
Correlation between Home Economics Education and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for
Wealth Creation and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurial skills acquisition has been widely accepted as a magic bullet that can contribute to economic development and reduce unemployment and poverty problems in the society. Home economics education is one of the oldest vocational courses that exists for a very long time. However, more entrepreneurial skills acquisition is needed by its graduates to compete favorably in a global market for efficiency, productivity and wealth creation. The basic entrepreneurial skills acquisition for wealth creation now involve innovation skills, creativity skills and foresight skills. Therefore this study examines the relationship that exist between home economics education and innovation, creativity and foresight skills for wealth creation and poverty reduction. A total of 304 questionnaires were administered to both regular and part-time home economics students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and Federal college of education Zaria. 279 valid questionnaires were retrieved. The data collected were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Linear Regression analysis was conducted to test the effects of all the variables while Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to test the relationship among the variables at 0.01, level of significance. The results showed strong positive relationship among the variables. It was recommended that the home economics education experts should create adequate awareness for graduates/students towards entrepreneurial careers and not to rely on the white collar jobs.

Key Words: Home Economics Education, Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition, Wealth Creation and Poverty Reduction

INTRODUCTION

In today's global world, the twin challenges of unemployment and poverty are facing the individual, families and the nation at large, owing to the global economic meltdown and economic recession in most of the African countries including Nigeria. Therefore entrepreneurial skills acquisition training was imposed in all the tertiary schools of Nigerian in the mid-1980s when the economy collapsed due to political instability and inconsistencies in the socio-economic policies of successive governments. This resulted in a very high youth and graduate unemployment (Arogundade, 2011). The current rate of unemployment in Nigeria places an increase in the demand for graduates to have skills to compete in the global market. Higher institution in Nigeria now offers a compulsory entrepreneurship course to all students. It is expected that after graduation from the

university the students would have acquired the skills and able to utilize them to become self-reliant.

However, home economics is a profession with more than a hundred years of global history as a vocational course. Even before the introduction of entrepreneurship in higher institutions the home economics education is long in existence as a vocational course. It teaches its students many skills that can enable them to be self-reliant. Such as: catering services, tailoring, housekeeping, day care services and interior designs among others. It is in view of this that this study looked into relationship between home economics education and entrepreneurial skills acquisition for wealth creation. The entrepreneurial skills for this study are innovation, creativity and foresight skills. Innovation is defined as an imagination or formulation of a “new idea, device, or method”. Creativity is the act of turning a new or imagined idea into reality and foresight is the act or ability of planning for future unforeseen events.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated to guide the study:

1. Identify the relationship between home economics education and innovation skills.
1. Examine the relationship between home economics education and creativity skills.
2. Assess the relationship between human home economics education and foresight skills.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised based on the objectives above:

1. What is the relationship between home economics education and innovation skills?
2. What is the relationship between home economics education and creativity skills?
3. What is the relationship between home economics education and foresight skills?

Hypotheses

The following alternative hypotheses are formulated for appropriate testing in the study; the hypotheses are intended to answer research questions 1, 2, and 3:

H₁: There is no significant relationship between home economics education and innovation skills.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between home economic education and creativity skills.

H₃: There is no significant relationship between home economics education and foresight skills.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Innovation always starts with the analysis for sources of new opportunities. Sources will have different importance at different times, depending on the context of conceptual and perceptual innovation. Those who want to be innovators must go out and look, ask, and listen. Successful innovators work out systematically and look at potential users to study their expectations, their values and their needs. Effective innovation is simple with focus. It should do only one thing otherwise it confuses people. Effective innovations always start small. According to Vuori & Okkonen (2012) innovation is fostered by information gathered from new connections, from insights gained by journeys into other disciplines or places, from active collegial networks and fluid open boundaries. It arises from organizing circles of exchange of information which is not just

accumulated or stored but created. Knowledge always generates new connections that were not there before.

Therefore, for any innovation to succeed the innovator must seek for information concerning the innovation in terms of money, mode or brand, operation and care. However, an idea does not become an innovation until it is widely adopted and incorporated into people's daily lives. But according to Okafor (2009) most people resist change which is a key part of innovation. Convincing other people that your idea is a good one by enlisting their help and in doing so they see the usefulness of the idea. Business throughout the world is experiencing what can be legitimately described as a revolution such as rising energy and material costs, fierce international competition, new technologies, increasing use of automation and computers. All these are major challenges which demand a positive response from entrepreneur and home economist if the business is to survive and prosper.

Innovation calls for special entrepreneurial skills in home economics education, the cooperation of a committed workforce, finance and a climate which will create the optimum overall conditions to encourage success. (Tubigi & Alshawi, 2015)). So for this global change there is need to for the home economists' to embrace innovation skills in order to succeed in their own business. Joseph Schumpeter (1934) believes that innovations create a new commercial product or service which is the key force in creating new demand and entrepreneurs bring the innovations to the market. This destroys the existing markets and creates new ones which will in turn be destroyed by even newer products or services.

Creativity is characterized by the ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena and to generate solutions. Creativity involves two processes thinking and producing. According to Youtie and Philip (2008) creativity is the process of bringing something new into being. Creativity requires passion and commitment. It brings awareness on what was previously hidden and point to new life. Creativity has been identified as one of the most distinct of human attributes. It is indeed a special case of problem solving in which originality is emphasized. Achor (2014) defines creativity as the disposition to make and recognize valuable innovations. It manifests itself in the ability of the individual to create his own symbols of experience. A person is said to be creative if he has the ability to combine or rearrange established patterns of knowledge in a unique fashion. Creativity is the fundamental premise and genesis of entrepreneur activity and is not exclusive right possession of a chosen few. It is in all human beings in varying degree. However, training has been found to increase the manifestation of creative abilities (Ihensekhein and Cas-Ogiegbaen, 2014). It is one of the major functions of home economics education to inculcate the skills of creativity among the students especially for the acquisition and utilization of entrepreneurial skills.

