

Youths and Acquisition of Entrepreneurial Skills Required for Self-Employment: A Case Study of Vocational and Technical Education Students in Enugu State

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Abstract

This study investigated youths' perception of their acquisition and application of entrepreneurial skills for self-employment: a case study of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) students in Enugu State. Specifically, this study determined: the extent to which students have acquired entrepreneurial skills, the extent to which students can apply entrepreneurial skills acquired, challenges encountered by students in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, and the challenges encountered by students in the application of entrepreneurial skills. Four research questions guided the study. The population for the study was 102 students from UNN and 28 students from ESUT. Questionnaire was used for data collection, consisting of 83 items. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that: students have acquired entrepreneurial skills to a high extent, students can apply entrepreneurial skills to a high extent, students encounter challenges in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills which includes: inadequate equipment, education and among others, students encounter challenges in the application of entrepreneurial skills which includes: productivity, entrepreneurial attitude and among others. Recommendations were made which includes: building in students the ability to withstand the challenges ahead, equipping students with the ability to apply all the knowledge and skills acquired and among others.

Key words: Youths, Vocational, Technical, Education, Entrepreneurial and Skills.

Introduction

In the nearest future, it is hoped that Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) will adequately equip students to be more effective in this era of science and technology, and to raise a generation of people who can think for themselves and respect the dignity of labour. VTE is an aspect of educational process that deals with the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge related to occupation in various sectors of economic and social life (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Vocational and Technical Education can also be defined as an educational training which comprehends knowledge, skills, competencies, structural activities, abilities, capabilities and all other structural experiences acquired through formal, on-the-job or off-the job which is capable of enhancing recipients opportunity for securing jobs in various sector of the economy or even enabling the person to be self-dependent by being a job creator (Osolor, 2015). The major target of VTE is the development of skills, aptitudes, abilities and knowledge in the learner, be it Technical, Business, Agricultural, Home Economics Education or Computer Education. VTE play a crucial role in the social and economic development of a nation. Owing to their dynamic nature, they are continuously subject to the forces driving change in the schools, industry and society. The roles of Vocational and Technical Education as

costive in the National Policy on Education (2013) are as follows: To provide trained manpower in the applied science and technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical level, To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agriculture, commercial and economic development, To give training and impact the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically. It therefore follows that the nation must invest copiously in education especially in VTE in order to equip students with entrepreneurial skills.

In other words, it is an “education designed to develop occupational skills.” Vocational and technical education gives individuals the skills to “live, learn and work as a productive citizen in a global society.” VTE has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of its impact on productivity and economic development (Osolor, 2015). Despite its contributions, Nigeria leaders have not given this aspect of education the attention it deserves, and this is one of the reasons for the nation’s underdevelopment. This article focuses on the dearth of skilled technical and vocational manpower in Nigeria and argues that technical and vocational education holds the key to national development. Every facet of the economy has been affected by lack of skilled technicians. The financial sector lacks technicians to regulate the banks and to develop financial software to

properly tackle the rising fraudulent activities in the banking sector (Awogbenle & Iwuamadu, 2010). Without security, development is impossible in a society; no nation can sustain its democracy if the citizens lack confidence in the police. The police violate the citizens' human and civil rights and lack forensic laboratory and fingerprint technicians to conduct criminal investigations. Due to poor training, military officers are known to beat up the citizens who challenge their powers and go scot free for their inhumane actions (Abiogu, 2016). The danger posed by environmental pollution and fake drugs is alarming. The less educated in the society lack the skill to manage AIDS, cancer and diabetes among other serious health problems (Gana, 2010). One wonders what the nation's health minister and the 36 state health commissioners are doing to tackle these issues. Every good citizen is aware that the neglect of technical and vocational education is socially and economically injurious, because it is robbing the nation of the contributions the graduates would make on national development. For that reason, Nigeria is today wearing the toga of a poor state.

