ENTREPRENEURS’ SKILL OF HANDLING TECHNOLOGY IN AGRO AND GENERAL BUSINESSES

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Abstract

The importance of technology cannot be overemphasized in an attainment of a good and a sustainable business. As a result, this work carefully shows the impacts and effects of entrepreneurship education and technology adopted by the entrepreneur in the running of a business. As presented in this paperwork, a systematic review method was used to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurs’ adequate use of technology in agro and general business. It revealed the efficacy of entrepreneurship education on an entrepreneur as it relates to the use of technology in business enterprise. Furthermore, this careful review provided a good understanding on entrepreneurship education, an entrepreneur’s skill of handling technology, reasons for handling technology by an entrepreneur and various technologies available for entrepreneurs. Against these backdrops, entrepreneurship education should be given maximum priority for a desirable output. More so, this study is of great importance, especially as applies to the tertiary institutions where knowledge on entrepreneurship education in relation to entrepreneurs and professional handling of technology would be expanded and dug deep for effective business application.

Keywords: Agro; Entrepreneurs; General Business; Skill of Handling; Technology


INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is a significant challenge currently facing the world’s developing nations, particularly Nigeria. For example, in Nigeria a large number of young people graduate from higher education institutions each year with no
job opportunities. Indeed, by the middle of 2020, it was predicted that Nigeria's unemployment rate would be around 33.5 percent (National Bureau of National Statistics, 2019). This deficiency has always been blamed on youths' various forms of criminality, violence, and unbearable social vices. Perhaps it is in an attempt to solve these problems associated with unemployment that the Nigerian government, with the goal of job creation, infused entrepreneurship education into school curriculum virtually at all levels of learning, with the goal of encouraging youths to be self-employed through various business activities, thereby boosting the economy's development. When it is discovered that entrepreneurship has the potential to provide a source of income when an economy lacks the ability to provide sufficient jobs or other alternatives for generating wages or salaries, even when there is positive social value, this policy direction is likely to be infused with a palpable sense of relief (Kelly, Bosma & Amoros, 2010). Apart from that, it is believed that a career influenced by entrepreneurship provides individuals with numerous opportunities to reap greater financial rewards, gain independence, and contribute to the economy, through contributions to job enhancement, innovation, and economic development (Abass & Rehman, 2010). In other words, entrepreneurship is essential for individual, national, and regional economic development. Richard Cantillon was the first economist to define entrepreneurship, as the process by which an individual is ready to involve in business that is encompassing the budgeting instability in 1732 (Minniti & Levesque, 2008). While Timmons (1989) defined entrepreneurship as a process of creating and constructing something useful. According to Drucker (1986), entrepreneurship is neither a science nor art, but is a practice with a knowledge base, and being innovative and creative rather than just earning money.

Entrepreneurship training is a crucial vocational subject of study that can set an individual and a nation on the path of social engineering and long-term economic growth. In the last ten years, it is now clear that venture capital is a critical component of fiscal success (Acs et al., 2009:2008). To that end, governments worldwide have devised methods to encourage entrepreneurship, such as entrepreneur financing, contractual constitutional safety, and appropriate governance (Armour & Cumming, 2006). According to Schmiemann (2008), in most developed countries, entrepreneurial business in a total of all enterprises is greater than 95%, with those firms employing 60% of all available labours. Technology, on the other hand, will continue to be a strong significant variable in the effectiveness of entrepreneurship. Information and communication technologies, for example, have provided society with a plethora of new communication capabilities. Entrepreneurs can communicate with customers and associates within a short period of time using technologies such as a voice over IP, instant messaging, and video conferencing. Users from all over the world can stay in touch and communicate on regular basis thanks to social networking sites like Facebook. Modern information and communication technologies have usher in a global era in which people communicate with people all over the world as if they were neighbours. The ability of entrepreneurs to manage these technologies will continue to be a strong indicator of how businesses will thrive, especially in a fiercely competitive environment.

