

## DEMYSTIFYING ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS REQUIRED FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AMONG GRADUATES OF TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) IN CROSS RIVER STATE

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### Abstract

The study was on 'Demystifying entrepreneurship skills required for employment generation among graduates of technical vocational education and training (TVET) in Cross River State. The research design employed in this study was survey design. The study was carried out in the University of Calabar, Cross River State. The population for the study was 72 final year students offering vocational education programme for 2019/2020 first semester academic session of the University of Calabar. A total of 60 students were sample for the study using purpose sampling technique. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The questionnaire was the instrument used for eliciting responses from the respondents. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded a coefficient of 0.82 showing that the instrument was reliable for the study. The data collected were collated and analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that male and female students do not differ in their entrepreneurship skills such as creative skills, resource management skills and accounting skills required for employment generation. It was recommended among others that students of Vocational Education should be exposed to entrepreneurship skills by their teachers to enhance their acquisition of relevant skills for self-employment

**Key words:** demystification, entrepreneurship skills, TVET, employment generation

### Introduction

Unemployment is one of the macroeconomic problems facing the Nigeria society today. Unemployment can be defined as the difference between the amount of labour employed at a given wage and working lends and working conditions as well as the amount of labour not hired at these levels. Ogwumike (2001) conceived unemployment as a situation whereby people who are willing to work at a prevailing rate are unable to find job. This implies that not everybody should be counted as part of the employed in order not to overestimate the official rate of

unemployment. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), (2008) explained that an unemployed is a member of the economically active population who is without work but is available for and seeking for work, including people who lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily resigned as a result of underpay. The issue of unemployment can be addressed by entrepreneurial skills acquired by individuals.

It is no news that the world has become private sector driven, and economic prosperity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires the possession of entrepreneurial skills to function. The youth needs exposure in practical entrepreneurial work experience in order to be proficient in their chosen career and be useful to themselves and the society. Okorie (2000) defined entrepreneurship skills as business skills which an individual acquires to enable him function effectively in the turbulent business environment as an entrepreneur. These skills include creative skills, innovative skills, accounting skills, management resource skills, risk-taking skills, opportunity skills, communication skills, technical skills and ICT skills. Successful entrepreneurship hinges upon the possession of a set skill. Skill acquisition is the process of acquiring or gaining effective and ready knowledge in developing one's attitude and ability in a particular field. Okorie (2000) defined skill as any established habit of performing a task in a way that is acceptable by a worker in his specialization.

Entrepreneurship which is a planned effort undertaken by an individual or individuals, institutions or agencies to develop the required competencies in people can easily be addressed through vocational options. Competencies of individual's entrepreneurial skill in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) are designed to lead the beneficiaries to self-employment, economic self-sufficiency, and employment generation through short or long-term training. This has led African countries including Nigeria to realize that training in TVET is necessary to alleviate poverty through skill acquisition.

TVET can be described as any form of education whose primary purpose is to prepare beneficiaries for gainful employment in an occupation or group of occupations. Maigida, Saba and Namkere (2013) defined TVET as a form of education that primarily concern the development of occupational skills needed in an individual as a preparation for work. It is a form of education which promotes the dignity of labour by entrenching work as the goal of education. TVET is training or retraining programme given in schools or classes under supervision and control. The learning experiences according to Abubakar (2010) may occur in variety of learning context, including educational institutions and workplace. UNESCO in Ayonmike, Okwelle and Okeke (2015) defined TVET as those aspects of educational processes involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisitions of skills the economy and social life. One of the skills in TVET is creative skill.

Creative skill is a prerequisite to escape unemployment. Creativity brings a new frontier in job explosion. Harris (1998) stated that creativity is marked by the ability to create, to invent into a new form, to produce through imaginative skill, and to bring into existence something new. Creativity is the ability to generate new ideas by combining, changing or reapplying existing ideas. Furthermore, some creative ideas are astonishing and brilliant while others are just simple, good practical ideas that no one seem to have thought of yet.

Creativity as reported by Okpara, (2007) consists of anticipation and commitment. Anticipation involves having a vision of something that will become important in the future before anybody else has it. Commitment is the belief that keeps one working to realize the vision

despite doubts and discouragement. Okpara, (2007) affirmed that the entrepreneur is primarily concerned with developing new products, processes, or markets, the ability to bring something new into the market. The entrepreneur indulges in original thinking more than any other person thinks and he is able to proffer solutions that fly in the face of established knowledge. Okpara affirmed further that entrepreneurs are inclined to be more adaptable and are prepared to consider a range of alternative approaches. They challenge the status quo, which can sometimes bring them into conflicts with their colleagues. They dismiss their detractors and are sometimes regarded as aloof. The entrepreneur should also be able to manage the limited resources.