Entrepreneurial skills involve the acquisition of abilities, knowledge and competencies that will enable people make use of existing resources to produce goods and services (Edefe, 2008). Generally, entrepreneurial skills consist of effective utilization of ideas, information and facts that can help a learner develop competencies needed

for firm career commitments such as setting up business in computer hardware and software development, maintenance and sales, clothing and textiles, marketing services, or being productive employees of organizations (Awogbenle, & Iwuamadu, 2010). These skills includes: ingenuity, originality, cleverness, creativity, initiative, inventiveness, innovativeness, resourcefulness, endurance, risk taking, honesty and among others (Lemchi, 2012). Experiences and researches have shown that businesses have failed where entrepreneur have little or no knowledge of the business type or lack entrepreneurial skills. According to Lemchi, (2012), youths of today find it difficult to get a job or be self-employed after graduation. According to Ezeobele, (2006), for one to establish and run a successful business in a recessed economy, the following entrepreneurial skills must be acquired and applied: Personal skill, Communication skill, Negotiation skill, Leadership skill, and Sales skill.

The first skill according to Ezeobele, (2006), to be developed as an entrepreneur is personal skill; personal skills are simply those skills that are attached to personality; more like habits. They are the characters possessed by successful entrepreneurs. For instance, it is important for a professional proof reader, to develop a keen eye for spotting errors. The next important entrepreneurial skill to be developed is communication skill. To be a successful business owner, the person must be a powerful communicator. In

the course of building a business, an entrepreneur is bound to negotiate deals. Negotiation can be made with customers and suppliers over goods and services offered (Egbule, 2012). It can be done with bankers over bank loan terms and conditions, just as investors negotiate over equity and stakes. Inability to negotiate, leads to getting goods deal at exorbitant prices or worse still, getting nothing in business. Leadership skill is not an option, it is a necessity. Business is all about relationship with people. It entails uniting people with different backgrounds, beliefs and skills to a common cause. It entails forging people with different skills and ideologies into a business team (Onuka, 2007). There is no great business without a great leader at the helm of affairs. Building a successful business therefore requires an excellent business leader. This is perhaps, the most important entrepreneurial skill. The reason this skill is regarded as the most important is because there is no business that does not sell one thing or the other (Wapmuk, 2011). It is either tangible or intangible items are being sold such as services. "A man's success in business today turns upon his power of getting people to believe he has something they want" (Soba, 2006). According to Obioma, (2011), sales skill is regarded as the most important because, life is all about selling. To get a good job, one must sell him/herself to the employers. Even before getting married, one must sell him/herself to the spouse, convincing him/her to accept his/her

marriage proposal. Success in business is also all about selling; one must first sell him/herself to the investors, next to the suppliers, business team and employees, and then to customers. A successful entrepreneur must have and apply the following skills: resilience, focus, invest for a long-term, find and manage people, selling, learning, self-reflection, and self-reliance (Edafe, 2008). An entrepreneur should also possess the following skills and qualities: ability to manage money, ability to raise money, ability to relieve stress, ability to be productive, ability to make entrepreneur friends, ability to identify strengths and weaknesses, ability to hire effective people, ability to train new staff, ability to manage staff, ability to connect via social networking, ability to focus on customers, ability to close a sale, ability to spot new trends, ability to deal with failure, the desire to improve the world and among others (Edafe, 2008). It is very important to determine the extent to which entrepreneurial skills are being acquired and applied by youths for economic development and sustainability.

The Nigerian National Youth Policy (2009) defines youth as between 18-35 years. Youth refers to the time when somebody is young; the period of human life between childhood and maturity; the state of being young; a boy or young man in his teens or early twenties; an early stage of something (Oyedokun, 2013). Youths and entrepreneurial skills acquisition required for self-employment in a recessed economy, and the ability to

establish an interaction between technological innovation and human values, partly determine development and globalization (Oyedokun, 2013). Acquisition and application of entrepreneurial skills can help youths survive in a recessed economy.

The National Youth Policy (2009) aims to, promote the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and protect the health, social, economic and political well being of all young men and women in order to enhance their participation in the overall development process and improve their quality of life. It focuses on 18 priority areas, including education, health, agriculture, women & girls, peace-building, HIV/AIDS, migration & human trafficking, poverty and participation and among others. The Federal Ministry of Youth Development is responsible for youth affairs with the vision "to empower Nigerian youth to become self-reliant and socially responsible." It was established in 2007 and has departments focusing on enterprise development, vocational skills & training, youth voice, employment, and education. The ministry is responsible for the national youth policy, youth development programmes, funding youth activities, youth participation, and to manage the National Youth Service Corps and the Citizenship and Leadership Training Centre.