Entrepreneurship Education

Many researchers have given entrepreneurship education significant attention in their research, with varying perspectives. Entrepreneurship education is a method of imparting the necessary knowledge and notion to pinpoint new business contingency and develop a high level of self-assurance in order to capitalise on such opportunities (McIntyre & Roche, 1999). Entrepreneurship education according to McMullan and Long (1987) and McMullan et al. (2000) who also advocated for it include new product development, skill development and leadership programmes, technological innovation, and creative thinking. Entrepreneurship education programmes as any educational programme or process of education for entrepreneurial attitudes and skills that aid in the development
of personal qualities (Maritz et al., 2015). Entrepreneurship education is one of the most important aspects of the entrepreneurship ecosystem for improving intentionality and business creation stability (Van Gelderen et al., 2015). According to Aliu (2017), entrepreneurship is the participation in any business for the purpose of creating wealth while taking risks. Furthermore, Hitt and Sirmon (2003) defined entrepreneurship as a context-dependent social process in which individuals and groups create wealth by pooling unique resources to capitalize on market opportunities. Entrepreneurship has been identified as a critical component in modern economic dynamics. Many small and medium-sized businesses have emerged as the primary source of new job creation. They have made significant contributions to the overview of valuable new products and the preservation of the economy's competitiveness in global markets. Entrepreneurs may be exposed to various forms of entrepreneurship education, namely; formal, semi-formal and informal education. The type of entrepreneurship education an entrepreneur is exposed to can greatly determine the level of handling technology in his business. In a study conducted by Deinde (2019) based on the type of entrepreneurship education they are exposed to, about 46% of the respondents are exposed to formal entrepreneurship education, 23% (semi-formal) and 31% are exposed to informal entrepreneurship education (Table 1). He reported that entrepreneurs who have formal entrepreneurship education tend to handle technology effectively in their businesses than the others who have semi-formal and informal entrepreneurship education.

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<th>Table 1: A Classification of Entrepreneurs based on Entrepreneurship Education exposed to</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Entrepreneurship Education</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-formal</td>
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<td>Informal</td>
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*Source: Deinde (2019)*

According to Fayolle et al. (2006), entrepreneurship education is approached from three different perspectives: culture/state of mind, behaviour, and the creation of specific situations. Entrepreneurship is emphasised in education as a cultural/state cover feature that focuses on entrepreneurship-related beliefs, values, and attitudes. While entrepreneurship education focuses on behaviour, it primarily addresses skills such as opportunity identification, decision making, and social skill development. Entrepreneurship education has customarily concerned with the creation of new firms and entrepreneurial scenarios, whereas entrepreneurship education has traditionally focused on the last aspect (venture creation, e.g., writing business plans), according to many current scholars, the main challenge for entrepreneurship education is determining the dimensions (Gibb, 2002:2009).

Positive or mixed results were found in most entrepreneurship education studies (Lorz et al., 2011), while there was a positive effect and performance on business teaching for people who applied for microfinance to start their own business as Van der Sluis and Van Praag (2007:2008) and Van der Sluis et al. (2005) agreed upon. According to Peterman and Kennedy (2003), intentions of the entrepreneurial participants can significantly be changed through entrepreneurship education programs. However, a negative correlation is found between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurs in only two recent studies (Oosterbeek et al., 2010; Von Graevenitz et al., 2010).

The findings had a positive effect, prompting some researchers to advocate for more research that employs rigorous research methods. While researchers have identified the beneficial effects of entrepreneurship education there has been little rigorous research on its effects (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). More research is needed because
the connection between entrepreneurship education and outcomes is still unclear, this was discovered during Pittaway and Cope (2007) analysis of entrepreneurship education. "There is a dearth of research on the outcomes of entrepreneurship education," Fayolle and colleagues write (2006). More research is needed to recognise the various options of entrepreneurship education programmes, according to Oosterbeek et al. (2010), and von Graevenitz et al. (2010), "Little is known at this point about the effect of these (entrepreneurship) courses." However, the concerned stakeholders believe in a current study that the majority of the previous studies were not implemented adequately. The problem does not end with the need for more research (though researchers are always needed), but with the need for the findings of many existing studies to be implemented. In a nutshell, research should not be treated as a regular paperwork or an academic exercise, but rather as a tool for solving common problems.

