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Skills Acquisition in Snail Farming: A Panacea for Entrepreneurship Development of Graduate Youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

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Abstract
The study which adopted descriptive survey design has a population of 800 graduate youths (male and female) from three local government areas in Rivers State. Accidental sampling technique was used to select 400 youths from the population as the study sample. Two research questions and two hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The instrument for data collection was the researcher's self-constructed 20-item questionnaire titled "Skills Acquisition in Snail Farming for Entrepreneurship Development Questionnaire (SASFEDQ)". SASFEDQ was constructed on a 5-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree corresponding to numerical values of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts in Vocational Agricultural Education from the University of Uyo, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was established via Cronbach's alpha method with a reliability coefficient of 0.83. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed among others that hatchability skills, skills in pen construction, skills in snail feed preparation, accounting skills, strategic planning skills, communication skills are some of the vocational and business management skills required by graduate youths in Rivers State for their entrepreneurship development in snail farming. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that Government should provide more vocational centers across the state for easy accessibility to vocational education and training.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship development, snail farming, vocational skills, graduate youths.
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1. Introduction

Youths are special group of the population of any country composed of young energetic people within the ages of 18 and 35 who play relevant key roles towards achieving societal development (Olelewe, 2016). The bulk of the workforce in any country across the globe is constituted of youths, by implication, youths serve as the active workforce in any nation. In the Nigeria, about 2/3rd of the total population is composed of youths (National Population Commission, 2007). According to NPC (2007), About 80 million which represents 60% of Nigeria's population is made of the youths. Okwelle and Ayonmike (2014) described youths as the engine room for meaningful development in any country. Akande (2011) defines youth as an age of adventure; a bridge between the adolescent and the adults or old age. Youths are special people with excellent innovative skills relevant to achieving societal development (Owo, 2018). Nigerian youths are very active and willing to contribute their quota to the economic and political development of the country however, they are unable to realize these noble dreams as they always find themselves in a dilemma of unemployment and poverty. Some of these youths are well-educated up to the university level in their chosen career paths. In fact, some of these youths are graduates of engineering, education, accounting, management sciences, arts to mention but a few from universities, polytechnics and colleges of education within and outside Nigeria who are willing to use their knowledge, skills and expertise to work in order to earn a living and contribute to the development of Nigeria yet unable to secure any paid employment from the Government. This development resulted to untold hardship and poverty among graduates which causes some of them to resort to criminal acts like kidnapping, prostitution, armed robbery, pipeline destruction, examination malpractice, cybercrimes, advanced fee fraud, among others. These problems may have been surmounted if the graduate youths have acquired in addition to the technical and vocational skills of their professions, relevant entrepreneurship skills capable of making them self-reliant upon graduation.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship as defined by Ogedi and Ukandu (2016) is the act of identifying, developing and employing new ideas aimed at creating new innovations for wealth-making. Entrepreneurship is the dynamic prospect of creating incremental wealth (Monday, 2012). Similarly, Kaburi, Mobegi, Kombo, Omari and Sewe (2012) submitted that the concept of entrepreneurship is very crucial as it leads to the acceleration of economic growth both in developed and developing countries through capital formation and wealth creation. Entrepreneurship is an attempt to create value through the recognition of business opportunity, management or risk-taking appropriate to the opportunity and through the communication and management skills to mobilize human, financial and material resources necessary to bring a project to function (Tyolumun & Umogbai, 2008). According to Okwelle and Owo (2018), entrepreneurship entails the creation of something via innovation and creativity that would add value to the quality of life of the people as well as wealth creation for the economic development of the nation. Entrepreneurship education therefore is a skill-based training given to students (learners) to enable them becoming self-sustained. Entrepreneurship education inculcates in the learners, relevant entrepreneurship skills for their self-employment and development.

2.2. The Concept of Development

Development as a concept is defined by Wright (cited in Aliyu & Kabiru, 2014) as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and behaviour that improve employees' ability to meet the future challenges of the existing job. According to Adenle and Olukayode (2007), development is any position changes leading to desirable benefits to individuals and society.

2.3. Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurship development is the process of assisting people to start and nurture dynamic businesses that provide high value addition to the benefit of the society (Monday, 2012). Entrepreneurship development remains a critical aspect of skill development and a vital tool for economic growth and development (Obitayo, 2001). Similarly, Duhu and Mbaga, (2016:293), submitted that entrepreneurship development programmes may include support for the following:

- Entrepreneurship orientation and awareness.
- Development of competencies (skills, experience and attitude) necessary to identify a market opportunity and harness resources to meet it.
- Improvement of business performance for growth and competitiveness.