The Labour statistics report of Nigeria in 2017 has shown that there is 7.9 million Nigerian youth (61.6%) aged 15-34 that are currently unemployed. The report, which was released on

Monday, June 5, 2017, by the National Bureau of Statistics (N.B.S), also revealed that 58.1% of youth within this age bracket who are currently working are underemployed. Though, the active population in the country increased by 0.5% within the period, over 2.9 million graduates and another 5 million semi-skilled workers also lose their jobs within this period. It would be recalled that recently the President Muhammadu Buhari's administration gave its midterm performance with only N-power being noted as a major job creation initiative by the current government. On the gender spread of unemployment in Nigeria, the country has a 5.086 million of unemployed male and 6.46 million of the unemployed female. Also, the figure indicates that 24.2% of employed female gender is underemployed. Noting the importance of education, about 3.4 million of uneducated Nigerians find it hard to get a job, as the unemployment rate in the rural areas is also on the increase.

According to the result of the research conducted by Onuka, (2004), on Entrepreneurship Skills Required for Economic Empowerment of Youths in Broiler Production, certain entrepreneurship skills were required for economic empowerment of youths in broiler production such as planning, organizing, marketing skills and among others. This study differs from the current study as it dwelt on the entrepreneurship skills required for economic empowerment of youths in broiler production, while, the current study dealt with youths and acquisition

of entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment. This study is related to the present study as both studies have interest in entrepreneurship skills acquisition for economic empowerment. The study reviewed above, showed that no research work has been done on youths and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment in Enugu State, and this is the gap this study will fill.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate views of VTE final year students' perception of their acquisition and ability to apply entrepreneurial skills for self-employment. Specifically, the study determined the students' perceptions of:

1. entrepreneurial skills they acquired.
2. acquired entrepreneurial skills they can apply to their entrepreneurial activities.
3. challenges they encountered in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills.
4. challenges they could encounter in the application of entrepreneurial skills.

Research Questions

1. To what extent have students acquired entrepreneurial skills?
2. To what extent have students applied entrepreneurial skills acquired?
3. What are the challenges encountered by students in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills?
4. What are the challenges students could encounter in the application of entrepreneurial skills?

Methodology

Area and Design of the Study: The area of the study was Enugu State. It was carried out in two universities in the state, namely: University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). These two universities were chosen because they offer VTE subjects and are involved in youth entrepreneurial skills acquisition and application. A descriptive survey research design was used in this study. This research design is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative sample of the group or population using questionnaire (Nworgu, 2006). This research design suited this study since the study sought to ascertain the opinions of respondents on youths and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment in Enugu State.

Population for the Study: The population for the study was 102 final year students of Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, comprising of 17 students from Computer Education Department, 46 students from Agricultural Education Department, 22 students from Business Education Department, 7 students from Industrial and Technical Education Department, 10 students from Home Economics Education Department, and 28 final year students of Computer Science Department from Enugu State University of Science and Technology,

Enugu State, making a total of 130 students.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: Due to the small size of the population, all were used for the study. Thus, there was no sampling.

Instrument for Data Collection: A structured questionnaire was developed and used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was containing 83 items and was structured in line with the four research questions. The instrument was presented in five sections. Section 'A' sought respondents' personal data, while sections 'B-E' sought responses on the four research questions to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire was on a five points scale: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) with assigned weight of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The instrument was subjected to face-validity by three experts, one from the Department of Industrial Technical Education, one from Computer Education Department, and one from Measurement and Evaluation Department, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State. The advice and criticism of these experts were used to modify the instrument.

The reliability of the instrument was established by trial testing using 10 final year Computer Science students from Ebonyi State University; that did not form part of the sample. Cronbach's

Alpha reliability test was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument on the data obtained. The analyzed data yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84, which showed that the instrument was reliable.

Method of Data Collection: One hundred and thirty (130) copies of the instrument were distributed to respondents by hand. All the copies were completed properly and retrieved within two weeks. One hundred and thirty (130) copies distributed were completed correctly and returned, showing a 100% return rate.