METHODOLOGY

A systematic review method was adopted using articles and research works which were carefully reviewed from different research works to explore the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurs adequate use of technology in agro and general business as presented in this paperwork. This paper reviewed different research works on entrepreneurs’ skills of handling technology, agro business in a modern World, reasons for handling technology by entrepreneurs and various technologies available for entrepreneurs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study Review

Entrepreneurs’ Skills of Handling Technology

Entrepreneurs will require entrepreneurship education in the future to acquire skills for business acumen (Do Paco et al; 2011a:2011b). Some business owners generally rely on their own competence, believing they have what it takes to succeed. These abilities include risk management, customer relations, and, most importantly, technology management in their businesses.

The ability of entrepreneurs to properly handle technology in their business is a composite of the business's functionality and sustainability. The main reason for the failure of many businesses is a lack of skills, particularly in the use of technology (Dowling, 2003; Scarborough & Zimmerer, 2003). It is not uncommon to observe that many entrepreneurs are not innovative and are sometimes stuck in the past. They are resistant to technological innovations primarily due to a lack of education or resources to obtain such technologies. As a result, these actions have an impact on their survival, particularly in a fiercely competitive business environment (Aliu, 2017). In another development, Lazear (2004:2005) discovered that people with work understanding and an educational qualification have a skills diverse and are more likely to become entrepreneurs and accomplish outstanding business success.

According to Martin (2015), the OECD (2014) an annual report identified three sets of skills: technical skills, business management skills, and personal entrepreneurial skills. Written and oral communication skills, technical implementation skills, and organisational skills are all part of technical management (Henry et al., 2005). Monitoring the environment, obstacle quick fix, and relational talent are also required (Martin, 2015). According
to Rungapadiachy (1999), interpersonal skills are the abilities required to communicate effectively with another person or a group of people. Environment monitoring, according to Aguilar (1967), is the method by which business management gathers important information about events occurring outside the company to aid in assessing the future course of the business.

Decision-making, goal setting, human resource management, finance, accounting, marketing, customer relations, negotiating, growth management, and regulatory compliance are all examples of business management skills (Martin, 2015). “Human resource management skills, financial management skills, and general planning skills are defined as management skills by De Wolf and Schoorlemmer (2007), Rudmann (2008), Vesala & Pyysiainen (2008), and marketing, accounting, and decision-making skills by Henry et al. (2005).

Integrating information and communication technology (ICT) into business issues, including entrepreneurship, is not a novel concept. It has the potential to be as old as other technologies such as radios and televisions. However, as emerging technologies such as web technology have advanced, educators' interest in ICT integration has grown. Technology should not be used simply because it is easily accessible or has been shown to be effective in some cases. Handling technology correctly results in a sense of completeness or wholeness, in which all essential elements of a system are seamlessly combined to form a perfect in terms of working-ability and business functionality. Thornhill and Amit (2003) discovered that deficiencies in handling technology is attributed to failure of younger entrepreneurs in businesses when assessing the importance of business administration abilities. In a related study, Landwehr (2005) stated that business management skills, of which technology handling is an important aspect, are critical in the later stages of the business to keep it running. This is because business situations are complex, unpredictable, and require changing requirements throughout the business process (Frese & Gielnik, 2014). Entrepreneurs must develop specific personality traits to deal with this situation. Entrepreneurs must be leaders, investors, inventors, accountants, marketing experts, and top sellers. In these cases, the entrepreneur's ability to effectively use technology is critical.

According to Thomas and Mueller (2000), the main distinction between entrepreneurs and regular employees is their willingness to take risks; additionally, ability of entrepreneurs to bear the uncertainty of loss or profit personally makes it differs from being a respectable business manager. Aliu (2017) who revealed that level of technological adoption and its use makes entrepreneurs different from regular employees. In the twenty-first century technology management is a critical factor in the survival of any business. However, as Erdem (2001) and Littunen (2000) point out, being an entrepreneur implies the emotional state, risk of career opportunities, health, risk of failure, and family relationships; as a result, when an individual intends to become an entrepreneur, he or she must embrace all the risk that entails. In the finding of Aliu (2017) based on entrepreneurial dispositions to handling technology, 83.6% of the respondents had interest in starting own business, 69.6% had interest in handling technology in business, while only 26.9% are presently not using technology in business (Table 2). Based on this, it can be deduced that most entrepreneurs are not innovative, especially in the area of handling technology in businesses. Researchers who discovered a strong relationship between dispositions such as personality traits and the entrepreneurial choice identified the need for innovation (especially in the handling of technology) and a proclivity for risk taking as the most common attributes influencing people's entrepreneurial aspirations (Hitt & Sirmon, 2003). The organizational structure, market area, and management styles of the organization change as it grows and expands. To survive in a fiercely competitive business environment, entrepreneurs must adapt to changing business conditions. A positive attitude is a critical factor that all entrepreneurs requires to have (Deinde, 2019). They will be unable to accomplish their objectives unless they remain positive, in addition to specialize or
technical skills. When they decide to start their own business, they may be driven and enthusiastic, but the real issues arise when they face challenges or obstacles. Some people eventually lose motivation and enthusiasm because they believe they made a mistake from which they will never recover; this is referred to as a negative attitude. At this point, it is critical to maintain a positive attitude.

