

**ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY UNDERGRADUATES OF
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION FOR ENTRY INTO POULTRY PRODUCTION IN
DELTA STATE**

BY

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Abstract

This research was carried out to identify the entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for entry into poultry production. Agriculture undergraduates of the Faculties of agriculture and agricultural education of Delta State University for the 2013/2014 session were purposely selected for the study. Three research questions guided the study. A-35 item entrepreneurial skill questionnaire was designed from literature to elicit information from the respondents. Three experts, two in the Department of Vocational Education and one in the Department of Animal Science and Fisheries, Delta State University Abraka validated the instrument, 30 graduating students in the Department of Vocational Education for the 2012/2013 session were used for the trial study. A test re-test method was used to establish the reliability and a coefficient of 0.81 was obtained using the Cronbach Alpha. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The results showed that the entire 35 of entrepreneurial skills items were rated as needed by the respondents. It was therefore recommended that all the identified entrepreneurial skills be included in the curriculum of the undergraduate agricultural education programme of Delta State University to enable the students obtain the relevant entrepreneurial skills prior to their graduation.

Introduction

Tertiary education in Nigeria is a post secondary education given in universities, colleges of education, polytechnic, monotechnics and other institutions running correspondence courses. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), one major objectives of tertiary education in Nigeria, is the preparation of the physical and intellectual skills of the individual to enable them become self reliant to make useful in the society. The current high level of

unemployment rate among young graduates of Nigerian higher institutions necessitated the government of Nigeria to introduce the entrepreneurship courses in education programmes in Nigerian higher institution of learning. Entrepreneurship is not only introduced in Vocational Education but in all courses for the acquisition of practical skills and competence by the beneficiaries of the educational system.

An entrepreneur in agriculture must be someone who possesses the initiatives and qualities that are needed in the agricultural

industry for success. Audretsch (2002) sees an entrepreneur as an individual responsible for the process of creating new values or an innovation and/or new organization. Entrepreneurship is the ability of the individual to identify opportunities in the environment and bring innovations into it for useful living.

According to Tibi (2011), entrepreneurship is concerned with creativity and innovation in industry and business for self reliance, diligence at work, job creation or employment provision for others and productivity for social development. Bird (2003) sees entrepreneurship as being specific on individual behaviour as being or more or less entrepreneurially competent. The art of entrepreneurship in this case is being competent.

According to Iyang, and Enuoh (2009), entrepreneurship is concerned with what an entrepreneur actually performs with resources in managing an enterprise and assuming the risk for profit maximization in the business. Abdulkarim (2002) stated that entrepreneurship is seeing opportunity and tapping into it and bringing about change from it. The opportunities that are seen in the environment are explored and changed for the betterment of the business by the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship education is seen as the innovation and creativity in the educational system (Abdulkarim, 2012). Entrepreneurship education in another sense is seen as how to start and run one's business and to develop general positive and willingness to enter into an enterprise, (Lundstrom 2002).

For the agricultural education graduates to be able to make themselves useful to the society, the necessary entrepreneurial skills need to be possessed by them. The educational system need to provide the youths with the needed entrepreneurial skills required in the work place and adequate attention should be given by the government to entrepreneurial development of a country (Arogundade, 2011). In the preparation of agricultural graduates prior to employment, there is the need to inculcate in them the entrepreneurial spirit and mindset necessary for self reliance on graduation.

Skill is defined as the ability to do something expertly. According to Osinem (2008). A skill is the ability to do something well, a particular ability or type of ability. Entrepreneurial skills are the expertness or ability to explore, create and manipulate the business environment for gain or other usefulness. According to Uko (2009) entrepreneurial skills are the ability to manipulate input resources, efficiently within particular enterprises with the purpose of achieving the goal of production of that enterprise. Obi (2012) stated that entrepreneurial skills are skills that are needed by an individual in setting up a business and the ability to run it effectively. Entrepreneurial skills in this context are those skills needed by the undergraduates of agricultural education in planning, managing and marketing in the poultry enterprise.

Poultry refers to the domestication of birds that are used mainly for food, income and

sometimes games. These domesticated birds may include; domestic fowl, duck, guinea fowl, turkeys, quails, ostrich, pigeons, pheasant among others. Many species and breeds of poultry are used in services and utility to man. According to Bessie (1987), poultry birds are kept under wide range of conditions, which can be classified into three broad production systems. Free range system or backyard system, extensive system or semi-intensive system and the intensive system. In rural setting which is dominated by small scale farms, poultry productions have little shelters and they are allowed to roam and scavenge for foods. Among the vast arrays of opportunities open to the agricultural graduates, the poultry industry is one of such that is lucrative and highly profitable to engage the undergraduates in the study area, Delta State. Therefore, they need to possess those requisite entrepreneurial skills to enable them go into the poultry enterprise and succeed.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurial skills constitute a major factor that determines the sustainability of poultry enterprise. However, it has been observed that most agricultural graduates lack the needed entrepreneurial skills required of them to function effectively on graduation. This problem could be as a result of inadequate training received by the graduates in school or during the course of training.