Method of Data Analysis: The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Since the items were based on 5 points scale, the acceptable mean score was 3.00. Thus, mean rating of 3.00 and above were considered as very high extent, high extent and moderate extent, while any item with a mean score of 3.0 and below was rated as moderate extent, low extent and very low extent. Respondent opinions were interpreted using real limit of numbers as follows: Very High Extent (4.50 - 5.00), High Extent (3.50 - 4.49), Moderate Extent (2.50 - 3.49), Low Extent (1.50 - 2.49) and Very Low Extent (0.50 - 1.49).

Findings

The following findings were made:

Research Question 1: To what extent have students acquired entrepreneurial skills?

Table 1: The mean rating and standard deviation of respondents on the extent to which students have acquired entrepreneurial skills

S/N	Entrepreneurial Skills	Perception		Responses		Remark
		\bar{X}_{ac}	SD _{ac}	\bar{X}_{ap}	SD _{ap}	
1.	Students acquire and apply the following skills: creativity skill	3.60	1.72	3.60	1.27	high extent
2	communication skill	3.98	1.74	3.80	1.21	high extent
3	negotiation skills	3.86	1.75	3.86	1.33	high extent
4	leadership skill	3.53	1.71	3.54	1.45	high extent
5	managerial skill	3.66	1.73	3.66	1.64	high extent
6	innovative skill	3.64	1.77	3.64	1.60	high extent
7	planning skill	3.57	0.86	3.57	0.86	high extent
8	marketing skill	3.59	1.61	3.59	1.61	high extent
9	evaluation skill	3.50	1.55	3.53	0.75	high extent
10	productivity skill	3.59	0.87	3.59	0.87	high extent
11	organizing skill	3.60	1.50	3.60	1.50	high extent
12	ingenuity skill	3.65	1.45	3.58	0.79	high extent
13	originality skill	3.51	1.55	3.65	1.55	high extent
14	cleverness skill	3.54	1.65	3.76	1.44	high extent
15	initiative skill	3.66	1.67	3.63	1.27	high extent
16	inventiveness skill	3.72	1.33	3.67	1.34	high extent
17	resourcefulness skill	3.67	1.23	3.66	1.28	high extent
18	endurance skill	3.76	1.43	3.58	0.88	high extent
19	risk taking skill	3.75	1.51	3.82	1.62	high extent
20	honesty skill	3.57	0.98	3.76	1.56	high extent
21	Personal skill	3.87	1.72	3.81	1.42	high extent
22	resilience skill	3.78	1.58	3.64	1.53	high extent
23	focus skill	3.58	0.84	3.59	0.84	high extent
24	long-term investment skill	3.62	0.96	3.73	1.61	high extent
25	learning skill	3.69	0.91	3.77	1.50	high extent
26	self-reflection skill	3.76	1.33	3.68	1.37	high extent
27	self-reliance skill	3.84	1.79	3.63	0.98	high extent
28	recognition skill	3.73	1.66	3.72	1.49	high extent

Table 1 reveals that 28 items on the extent to which VTE final year students have acquired entrepreneurial skills had their mean values ranging from 3.50 to 3.98. This showed that the mean of each

of the twenty-eight items was above the real limit of 3.00, indicating that VTE students have acquired entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. The table further showed that the standard deviation

(SD) of the items were within the range of 0.84 to 1.79 in the twenty-eight items indicating that the opinions of the respondents were not far from each other in their responses to the twenty-eight items.

Research Question 2: To what extent have students applied entrepreneurial skills acquired?

Table 1: The mean rating and standard deviation of respondents on the extent to which students have applied entrepreneurial skills acquired.

Table 1 reveals that 28 items on the extent to which VTE final year students apply entrepreneurial skills acquired

had their mean values ranging from 3.53 to 3.86. This showed that the mean of each of the twenty-eight items was above the real limit of 3.00, indicating that VTE students can apply entrepreneurial skills acquired to a high extent. The table further showed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items were within the range of 0.75 to 1.64 in the twenty-eight items indicating that the opinions of the respondents were not far from each other in their responses to the twenty-eight items.

Research Question 3: What are the challenges encountered by students in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills?