One of the ways by which graduate youths can develop their entrepreneurship potentials is via skills acquisition in technical vocational education and training (TVET).

2.4 The Concept of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

According to the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2002), TVET is a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational processes involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. One of the goals of TVET as contained in the Federal Republic of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPE) (2013) is to give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically. TVET is an education for skill building and identity which ultimately becomes a means of livelihood (Aina, 2009). In the views of Abdulwahab (2006), technical and vocational education is aimed at developing human abilities in the areas of knowledge, skills and understanding so as to carry out more efficiently, the vocational activities in any vocational area of choice. One of the vocational areas in TVET capable of helping graduate youths to have a sustained means of livelihood through job creation and poverty reduction with better living standards is snail farming.

2.5 The Concept of Snail Farming

Snail farming is a vocational occupation which entails the rearing of snails for commercial and personal use. Snails belong to a division of the animal kingdom called Mollusca. Mollusca constitute one of the major divisions of the animal kingdom (Ademosu & Omidigi, 1999). In the views of Baba and Adeleke (2006), one of the important alternative sources of animal protein which has received relatively scanty attention in Nigeria is the snail. In Nigeria, snails dwell mostly in humid forest areas from where they are gathered by villagers for personal consumption and commercial purposes (Ademosu & Omidigi, 1999). Snail meat is traditionally a major ingredient and a good source of protein in the diet of people living in high forest zone. Similarly, Agbogidi,

Okonta and Ezeani (2008) reported that snails are high in protein, iron and low in fat and as such serve as good nutrition. Snail farming therefore is a good means of earning a living from all indication. Despite the numerous benefits derivable from snail meat and the entrepreneurship development opportunities available for exploration through snail farming, many Nigerian graduate youths are yet to be aware of this development (Baba & Adeleke 2006). According to the Enugu State Agricultural Development Programme (ENADEP) (2009), most graduates in Nigeria are yet to embrace snail farming as a good business for wealth creation and self-employment. Presently, snail farming serves commercial purposes for economic development in several countries of the world such as Italy and France (Baba and Adeleke, 2006). However, snail farming requires relevant skills acquisition obtainable through vocational education in order for graduate youths to take their entrepreneurship development in this business to the next level.

3. Statement of the Problem

Poverty and unemployment are two common plagues prevalent among youths in Nigeria. The National Bureau of Statistics (2019), third quarter 2018 Labour Force Survey Reports, stated that Rivers State records the second highest unemployment rate at 36.4% in Nigeria. Again, Rivers State also records the highest number of unemployed population having a labour force population of 4,601,135. The Nigerian economy presently lacks the capacity to absorb chains of thousands of unemployed graduate youths which implies that Nigerian graduates can no longer rely on the Nigerian labour market for employment except via entrepreneurship (Solomon, 2013). Entrepreneurship development serves an avenue for graduate youths in Rivers State to overcome the menace of unemployment and poverty. According to Solomon (2013), one of the areas which the youths can become self-employed and create wealth for themselves is via skills acquisition in snail farming as a vocation. Snail farming is a business that can create employment for numerous graduate youths in Rivers State. Therefore, this study seeks to determine the relevant skills necessary to achieve maximum productivity in snail farming business for the entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine how skills acquisition in snail farming could serve as a panacea for the entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out vocational technical skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. Find out business management skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following two research questions were posed by the researcher to guide the study:

1. What are the vocational technical skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria?
2. What are the business management skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

These two null hypotheses were formulated and tested by the researcher at 0.05 level of significance in order to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduate youths on the vocational technical skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduate youths on the business management skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