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<th>Entrepreneurial Disposition</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Interest in starting own business</td>
<td>83.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest in handling technology in business</td>
<td>69.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presently using technology in business</td>
<td>26.9</td>
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*Source: (Aliu, 2017)*

The desire to become an entrepreneur is strongly related to risk-taking and innovation (Bolton & Lane, 2012). People with a team of highly skilled are more likely to succeed as entrepreneurs, according to Lazear (2004)'s "Jack-of-all-trades" theory, and those skills and knowledge can be acquired through working in various functions, working for different employers, and appropriate education. Lazear (2005) highlighted that individuals can also engage in learning and acquiring different expertise through education or job training. Individuals who wish to go after a career in entrepreneurship can do so through education or by working in a variety of jobs. Individuals with a strong educational background or prior work experience, additionally, are more likely to succeed as entrepreneurs.

**Agro Business in a Modern World**

To be successful in Agro business, farmers must become entrepreneurs. All over the world, this concept has transformed farmers and those in agro business to a remarkable business economic developer. Experimenting with better animals, raw crops and cultivars, and alternative technologies (including ICT) to diversify production, increase production, increase profits, and reduce risk is part of this. As a result, they've become more market-oriented, learning to take calculated risks to open or create new markets for their products (Kahan 2012). The use of technology has caused Agro-business stakeholders to become more innovative and forward-thinking. It has also provided them with the necessary skills to manage their businesses as long-term investments in order to make them sustainable in the digital modern economy. A technologically skilled Agro business entrepreneur has a clear picture of what is possible and required for success in this digital age because the knowledge of technological skill is important for general and agro-business sustainability in this modern world. (Kahan, 2012).

**Reasons for Handling Technology by Entrepreneurs**

Technology's impact on our daily lives has undeniably grown exponentially in recent decades. Technology, whether laptops or cell phones, connects us to the world around us and serves as a gateway to a vast array of easily accessible
knowledge. Many entrepreneurs, however, do not fully utilise technology to propel themselves to new heights. As a result, for the following reasons, many entrepreneurs incorporate technology into their businesses:

**Effective Communication**
According to Abdullahi (2018), good communication is necessary for entrepreneurs to ensure the efficient flow of information in a business. Businesses can communicate both internally and externally through a variety of channels due to technological advancements. Technology can be used to collect feedback from customers, which can then be used to improve or change a product to better suit the needs of the customers, whether it's creating virtual workspaces for employees to interact and develop ideas, or connecting with international businesses via telephones, video conferencing, and other means.

**Research and Development**
Entrepreneurs use technology to achieve research and development goals. Secondary data can be used by businesses to conduct market research, according to Aliu (2017). This is extremely beneficial because it allows businesses to gain in-depth knowledge of markets before entering them. Deinde (2019) discovered that, in addition to conducting secondary research, entrepreneurs can conduct primary research using technology such as customer feedback and online surveys.

**Web Based Advertising**
The click of a button that reaches millions of people is one of the most significant benefits of using technology for entrepreneurs all over the world. Web-based advertising includes websites and social media (Deinde, 2019). Websites can be created with free software like WordPress or Square Space, or by hiring a professional web developer. Business social media accounts, unlike websites, are easy to set up and provide exposure across a variety of platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Skype Chats, Palm Chats, YouTube, and many more.

**Easy Operations**
Humans are living in an odd and wonderful technological era. Entrepreneurs who closely follow the media will notice that progress is rapid and frequently overwhelming—blockchain, deep learning, neural networks, robotics, and smart AI-assistants assisting entrepreneurs to schedule meetings or meet new clients for various purposes. The tasks of entrepreneurs in terms of proper and timely delivery of goods and services have now become simpler.