Table 3: The mean rating and standard deviation of respondents on the challenges encountered by students in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills

S/N	Challenges in Skills Acquisition	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
	VTE students encounter the following challenges:			
1	economic pressure from parents	3.55	1.40	high extent
2	ability to raise money	3.53	1.22	high extent
3	inadequate equipment and technology	3.51	1.06	high extent
4	education	3.57	0.91	high extent
5	ability to make entrepreneur friends	3.52	0.89	high extent
6	ability to identify strengths and weaknesses	3.57	1.54	high extent
7	ability to connect via social networking	3.55	0.98	high extent
8	ability to spot new trends	3.54	1.60	high extent
9	ability to deal with failure	3.56	1.47	high extent
10	ability to improve their world	3.59	1.42	high extent
11	Research and Linkages	3.56	1.41	high extent

Table 2 reveals that 11 items on the challenges encountered by VTE final year students in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills had their mean values ranging from 3.51 to 3.59. This

showed that the mean of each of the eleven items was above the real limit of 3.00, indicating that VTE students encounter challenges in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills to a high extent.

The table further showed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items were within the range of 0.89 to 1.60 in eleven items, indicating that the opinions of the respondents were not

far from each other in their responses to the eleven items.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges students could encounter in the application of entrepreneurial skills?

Table 4: The mean rating and standard deviation of respondents on the challenges students could encounter in the application of entrepreneurial skills

S/N	Challenges in Skills Application	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
	VTE students encounter the following challenges:			
1	ability to manage money	3.55	1.48	high extent
2	Finance	3.53	1.22	high extent
3	ability to relieve stress	3.55	1.06	high extent
4	ability to be productive	3.52	0.91	high extent
5	entrepreneurial attitude	3.53	0.80	high extent
6	inadequate infrastructural facilities	3.57	1.54	high extent
7	cultural barriers	3.51	0.98	high extent
8	enabling environment	3.54	1.66	high extent
9	ability to create and build something from nothing	3.56	1.47	high extent
10	ability of having a vision matched with focus and determination of building an enterprise	3.54	1.42	high extent
11	skill for seeing an opportunity where others failed	3.54	1.21	high extent
12	ability to build a working team to complement your own talents and efforts	3.57	1.53	high extent
13	ability to aggregate, marshal and control resources judiciously	3.53	1.37	high extent
14	willingness and ability of innovativeness and creativity	3.54	1.48	high extent
15	willingness to undertake personal and financial risks	3.52	1.15	high extent
16	ability to engage in activities despite all odds	3.55	1.27	high extent

Table 3 reveals that 16 items on the challenges encountered by VTE final year students in the application of entrepreneurial skills had their mean values ranging from 3.51 to 3.57. This showed that the mean of each of the sixteen items was above the real limit of 3.00, indicating that VTE students encounter challenges in the application

of entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. The table further showed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items were within the range of 0.80 to 1.66 in sixteen items, indicating that the opinions of the respondents were not far from each other in their responses to the sixteen items.

Discussion of the Findings

This study sought to investigate the views of VTE final year students on their acquisition and application of entrepreneurial skills for Self-Employment: a case study of Vocational and Technical Education students in Enugu State. The findings of the study revealed that VTE students have acquired entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. The findings are as follows: VTE students possess the following skills: creativity skill, communication skill, negotiation skills, leadership skill, managerial skill, innovative skill, planning skill, marketing skill, evaluation skill, productivity skill, organizing skill, ingenuity skill, originality skill, cleverness skill, initiative skill, inventiveness skill, resourcefulness skill, endurance skill, risk taking skill, honesty skill, Personal skill, resilience skill, focus skill, long-term investment skill, learning skill, self-reflection skill, self-reliance skill and recognition skill. These findings are in line with Abiogu, (2016), who was of the opinion that Vocational and Technical Education students have acquired entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment and youth empowerment. Those students whose families are financially handicapped and those that are financially buoyant are able to start and run an enterprise because they possess the required skills (Ezeobele, 2006). With the possession of these skills, families can survive in a country that is passing through economic recession. Entrepreneurial skills must be acquired irrespective of

their financial status else, they may not be able to manage the money well. Those that possess these skills can manage any amount of money they have and be successful (Awogbenle & Iwuamadu, 2010). Nigeria is currently experiencing problems of unemployment and rural urban migration. These have been compounded by high turnout of school leavers and university graduates every year without employment (Akpa, 2007). This situation made it necessary and important that everyone should make efforts towards the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in order to be self-employed or be gainfully employed.