Resource management is one of the prime functions of the entrepreneur. Kazanjian, Drazin and Glynn (2008) reported that resource management is the comprehensive process of structuring the firm's resource portfolio, bundling the resources to build capabilities and leveraging those capabilities with the purpose of creating and maintaining value for customers and owners. Structuring the resources portfolio involves using processes (acquiring, accumulating and divesting) to obtain the resources that the firm will use for bundling and leveraging purposes. Bundling refers to the processes of stabilizing, enriching and pioneering used to integrate resources to form capabilities. Leveraging involves the set of processes mobilizing, coordinating and deploying used to exploit capabilities to create solutions for current and new customers.

One of the duties of an entrepreneur as opined by Eno (2010) is assembling of business resources needed for the purpose of producing goods or services. According to Akpan (2004), business resources are facilities and conditions which make possible the production of goods and services. Eno (2010) maintained that business resources include money, personnel, materials, machines, information, opportunities and relationships. They are called the three Ms of business: (man, money and materials). People and money are two primary resources that are in short supply. Also, finding and keeping good employees is essential to success of business. The entrepreneur takes initiative in assembling the required resources needed to exploit business opportunities that unfold to him. The entrepreneur must report appropriate accounting processes.

Accounting skills is paramount in any business operation. Accounting is not only important to the economy but also to business world and personal use (Osuala, 2009). Accounting cuts across every course. Virtually, all organisation deals with money either as income or generate revenue. The keeping of financial records, budgeting and other issues relating to finance invites accounting. Lack of proper records and lack of understanding of records, is one of the most frequent causes of business failure (Odulami, 2001).

Onoh (2011) observed that fundamental accounting skills are those competencies in basic accounting required by a person to function competently, confidently, and successfully in the process of carrying out one's function of recording daily business transactions. They include skills in book-keeping, purchasing and supply, bargaining, determining labour costs, simple budgeting, and keeping of accurate receipts, sales records skills in keeping reliable records, sourcing for market outlets, work in progress records, credit purchases, invoices, cheque payments, keeping customers' records and goods inventory. Others are skills in good credit facility practices, operating the cash payment receipts, cash sales, prudent financial and working capital management. The knowledge of fundamental accounting skills by an entrepreneur will promote in good financial management, which is aimed at ensuring that there is adequate cash on

hand to meet the necessary current and capital expenditures as well as to assist in maximizing growth and profits.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Unemployment is a menace in Nigeria especially in Cross River State and is degenerating into alarming proportion. Every year the educational institutions are graduating good number of students from the institutions and there is alarming rate of unemployment. Unemployment breeds violence, poverty, hatred, arm robbery, kidnapping and other ills in the society. It is posing a big threat to our economic growth and development. The problem has aggravated due to lack of entrepreneurial skills by graduates from our educational institutions. Government have not properly funded entrepreneurship to ensure that students acquire necessary competencies and skills to be self-employed.

Developed countries of the world consciously tackle unemployment by including entrepreneurial education into every aspect of formal education. Reasons being that they have enjoying the role and benefits of entrepreneurship as a major driver of economic growth, development and employment generation. Proper funding of their educational system is key to ensure that graduates do not lack jobs and roam the streets searching for jobs. Thus, giving young people the opportunity of acquiring entrepreneurial competencies for effective and responsible living is giving hope to the people today and the future.

The truth remains that it is people with the requisite entrepreneurial skill who can create wealth, help the state as well as country to attain economic prosperity and job creation. Therefore, there is need for students to acquire entrepreneurial skills to be independent, generate income, live a responsible live and contribute to the development of the society.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine the entrepreneurship skills required for employment generation among graduates of technical vocational education and training in Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment generation.
2. Determine the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on resource management skills required for employment generation.
3. Determine the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on accounting skills required for employment.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were answered by the study.

1. What is the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment generation?
2. What is the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on resource management skills required for employment generation?
3. What is the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on accounting skills required for employment generation?

### Null Hypotheses

The following research questions were answered by the study.

1. There is no significant difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment.
2. There is no significant difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on resource management skills required for employment generation.
3. There is no significant difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on accounting skills required for employment generation.

### Methodology

The research design employed in this study was survey design. Survey design typically employs questionnaire and interviews in order to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions of person of interest to the researcher (Udoh and Joseph, 2005). The design is appropriate for this study because it sought the representative views of the male and female students on the entrepreneurial skills required by business education students for the establishment of small-scale enterprises. The study was carried out in the University of Calabar, Cross River State. The choice of the state for this study was necessitated by the adequate number of Vocational Education students who constituted the respondent for the study. The population for the study was 72 final year students, 42 males and 30 females offering vocational education programme for 2019/2020 first semester academic session. A total of 60 students were sample for the study using purpose sampling technique. The questionnaire was the instrument used for eliciting responses from the respondents. The questionnaire has 12 generated items. The instrument utilized a four-point rating scale of Very Highly Required (VHR) 4 points, Highly Required (HR) 3 points, Slightly Required (SR) 2 points, and Not Required (NR) 1 point. The instrument was face validated by three experts in the Department of Vocational Education, University of Uyo by experts in the field.