In line with that Onu (2014) has the opinion that there is a link between creativity and entrepreneurship, hence creativity and entrepreneurial skills can be learned. Home economics education focuses on entrepreneurship through training on various task and entrepreneurial skills in home economics education trained the students on how to be self-employed after graduation for wealth creation. As mentioned earlier some of the major areas of emphasis in home economics education include catering skills, tailoring skills, housekeeping skills, child development skills, housing and design skills. All those areas are creative in nature and can lead to a wide range of

occupation for home economics graduates making them to become self-reliant, self-employed and employers of labor.

Furthermore creativity has been associated with the uniqueness of Home Economics Education in many areas that involve development of new ideas or products. Oyindoyin (2013) notes that researchers in the area of creativity have used terms such as innovation, novelty, imagination, discovery, newness, ingenuity, uniqueness/unusualness, intuition and invention to describe the nature of creativity in any area of life and not just in art. So creativity in home economics is a systematic process that involves critical thinking, in order to produce newness or uniqueness in a product.

Foresight is a human attributes that allow one to weigh up the pros and cons, to evaluate different courses of action and to invest in possible future. The process of strategic foresight encompasses broadening our perception of what future possibilities may unfold and therefore, considering various situations beyond our normal line of sight. According to neurobiologists, Dr. Calvin and Dr. Ingvar, the human brain is hard wire in its drive to envision and plan for future events. Unlike other animals whose planning is hormonal and driven by seasonal patterns, the human brain is capable of planning decades ahead, able to take account of extraordinary contingencies far more irregular than the seasons. To recall that contrary to predicting the future strategic, foresight centers on the principle of back casting from an anticipated future, back to the present, using both scientific and intuitive techniques and frameworks (Mack, 2010). However without foresight one will steer into the future blindly unable to visualize the total picture and the possible consequences of our actions or inactions.

One technique for enhancing strategic foresight on home economics education to engage in regular scenario like planning-outlining two or three potential futures on various possibilities and rehearsing on how to respond to each scenario. To start planning one needs to outline the several steps that can help to build plans, which include the following; (1). Identify a focal issue and then build outward toward that position (2). Outline those forces that can influence the outcome of the scenario and (3). Review those forces that are most important to a scenario and those that are most uncertain

According to Panagiotakopoulos (2013) foresight skills is one of the five factors that determine the existence of any organization as they put foresight on an equal footing with men, money, machines, and morale. The aspect of utilization of skill lies within foresight and the internalized drive toward dominant thought of the moment (Rabby, 2010). Foresight is directly linked to individual performance that gain from organization performance and as a catalyst for all individual employees working for an organization to enhance their working performance or to complete task in much better ways than they usually do.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed quantitative design approach. Using a purposive sampling procedure, the overall 304 questionnaires were administered to both regular and part time students of home economics in Ahmadu Bello University, and Federal college of education Zaria. 279 retrieved questionnaires were found to be adequate for the purpose of analysis. The data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Regression was used to test the effects of all

the variables while Pearson’s Linear Correlation Coefficient was used to test the relationship of the variables at 0.01, level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation between home economics education and innovation skills

		HEC	Innovation skills
HEC	Pearson Correlation	1	.700(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	279	279
Innovation skills	Pearson Correlation	.700(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	279	279

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table 1 indicated a strong significant positive relationship between home economics education and innovation skills, the r value equals to 0.7000204 which was rounded up to 3 digit (r = 0.700; p < 0.01) .

Table 2: Correlation between home economics education and Creativity Skills

		HEC	Creativity skills
HEC	Pearson Correlation	1	.700(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	279	279
Creativity skills	Pearson Correlation	.700(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	279	279

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It can be seen from the above table that r value was 0.7007702 rounded up to three digits it became 0.700. The results of the correlation indicated a strong significant positive relationship between home economics education and creativity skills (r = 0.700; p < 0.01). The result also shows that the more the level of creativity skills increases the more the level of home economics education increases (wealth creation).

Table 3: Correlations between home economics education and Foresight Skills

		HEC	Foresight skills
HEC	Pearson Correlation	1	.726(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	279	279
Foresight skills	Pearson Correlation	.726(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	279	279

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in table 3 established a strong significant relationship between home economics education and foresight skills ($r = 0.726$; $p < 0.01$). This implies that an increase in foresight would lead to a corresponding increase in home economics education and wealth creation.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that innovations, creativity and foresight skills contribute significantly to home economics education in terms of productivity and strategy for marketing of goods and services for wealth creation. The more the level of those skills increases the level of home economic education also increases and this will result in higher productivity to individual, families and national objectives for wealth creation and poverty reduction. Therefore based on the findings of this study there is need for the home economics education to fully embrace this global demand of skills acquisition in other to meet up with the needs for wealth creation and poverty reduction in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. There is need for the home economics students and graduates to embrace the innovation skills in any kind of business they are into. This will help in boosting their efficiency and productivity.
2. There is need for home economists to make use of their brain and hands to come up with new ideas with the available resources at hands. This will attract more customers towards their productivity and enhance wealth.
3. The home economic students and graduates need to plan on future opportunities, on how to solve problems before it arrive. Example to buy things in bulk at season when it is cheap and available.
4. The home economics education experts need to create adequate awareness for students towards entrepreneurial careers and not to rely on the white collar jobs.

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