This study further discovered that VTE students can apply entrepreneurial skills acquired to a high extent. The following discoveries were also made: VTE students can apply the following skills: creativity skill, communication skill, negotiation skills, leadership skill, managerial skill, innovative skill, planning skill, marketing skill, evaluation skill, productivity skill, organizing skill, ingenuity skill, originality skill, cleverness skill, initiative skill, inventiveness skill, resourcefulness skill, endurance skill, risk taking skill, honesty skill, Personal skill, resilience skill, focus skill, long-term investment skill, learning skill, self-reflection skill, self-reliance skill and recognition skill. This is in line with (UNESCO, 2012), that from a global perspective, social and economic developments are increasingly driven by the advancement and application of knowledge and skills acquired. The

knowledge and skills can only be acquired through quality vocational and technical education programmes (Egbule, 2012). The youths should be trained to acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and aptitudes necessary for preserving and defending the basic institutions and values of the society for sustainable development (Obioma, 2011). It also involves the more effective use of knowledge, skills and creativity in all manner of economic activity (Obioma, 2011).

This study also revealed that VTE students encounter challenges in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. These challenges are as listed below: economic pressure from parents, ability to raise money, inadequate equipment and technology, education, ability to make entrepreneur friends, ability to identify strengths and weaknesses, ability to connect via social networking, ability to spot new trends, ability to deal with failure, ability to improve their world, research and linkages. These findings are in line with Sanusi, (2012), who pointed out that the task of providing an effective education for children and youths which will prepare them for participation in the workplace and for community development has remained a challenge for school systems, especially for developing countries. The world economic recession, as evidenced in job losses, unemployment, decreasing industrial capacity utilization, poverty, dilapidating infrastructure, low productivity at work places and pervading threats of social insecurity,

makes it mandatory that nations should re-tool their development strategies for sustainable development (Ezeobele, 2006). In Nigeria today, the large army of unemployed youths, mainly due to lack of vocational and technical skills, has resulted in frightening state of national and community insecurity (Egbule, 2012).

This study further revealed that VTE students encounter challenges in the application of entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. These challenges are as listed below: ability to manage money, finance, ability to relieve stress, ability to be productive, entrepreneurial attitude, inadequate infrastructural facilities, cultural barriers, enabling environment, ability to create and build something from nothing, ability of having a vision matched with focus and determination of building an enterprise, skill for seeing an opportunity where others failed, ability to build a working team to complement your own talents and efforts, ability to aggregate, marshal and control resources judiciously, willingness and ability of innovativeness and creativity, willingness to undertake personal and financial risks and ability to engage in activities despite all odds. These findings are in line with Akpa, (2007), who pointed out that entrepreneurship is critical to the development of societies. Entrepreneurs however, cannot work in isolation; they need the right environment to thrive. The judicial system, the educational system, the financial system and general government policies should be such that

encourage and promote entrepreneurship (Gana, 2010). Basic infrastructures such as power, water, and transport systems are necessary to boost entrepreneurship. The cost of equipment is quite high and not affordable by most Nigerians especially young graduates (Lemchi, 2012). This makes for difficulty in development of entrepreneurship as technology is closely related to entrepreneurship. It therefore calls for a need for the provision of affordable technologies (Nwangwu, 2006).

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings, the following conclusions were made: VTE students have acquired entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. VTE students can apply entrepreneurial skills acquired to a high extent. VTE students encounter challenges in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills such as economic pressure from parents, ability to raise money, inadequate equipment and technology, education, ability to make entrepreneur friends, ability to identify strengths and weaknesses and among others. VTE students also encounter challenges in the application of entrepreneurial skills such as ability to manage money, finance, ability to relieve stress, ability to be productive, entrepreneurial attitude, inadequate infrastructural facilities, cultural barriers, enabling environment, ability to create and build something from nothing, and among others. In other words, Vocational and Technical Education students' are able to acquire and apply entrepreneurial skills

required for self-employment to a high extent in Enugu State, in spite of the challenges facing them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- ❖ The Federal Ministry of Youth Development should create a conducive and enabling environment to encourage the youths by providing basic infrastructures/facilities that will enable one, irrespective of his/her financial status, acquire and apply entrepreneurial knowledge and skills.
- ❖ Vocational and Technical Education should be able to build in students the ability to withstand the challenges ahead.
- ❖ Vocational and Technical Education students should be equipped with the ability to apply all the knowledge and skills acquired for economic sustainability and growth.

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