**Gaining Competitive Edge**
Technology assists entrepreneurs in gaining a competitive advantage over larger corporations or business outlets. When a large corporation decides to embrace technology on a large scale, it has the funds and resources to do so. That is almost never the case for small businesses. There is, however, one area where entrepreneurs can profit. To test and adopt newer technologies, an entrepreneur must go through a series of steps. These steps should be included in entrepreneurship education for entrepreneurs before they start their businesses (Aliu, 2017). They can jump on the innovation bandwagon quickly and develop new solutions from scratch because they are agile and have fewer administrative functions to contend with. Indeed, larger corporations, such as Google and Facebook, frequently obtain smaller start-ups in order to gain access to their technology and the minds behind it before the "new kid" dethrones them (Deinde, 2019).

**Various Technologies Available for Entrepreneurs**
Entrepreneurs have a wide range of technologies to handle for their businesses as stated below:
Project Management Software
Every entrepreneur's team should have a cloud-based project management application that is simple to use, powerful but flexible. A good project management software can help to preserve and nurture ideas while also serving as a platform for collaboration. Discussion threads can form around good ideas, and once an idea has matured into a project, you can create a timeline and add resources to it (Obisanya & Akinbami, 2010).

Internal Chat Platform
For intra-company communications, many entrepreneurs still rely on email. Entrepreneurs can improve the speed and accountability of business interactions and discussions by using Hip Chat as an internal communication platform (Obisanya & Akinbami, 2010). Furthermore, it has been reported that such technology allows employees to bond on a deeper level (Wunderlinch, 2015).

Last Pass
Last Pass is the best tool for keeping track of online passwords and credentials. Lane Campbell (2012) reported that this technology can help entrepreneurs centralize important data and work more efficiently at faster and cheaper rates.

Video Equipment
In today's digital marketplace, video has become an increasingly important marketing asset. Rather than hiring expensive videographers, entrepreneurs should equip their business teams with easy-to-use, portable video equipment to create high-quality video content. For a relatively small investment, the entrepreneur will notice a significant improvement in the quality of video produced with a good camera rather than a webcam.

USB Modems and Scalable Data Plans
This technology is beneficial to entrepreneurs, particularly those running remote businesses; it will encourage business teams to stay connected and work wherever they feel most productive, on whatever the device suits their needs (Jared Brown, 2010). That means it's critical to equip them with scalable business data, plans and hardware that allows them to access the internet even when there's no Wi-Fi.

Training Software
According to Matt (2009), this technology is essential for entrepreneurs who want to work hands-on with their business team. Face-to-face time investment will be amplified in this case if the entrepreneur combines it with effective self-paced training. The entrepreneur will provide his team with tools they can revisit, share, and add to as the business grows by creating lessons in training software. This software can also be used to train new business teams as well as existing teams in-service. It also has the ability to expand on the knowledge gained through entrepreneurship education.

CONCLUSION
The study thoroughly investigated how entrepreneurship education influences the quality of technology-handling expertise in entrepreneurs' businesses. Entrepreneurship education is as important as general education, especially in the face of chronic unemployment and dwindling economy, while technology handling skill makes entrepreneurs to effectively manage risks and uncertainties in businesses and survive in a fiercely competitive business
environment. From the review of this study, in order to improve the entrepreneurs’ functionality and sustainability, thereby making them succeed in their businesses; certain efforts must be put in place.

Notwithstanding, working on the improvement of entrepreneurial education is a veritable means that provide the crucial skills for entrepreneurs to adequately manage their businesses with effective handling of technology and to manage the challenges, risks, and uncertainties inherent in their businesses for sustainability and growth. Equally, providing adequate supports for educational institutions in various capacities from the government and other stakeholders, including NGOs in a form of special programs for entrepreneurs is required. This will provide adequate room for training and re-training of entrepreneurs and to acquaint them with innovations in technology and handling for their businesses. The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurs is the ability to handle technology for their businesses, as examined in this study. Against this backdrop, entrepreneurship education should continue to be given adequate priority for increased skills of handling technology by entrepreneurs in their businesses.

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