The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded a coefficient of 0.82 showing that the instrument was reliable for the study. All the 60 copies of the questionnaire were administered to students in the department of Vocational Education, University of Calabar by the researchers with the help of two researcher assistants, who helped to collect on the spot the completed questionnaire to ensure 100% return rate of the questionnaire. The data collected were collated and analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The  $p$ -value and  $\alpha$ -value were compared to decide whether the null hypothesis should be accepted or rejected. When  $p < \alpha$ , the null hypothesis is accepted and  $p > \alpha$  the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, any item whose  $p$ -value was less 0.05 was considered not significant and any item whose  $p$ -value was greater than 0.05 was considered not significant.

### Results

**Research Questions 1:** What is the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment generation?

**Table 1:** Mean Responses and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Graduates of TVET on Creative Skills required for Employment Generation

S/N	Item Statements	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Generate new ideas for the business.	Male	34	3.76	.431	HR
		Female	26	3.58	.504	HR
2.	Apply existing ideas.	Male	34	3.53	.662	HR
		Female	26	3.54	.706	HR
3.	Improve ideas and solutions by making gradual alterations.	Male	34	3.71	.799	HR
		Female	26	3.12	.909	HR
4.	Recognize a problem in the business.	Male	34	3.59	.500	HR
		Female	26	3.27	.604	HR
<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>60</b>	<b>3.51</b>		

The results presented in Table 1 revealed that creative skills have the grand mean of 3.51. This means that creative skills are highly required by male and female students for the employment generation. All the items on creative skills had their mean above the cut-off point of 2.5. However, the means of male students were higher than the means of female students in most of the items as shown in Table 1. This implies that male students were more proficient in creative skills than female students. The standard deviation ranges from .431- .909. This implies that there was no divergent view among the respondents.

**Research Questions 2:** What is the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on resource management skills required for employment generation?

**Table 2:** Mean Responses and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Graduates Of TVET on Resource Management Skills Required for Employment Generation

S/N	Item Statements	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Assemble resources for the business.	Male	34	3.56	.660	HR
		Female	26	3.38	.752	HR
2.	Keep complete and adequate financial record.	Male	34	3.71	.524	HR
		Female	26	3.80	.648	HR
3.	Manage staff.	Male	34	3.68	.475	HR
		Female	26	3.35	.689	HR
4.	Reduce cost of materials to maximize profit.	Male	34	3.71	.462	HR
		Female	26	3.60	.732	HR
<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>60</b>	<b>3.61</b>		

The results presented in Table 2 revealed that management skills have the grand mean of 3.61. This means that resource management skills are highly required by male and female students for the employment generation. All the items on resource management skills had their mean above the cut-off point of 2.5. However, the means of male students were higher than the means of female students in most of the items as shown in Table 2. This implies that male students were more proficient in resource management skills than female students. The standard

deviation ranges from .462- .752. This implies that there was no divergent view among the respondents.

**Research Questions 3:** What is the difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on accounting skills required for employment generation?

**Table 3:** Mean Responses and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Graduates of TVET on Resource Accounting Skills Required for Employment Generation

S/N Item Statements	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.Financial management skill	Male	34	3.77	.239	HR
	Female	26	3.94	.430	HR
2.Ledger preparation skill	Male	34	3.73	.359	HR
	Female	26	3.85	.604	HR
3.Book-keeping skill	Male	34	3.97	.300	HR
	Female	26	3.27	.919	HR
4.Budgeting skill	Male	34	3.35	.459	HR
	Female	26	3.82	.629	HR
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>3.71</b>		

The results presented in Table 3 revealed that accounting skills have the grand mean of 3.71. This means that accounting skills are highly required by male and female students for the employment generation. All the items on accounting skills had their mean above the cut-off point of 2.5. However, the means of female students were higher than the means of male students in most of the items as shown in Table 3. This implies that female students were more proficient in accounting skills than male students. The standard deviation ranges from .239- .919. This implies that there was no divergent view among the respondents.