This problem has made many young graduates to roam the streets of Nigeria without paid employment as well as

inability to create self employed jobs. When graduates are not properly equipped or they are ill equipped with the needed entrepreneurial skills, the resultant effect is unemployment with its attendant consequences of robbery, prostitution, youths restiveness, thuggery and other sundry social vices occasioned by joblessness. The problem focus of this study is to determine the entrepreneurial skills that are needed in poultry production which are supposed to be taught to the undergraduates of agricultural education prior to their graduation; to enable them possess such skills before they graduate.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for entry into poultry production in Delta State, Nigeria.

The specific purposes of the study were to identify;

1. The entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for planning poultry enterprise in Delta State.
2. The entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for managing poultry enterprise in Delta State.
3. The entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for marketing poultry products in Delta State.

Research Questions

The research sought to provide answers to the following research questions;

1. What are the entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for planning poultry enterprise in Delta State?
2. What are the entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for the management of poultry enterprise in Delta State?
3. What are the entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduates of agricultural education for marketing poultry in Delta State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study was carried out in Delta State University, Abraka. All the 120 graduating students of the Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Education of Delta State University for the 2013/2014 academic session constituted the population of the study.

A well structured and validated questionnaire which has a-35 skill item was designed and administered to the students with the assistance of the students’ course advisers and their class coordinators. The instrument was a Likert Scale form of Very

Result

The result of the study was organized based on research questions and presented in tables 1 to 3.

Research Question One: What are the entrepreneurial skills needed by undergraduate agricultural education for planning poultry enterprise?

Table 1: Mean ratings of responses on the entrepreneurial skills for planning of poultry enterprises by undergraduates of agricultural education. **N=110**

S/N	Planning skills needed in poultry production, ability to:	X	SD	Remark
1.	to identify poultry breeds	3.61	0.5	Needed
2.	to select layers or broilers birds	3.81	0.6	Needed

Highly Needed = 5, Highly Needed = 4, Averagely, Needed = 3, Slightly Needed = 2 and Not Needed = 1. The questionnaire was face validated by two experts in the Department of Vocational Education; Delta State University, Abraka and one expert in the Department of Animal Science and Fisheries, Delta State University, Asaba Campus. All validates are senior academic staff in their various departments.

The inputs validates were used by the researcher to improve the items in the questionnaire so that the questionnaire could elicit the needed responses from the respondents. Each respondent was expected to rate his/her perceived level of needs for each item on the questionnaire. In order to consider that an item was needed by the respondent, it should have a mean rating of ≥ 3.50 and above; however, any item with a mean rating of ≤ 3.50 was considered not needed by the respondents. 120 copies of the questionnaire were administered out of which 110 copies were properly filled and returned representing 91% return. The returned questionnaires were collated and analysed for interpretation.

3.	to select good site for birds	3.71	0.8	Needed
4.	Determine the feeder space	3.60	0.7	Needed
5.	Determine the water space	3.90	0.5	Needed
6.	Select good lighting system	3.90	0.6	Needed
7.	Select good bedding materials	3.90	0.6	Needed
8.	Provide good and well ventilated building	3.60	0.6	Needed
9.	Determine the ideal time for stocking	3.70	0.8	Needed
10.	Budget for the take off of the farm.	3.60	0.9	Needed
Grand Mean and SD		3.73	0.7	

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that all the 10 skills item outlined in the Table were needed. The mean values of the items ranged from 3.60-3.90 with SD between 0.5-0.9. Each of the value is above the cutoff point of 3.50, indicating that all the 10 items were needed in planning for poultry enterprise.

Research Question Two: What are the skills needed for management of poultry enterprise by undergraduates of Agricultural Education?

Table 2: Mean ratings of responses of the entrepreneurial skills needed for management of poultry. **N=110**

S/N	Management skills needed in poultry production, ability to:	X	SD	Remark
1.	feed birds properly	3.90	0.9	Needed
2.	formulate balanced ration	3.70	0.8	Needed
3.	disinfect poultry houses	3.80	0.6	Needed
4.	administer drugs to birds	3.81	0.7	Needed
5.	diagnose diseases	3.66	0.5	Needed
6.	reduce rodents in poultry	3.77	0.7	Needed
7.	repair brooder equipment	3.80	0.8	Needed
8.	de worm birds regularly	3.67	0.9	Needed
9.	de-beak birds	3.90	0.7	Needed
10.	record chicks mortality	3.90	0.8	Needed
11.	control flies	3.80	0.8	Needed
12.	determine sex birds	3.60	0.6	Needed
13.	cull birds	3.80	0.7	Needed
14.	de-toe birds	3.70	0.8	Needed
15.	Wing band birds for identification	3.70	0.9	Needed
Grand Mean and SD		3.77	0.8	

Data presented in Table 2 shows that all 15 items are needed for management with mean value ranging from 3.60 to 3.90 with SD of 0.5-0.9 indicating that all the items are needed for management of poultry.