5. Methods and Materials

The study adopted descriptive survey design. A population of 800 graduate youths (male and female) from three local governments areas of Bonny, Andoni and Opobo/Nkoro in Rivers State was used for the study. These youths realized that the present Nigerian government could not offer them paid employment thus they seek for alternative option via skills acquisition in snail farming obtainable through vocational education for their employment and wealth creation. Accidental sampling techniques were used to select 400 graduate youths (240males and 160 females) from Bonny, Finima, Asarama, Ekede, Oyorokoto, Opobo, Queen's town and Nkoro as the study sample. Two research questions and two hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The instrument for data collection was the researcher's self-constructed 20-item questionnaire titled "Skills Acquisition in Snail Farming for Entrepreneurship Development Questionnaire (SASFEDQ)". SASFEDQ was constructed on a 5-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree corresponding to numerical values of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts in Vocational Agricultural Education from the university of Uyo, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was established using 60 graduate youths (35 males and 25 females) who were not part of the study sample and a reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained as a measure of the internal consistency of the instrument via Cronbach's alpha method. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed to the respondents by the researcher and two other research assistants, only 286 (154 males and 132 females) representing 95.3 % of the total number of questionnaires distributed were successfully retrieved and used for data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were descriptive statistical tools used to analyze the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision is that any item whose mean is less than 3.00 was rejected while any item whose mean is greater than or equal to 3.00 was accepted. Standard deviation values close or wide apart were used to test homogeneity in the responses of the respondents. If the table value, t_{crit} is less than the calculated value, t_{cal}, the hypothesis will be rejected but if otherwise, the hypothesis will be accepted.

6. Results

The results are presented in accordance with the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What are the vocational technical skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table1: Vocational technical skills in Snail Farming for Entrepreneurship Development of Graduate Youths in Rivers State.

S/N	Item Statement	Male youths			Female youths		
		$\overline{X}_1$	SD_1	Decision	$\overline{X}_2$	SD_2	Decision
1	Hatchability skills in pen construction.	3.91	0.91	Agree	4.22	1.05	Agree
2	Skills in snail feed preparation.	4.04	0.67	Agree	4.01	1.09	Agree
3	Skills in selecting good stock for breeding.	3.98	0.88	Agree	3.93	0.83	Agree
4	Skills in supplying quality feeds for the snails.	4.02	0.92	Agree	3.81	0.73	Agree
5	Skills in removing breeding stock from the pen after laying eggs.	3.92	0.76	Agree	3.96	0.49	Agree
6	Skills in keeping records of observable deficiencies in the snails.	4.26	0.89	Agree	4.11	0.57	Agree
7	Skills in preventing predators, parasites and diseases from the snails.	3.69	0.99	Agree	3.73	0.69	Agree
8	Skills in supplying the snails with water.	4.22	1.04	Agree	4.08	0.77	Agree
9	Skills in creating conducive environments for the snails	3.88	1.11	Agree	4.12	0.83	Agree
	Grand mean and SD	**3.99**	**0.91**		**4.00**	**0.78**	

Table 1 revealed that all the mean scores from both male and female graduate youths are above the criterion mean of 3.00. Thus, the respondents agreed that all the items in table 1 are vocational technical skills required in snail farming for the entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria. Standard deviation values ranging from 0.49 to 1.11 indicated homogeneity in the opinion of both categories of respondents.

Research Question 2: What are the business management skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Business Management skills in Snail Farming for Entrepreneurship Development of Graduate Youths in Rivers State.

S/N	Item Statement	Male Youths			Female Youths		
		$\overline{X}_1$	SD_1	Decision	$\overline{X}_2$	SD_2	Decision
1	Graduate youths need accounting and book-keeping skills for snail farming.	3.96	0.85	Agree	3.23	0.97	Agree
2	Graduate youths need sales and marketing skills for snail farming.	3.67	0.93	Agree	3.64	0.94	Agree
3	Graduate youths need leadership skills for snail farming.	3.62	0.82	Agree	4.03	0.85	Agree
4	Graduate youths require communication skills for snail farming.	4.01	0.94	Agree	4.18	0.93	Agree
5	Graduate youths need problem solving skills for snail farming.	3.98	0.89	Agree	3.98	0.71	Agree
6	Graduate youths need strategic planning skills for snail farming.	3.93	0.79	Agree	4.00	0.78	Agree
7	Graduate youths require decision making skills for snail farming.	3.42	0.77	Agree	4.16	1.02	Agree
8	Graduate youths require time management skills for snail farming.	3.59	0.92	Agree	3.87	1.12	Agree
9	Graduate youths need creative and innovative skills for snail farming.	4.11	0.97	Agree	4.27	0.91	Agree
10	Graduate youths need networking skills for snail farming.	3.88	0.81	Agree	3.68	0.81	Agree
11	Graduate youths need analytical skills snail farming.	3.97	0.86	Agree	4.18	0.98	Agree
	Grand Mean and SD	**3.83**	**0.87**		**3.93**	**0.91**	

Table 2 revealed that all the mean scores from both male and female graduate youths are above the criterion mean of 3.00. Thus, the respondents agreed that all the items in table 2 are business management skills required in snail farming for the entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria. Standard deviation values ranging from 0.71 to 1.12 show closeness in the opinion of both categories of respondents.