**Null Hypotheses 1:** There is no significant difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment generation.

**Table 4:** Independent t-test analysis of difference in mean between Male and Female Graduates of TVET on Creative Skills required for Employment Generation

S/N Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	P-value	Remarks
1.Generate new ideas for the business.	Male	34	3.76	.431	.074	.025	NS
	Female	26	3.58	.504	.099	.034	NS
2.Apply existing ideas.	Male	34	3.53	.662	.114	.021	NS
	Female	26	3.54	.706	138.	.007	NS

3.Improve ideas and solutions by making gradual alterations.	Male	34	3.71	.799	.137	.010	NS
	Female	26	3.12	.909	.178	.011	NS
4.Recognize a problem in the business.	Male	34	3.59	.500	.086	.029	NS
	Female	26	3.27	.604	.118	.034	NS

*Note: NS = Not Significant, S = Significant, df= 58, p < .05*

The results in Table 4 showed the t-value of the t-test analysis comparing the mean responses of male and female graduates of TVET. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on creative skills required for employment generation. The null hypothesis was accepted since the total p-value 0.021 was less than 5% (.05) level of significance at 58 degree of freedom.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment generation.

**Table 5:** Independent t-test analysis of difference in mean between Male and Female Graduates of TVET on Resource Management Skills required for Employment Generation

Variables	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-cal	p-value	Rmk	
Assemble resources for the business.	Male	34	3.56	.660	.953	.134	S	
	Female	26	3.38	.752	.937	.093	S	
Keep complete and adequate financial record.	Male	34	3.71	.524	1.361	.019	NS	
	Female	26	3.50	.648	1.323	.012	NS	
Manage people or staff.	Male	34	3.68	.475	2.196	.032	NS	Not
	Female	26	3.35	.689	2.093	.042	NS	e:
	Male	34	3.71	.462	2.569	.001	NS	NS
Reduce cost of materials to maximize profit.						.002	NS	=
	Female	26	3.15	.732	3.367			Not
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= Significant,  $df= 58, p < .05$

The results in Table 5 showed the t-value of the t-test analysis comparing the mean responses of male and female graduates of TVET. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on resource management skills required for employment generation in one item and significant in three items. The null hypothesis was accepted since the total p-value .041 was less than 5% (.05) level of significance at 58 degree of freedom.

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference in mean response of male and female graduates of TVET on creative skills required for employment generation.

**Table 6:** Independent t-test analysis of difference in mean between Male and Female Graduates of TVET on Accounting Skills required for Employment Generation

S/N Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	P-value	Remarks
1.Financial management skill	Male	34	3.94	.239	1.972	.086	S
	Female	26	3.77	.430	1.835	.075	S
2.Ledger preparation skill	Male	34	3.85	.359	.976	.103	S
	Female	26	3.73	.604	.915	.201	S
3.Book-keeping skill	Male	34	3.97	.300	4.176	.198	S
	Female	26	3.27	.919	3.372	.215	S
4.Budgeting skill	Male	34	3.82	.459	3.402	.013	NS
	Female	26	3.35	.629	3.264	.002	NS
Total						.112	

Note: NS = Not Significant, S = Significant,  $df= 58, p > .05$

The results in Table 6 showed the t-value of the t-test analysis comparing the mean responses of male and female graduates of TVET. The results revealed that there is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on accounting skills. The null hypothesis was rejected as the total p-value .112 was greater than 5% (.05) level of significance, at 58 degree of freedom.

### **Discussion of Findings**

In Hypothesis one, the findings reveal that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on creative skills required for employment generation. The finding is in consonance with report of Okpara (2007) who affirmed that the entrepreneur is primarily concerned with developing new products, processes, or markets, the ability to bring something new into the market and not necessarily based on gender.

In hypothesis two, the findings reveal that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on resource management skills required for employment generation in two items and significant in two items. In summary, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on resource management skills required for employment generation. The finding is in consonance with assertion of Kazanjian, Drazin and Glynn (2008) who reported that resource management is the comprehensive process of structuring the firm's resource portfolio, bundling the resources to build capabilities and leveraging those capabilities with the purpose of creating and maintaining value for customers and owners and not based on gender.

In hypothesis three, the findings reveal that there is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on accounting skills required for employment generation in two items and significant in two items. In summary, there is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on accounting skills required for employment generation. The finding is in consonance with assertion of Onoh (2011) observed that fundamental accounting skills are those competencies in basic accounting required by a person to function competently, confidently, and successfully in the process of carrying out one's function of recording daily business transactions and not based on gender.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduates on creative skills, resource management skills and accounting skills required for employment generation. It was also concluded that entrepreneurial skills are required by graduates of TVET for employment generation in Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Students of vocational education programme in Cross River State should be exposed to entrepreneurship skills by their teachers to enhance their acquisition of relevant skills for self-employment
2. Teachers should incorporate the relevant entrepreneurship skills into their instructional delivery to prepare students for self-employment.

3. The academic institutions should partner with industrial sector to provide the needed skills in the work environment
4. The government and the academic institutions should make the learning environment a replica of the work environment.

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