Research Question Three: What are the entrepreneurial skills needed for marketing by undergraduates of Agricultural Education?

Table 3: Mean ratings of responses on the entrepreneurial skills needed for marketing of poultry by undergraduates of agricultural education. **N=110**

S/N	Marketing skills needed in poultry production, ability to:	X	SD	Remark
1.	identify marketing links	3.90	0.6	Needed
2.	advertise your product before sale	3.80	0.7	Needed
3.	grade and price tag birds	3.90	0.9	Needed
4.	keep accurate record of sale	3.90	0.8	Needed
5.	preserve bird not sold	3.70	0.9	Needed
6.	calculate the profit margin	3.80	0.8	Needed
7.	sell fresh birds	3.80	0.8	Needed
8.	sell processed birds	3.60	0.9	Needed
9.	save money in bank	3.80	0.5	Needed
10.	Provides incentive to farm workers.	3.90	0.7	Needed
Grand Mean and SD		3.81	3.8	

Data in Table 3 revealed that all the nine items has their mean values ranged from 3.60 – 3.90 and were above 3.50. This indicted that all the items were needed for marketing of poultry.

Discussion of Findings

One major component of vocational education is the learning by doing which in turn will enhance entrepreneurial spirit. For the undergraduates to be self reliant and be useful to themselves, they need to possess entrepreneurial skills to enable them enter into an enterprise they can handle with ease and in this case, the poultry enterprise.

From Table 1, the necessary entrepreneurial skills needed for planning were determined. The undergraduate respondents clearly rated the outlined skills above 3.50 indicating that they are needed for planning, if they are to enter into poultry production enterprise. This finding is in line with Tibi (2011) who stated that entrepreneurship is identifying an opportunity and making use of it as well as creativity and innovations.

The planning skills are needed for success in the poultry industry. Arogundade (2011) also noted that the educational sector of the economy should provide students with the needed entrepreneurial skills to enable them function effectively and be useful to themselves. The planning skills of identifying breeds of birds, selecting layers and good site for establishing the poultry among other planning skills are very relevant and highly needed by the undergraduates in poultry production.

Management of any enterprise is very paramount. In research question 2, 15 items on management of poultry were rated as paramount for management of poultry. Among these skills items are identification of the birds both layers and broilers, formulating feeds, good sanitation and

ventilation of the farm house. This finding is in line with Inyang and Enuoh (2009) who stated that entrepreneurship is concerned with what an entrepreneur does which include, the utilization of resources in managing an enterprise. Without proper and accurate management of resources in the farm by the entrepreneurs, there will be waste of resources and this result in non-utilization of such resources.

In Table 3, all the 10 items of entrepreneurial skills for marketing were rated as needed by the respondents. This finding is also in line with Ideh (2012) who found out 7 items for marketing of fish among agriculture undergraduates for success in their fishing endeavour in Delta State. A good and very strategized poultry marketing skills are necessary for the sale and subsequent profit making of an entrepreneur.

Conclusions

The high level of unemployment rate in Nigeria has assumed a very worrisome dimension that needs urgent attention. Stakeholders in the educational sector have been looking for means of addressing the menace of unemployment rate in Nigeria. The poultry enterprise is one of such lucrative areas where entrepreneurial opportunity exist for potential graduates who need to get entrepreneurial skills and be useful to themselves and the society by being employer of labour as well as possessing needed entrepreneurial skills for employment in the poultry industries.

Delta State is an area with high potentials of the successful production of poultry.

Training becomes one major instrument of achieving this purpose especially at the higher institution level. This study was conducted in Delta State University among undergraduates of agricultural education for 2013/2014 session. Three areas of entrepreneurial skills namely; planning, management and marketing were exhaustively discussed with different skill items which were all rated as needed by the respondents.

In the area of planning, 10 skills were identified, in management, 15 skills were identified, and while for marketing skills 10 areas of entrepreneurial skill were also identified cumulating to 35 skills in all. It is, the view of the researcher that since the identified entrepreneurial skill are relevant and needed to be included in the curriculum of animal science in the vocational education department.

With the above skills, agricultural education graduates may be able to go into poultry production enterprise and not only to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of protein but also provide employment for the young and teeming youths roaming the streets in search of jobs.

The undergraduates of agriculture who intend to go into poultry production on graduation will undoubtedly, find the above skills very useful as this will assist them to succeed in the business. With these skills, unemployment occasioned by lack or inadequate possession of relevant entrepreneurial skills by most graduates of agriculture will be addressed. This will in

turn lead to well equipped graduates with relevant entrepreneurial skills.

Recommendations

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

1. All the 35 skill items identified in the study should be included and taught to undergraduates of agricultural education to prepare graduates skillfully prior to their graduation.
2. Since these 35 skill items have been rated as needed by the undergraduate students of agriculture, lecturers should lay emphasis on the teaching and learning of these skills during the programme.
3. The students should be encouraged to be involved practically on poultry farming activities to enable them learn practically most of these identified entrepreneurial skills.

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