates in Ebony State.	$\bar{X}_1$	SD	Remark
1	Some Home Economics graduates Lack interest in the business.	3.15	1.01	Agreed
2	Incompetency, lack of creativity and innovation on part of some Home Economics graduates.	3.52	0.76	Agreed
3	Insufficient funds to buy materials for the initial take off of the business.	2.80	0.96	Agreed
4	Inaccessibility of adequate facilities/equipment needed by Home Economics graduates to start off.	3.59	0.75	Agreed
5	High cost of renting /building a shop for clothing business.	3.43	0.76	Agreed
6	Some Home Economics graduates lack traits necessary for the skill acquisition.	3.48	0.77	Agreed
7	Lack of financial support by Parents/guardians.	3.20	0.90	Agreed
8	Time consuming nature of the business.	3.44	0.76	Agreed
9	Irregular supply of electricity light.	3.43	0.79	Agreed
10	Expensive nature of the materials/tools required for skill acquisition.	3.24	0.97	Agreed
11	Poor innovation and creative ability of the entrepreneurs.	3.25	0.93	Agreed

Results on table 1 show all eleven factors as significant to the acquisition of skills in clothing and textiles

Table 2A: The Mean Responses on Strategies for Promoting and Sustaining Entrepreneurship skills among the Home Economics Graduate in Ebony State

S/N	Strategies	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Organizing enlightenment program(Seminars, workshop) regularly by those already successful in the business	3.37	0.87	Agreed
2	Forming cooperatives by Home Economics graduates and requesting for loan with little/no interest from government	3.57	0.74	Agreed
3	Provision of financial assistants to Home Economics graduate by the government as a way of empowering them to start their own business.	3.38	0.72	Agreed
4	Ebonyi State citizens should patronize the products by Home Economics graduates.	3.44	0.78	Agreed
5	Exhibition of products, trade fare will showcase the available ventures to the public	3.45	0.74	Agreed

Table 2B: The Mean Responses on Strategies for Promoting and Sustaining Entrepreneurship skills among the Home Economics Graduate in Ebonyi State

6	Refresher training and retraining will meet the changing fashion trends in order to meet the clients' choice.	3.15	0.74	Agreed
7	Those that has established in the business should orientate the new ones so that there should be continuity in the business.	3.43	0.79	Agreed
8	Organizing healthy competition and giving an award to the best entrepreneur by local /state government will promote and lure more graduates into skills acquisition.	3.21	0.84	Agreed

Table 2A & B examined the strategies for promoting and sustaining the entrepreneurship skills among graduates of Home Economics in Ebonyi State. The 8 items statement listed are strategies for promoting and sustain entrepreneurship skills among Home Economics graduates.

Discussion of Findings

In table 1, the respondents agreed that all the suggested factors are hindering acquisition of clothing and textiles skills by Home Economics graduates in Ebonyi State. The factors includes: inaccessibility of adequate facilities/equipment needed by Home Economics graduates to start off. Incompetency, lack of creativity and innovation on part of some Home Economics graduates. Some Home Economics graduates lack traits necessary for the skill acquisition; time for practical and Lack of financial support from the government are some of the challenges. This finding is in agreement with Enobong (2006) who reported that inadequate skill, insufficient funds, inadequate tools/equipment are factors hindering the acquisition of clothing and textiles skill by Home Economics graduates. The study is also in line with the findings of Anozie (2003) who identified some of the factors hindering the acquisition of skills as financial burden,

poor creative abilities, and lack of facilities. Inaccessibility of adequate facilities/equipment needed by Home Economics graduates to start off is an indication that young entrepreneurs interested in clothing and textiles business do not have access or cannot afford the necessary facilities needed to set up a clothing business. In such a situation, they will end up having poor end low products. This makes venturing into the business frustrating. What one normally hear not long after opening such business is that the person has closed the business and run to cities for greener pastures. The finding of this study also agrees with Anozie & Ngoka (2014) who discovered that enough funding is needed to take care of the tangible materials needed in establishing different clothing and related businesses.

The study identified 8 strategies for promoting and sustaining entrepreneurship skills among graduates of Home Economics in Ebonyi State. These include: Forming cooperatives by the Home Economics graduates and requesting for loan with little/no interest from government. This finding is in line with Achor (2012) who agreed that forming cooperatives will make the Home Economics graduates venture into business with viability for seeking for low interest loans from government. The

finding also showed that those already in the business should encourage young ones by organizing workshops and exhibition; motivation of young entrepreneurs by patronizing their products. These workshops could serve as a training ground for new ideas. Furthermore, training and retraining in trendy fashion will meet the choices of the clients. Adetoun & Olajide (2015) who reported that creating more opportunity for training new one into business is a vital strategy for sustaining entrepreneurial skill in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Home Economics is an interdisciplinary course that is entrepreneurial in nature. Graduates of Home Economics need to acquire various skills in different areas especially clothing and textiles related businesses to enable them become self-employed and employers of labour. The rate of unemployment in the country is on steady increase acquiring entrepreneurship skills in Home Economics is capable of solving this problem

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

1. Government and institutions should provide incentives for students of Home Economics, especially to graduating students. This will serve as a takeoff loan for ventures in clothing and textiles. Loans with little/no interest rate should be granted to fresh Home Economics graduates to encourage them acquire tools/working materials/initial capital for a smooth kick off in the business.
2. More practical courses and hours should be allocated for the teaching of clothing and textiles to

improve on the practical orientation, as this will help to improve student's creativity and innovativeness during their years in tertiary institutions in preparation for entering the world of work.

3. Conferences, seminars and workshops should be periodically arranged for lecturers and trainee (students) as this will assist them to update their knowledge and clothing and textiles skills in Home Economics programs.

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