Table 3: t-test analysis on vocational technical skills in snail farming for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State.

GROUP	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	154	3.99	0.91	284	-0.1	1.96	Accepted
Female	132	4.00	0.78				

Source: *Researcher's Field Work; 2019*

The analysis on table 3 reveals that the calculated value of t, t_{cal} (-0.1) is less than the critical value of t, t_{crit} (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom 284. Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduate youths on the vocational technical skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: t-test analysis on business management skills in snail farming for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State.

GROUP	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	154	3.83	0.87	284	-0.95	1.96	Accepted
Female	132	3.93	0.91				

Source: *Researcher's Field Work; 2019*

The analysis on table 4 reveals that the calculated value of t, t_{cal} (-0.95) is less than the critical value of t, t_{crit} (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom 284. Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduate youths on the business management skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

7. Discussion

The finding of the study as indicated in table 1 revealed that hatchability skills, preparation of feed skills, prevention of predators and disease skills and supplying of snail feeds among others are vocational technical skills needed by graduate youths for entrepreneurship development in Rivers State. This finding is in line with Nnodim and Johnwest, (2016) who posit that vocational agricultural education offers numerous opportunities for youth to be economically and socially empowered though required relevant skills to become efficient and productive entrepreneurs. The finding further agrees with Abdulwahab (2006) who postulated that vocational education is aimed at developing human abilities in the areas of knowledge, skills and understanding so as to carry out more efficiently, the vocational activities in any vocational area of choice. In the same vein the finding agrees with Aina (2009) who stated that vocational technical education is directed towards skill building and identity of individuals which ultimately becomes a means of livelihood.

Table 2 revealed that accounting and book-keeping skills, sales and marketing skills, strategic planning skills, analytical skills, innovative skills among others are business management skills required in snail farming for the entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria. This finding corroborates Solomon (2013), who opined that snail farming provides opportunity for wealth creation and poverty reduction among graduates in Nigeria. Similarly, this finding agrees with Duhu and Mbaga, (2016), who submitted that entrepreneurship development programmes ensure the development of the individual's competences in skills, experience and attitude for improved business performance in any chosen vocation. Thus, from the foregoing, it is pertinent for graduate youths who are willing to venture into snail farming to acquire relevant vocational and business skills in snail farming for their self-employment and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

Table 3 revealed that the calculated value of t (tcal -0.1) is less than the table value of t (tcrit 1.96). Therefore, the null hypotheses which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduate youths on the vocational technical skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria was accepted.

Table 4 revealed that the calculated value of t (tcal -0.95) is less than the table value of t (tcrit 1.96). Therefore, the null hypotheses which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female graduate youths on the business management skills required in snail farming as a panacea for entrepreneurship development of graduate youths in Rivers State, Nigeria was accepted. Thus, graduate youths need both vocational technical and business management skills for snail farming business to feature as trained entrepreneurs.

8. Conclusion

One of the goals of vocational education is to train learners in any vocation of their choice with the aim of making them not just self-employed but also employers of labour. This noble objective can only be made realizable in tandem with adequate entrepreneurship education and training. Therefore, for graduate youths to become vibrant entrepreneurs in snail farming business, they need to acquire adequate vocational and business management skills. Once, this is done, achieving entrepreneurship development through snail farming becomes a

reality capable of creating numerous jobs among Nigerian graduate youths especially those residing in Rivers State.

9. Recommendations

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

1. Government should enrich the curriculum of vocational education in Nigerian tertiary institutions to cater for any deficiencies in skills acquisition and training.
2. Government should make provisions for adequate funds for aspiring graduate youths in Rivers State who are willing to develop their entrepreneurship capacities.
3. Government should provide more vocational centres across Rivers State for easy accessibility to vocational education and training by graduate youths resident in the state.
4. Tertiary institutions in Rivers State which offer courses in vocational education should embark on quality enlightenment campaign to sensitize the public on the need to embrace vocational education for entrepreneurship development of youths in the state.

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