

Strategies for Enhancing Entrepreneurial Activities of Female Secondary School Teachers in Bead Craft in Umunneochi Local Government Area of Abia State

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Abstract

The study investigated strategies for enhancing entrepreneurial activities of female secondary school teachers in bead craft in Umunneochi local government area in Abia State. The study adopted a survey research design and a structured questionnaire was used for the study. A total of 60 female teachers who were in the beading business responded to the questionnaire. Data was analyzed using means and t-test. The findings revealed, among other things, that some female teachers from other professions were into bead craft. Some of them could not make use of corrosion resistant products because of limited knowledge in bead craft.

Introduction

Bead accessory is gaining prominence in the fashion scene. Various bead work come in combination of colours as long bead, bangles and cuffs, party purses, hand fans, bridal accessories, fashion bells, chandelier earrings. So also are the bracelet concepts made of connector bracelet, gizmo coil with black onyx, curved tube type, silver charm, among others. These are used for expressions of beauty and gorgeous look. Bead craft as a hobby is where differences in talents are required to produce striking fashions to attract economy.

Fashion is not dressing, but good fragrances using good products that reflect on every day. It is a big world on its own. Fashion is a language which tells a story about a person who wears it. Fashion is an endless popularity contest (saunders, 1994). Advertisements and articles about fashion contain terms such as "Fad", "Classic" and "Status symbols".

A fad is a fashion that lasts for a short time (Johnson and Foster, 1990). Individuals think that having them will make them popular and up-to-date in the fashion scene. A classic is an additional style that can stay in fashion for long time. It is

recommended for adults who are not fashion fads. Status symbol on the other hand is something to wear that gives one a feeling of importance or wealth. To appear fashionable, one should be sorted with proper fashion critiques, stylish and proper model (Cardow, 2011). Creating designs, looking beautiful and ability to link to other viable markets that need ones designs in subsequent editions is an aspect of fashion innovation. When this happens a female teacher who is into bead craft works as an entrepreneur. Innovation is the fundamental source of getting money (Christenson, 2002).

An entrepreneur is a person who organizes and manages his or her own business. A business might be run from home, an office, or a store (Qsuala, 2000; Adisa and Sodique, 2008). Therefore, an entrepreneurial activity in this study is regarded as innovative ideas, processes product which manifest from thought into reality.

There are also lots of innovative or creative talents one can use to enhance labour turnover. In this period of economic melt down bead and jewelry designing seem to be good option for creating jobs for Nigerian youths. These accessories are outstanding in the fashion scene. The tools and accessories available for designing are available in various markets. They appear in different shapes, sizes and colours, some

faceted, plier, cutter, dividers, ear clips and pendants ready to be used. For instance necklace clasps, needles, nylon and metallic threads, assorted beads and stones can be purchased.

Substances which are made into jewelry are bones, ivory and teeth of animals, wood, processed, glass and plastic. They are manufactured synthetic stones in use as jewelry. Kaka (2006) citing Steven (1993) suggests that one can experiment and then create exciting pieces. In bead and jewelry designing, the beadalon bead board is used to plan and layout designs before stringing.

Having briefly explained bead craft in the fashion scene, it is important to note that one who is doing the beading business is privileged to produce wonderful designs of divinely inspired wedding gowns, hats, beads and lots more. Bead accessories have been the choice of ladies as befitting and suitable accessories for any function. Housewives, youths, coppers, teachers, civil servants use bead craft to update fashion. Cardow (2011) opines that it makes one an employer of labour instead of being an employee. Furthermore, it expands one's imaginations.

It is calibrated in inches which makes it easy when making desired necklace length. The storage bins are handy for organizing beads and findings during stringing.

Beads and jewelries are used to harmonise or contrast garments (Cardow, 2011). Cut and set stones are made into jewelry of variety of colors used as decoration (Smith, 2000). The qualities inherent in them are symbols. Accessories like rings, badges, necklaces and chains may indicate rank, honor or office. It can serve as a mark of status and a form of investment (Kaka 2006). They are expressions of beauty.

Experiences have shown that designed beads and jewelries seen in Nigerian markets have cast doubt on credibility of these accessories. These accessories corrode easily. As such efforts have to be made to improve the quality rating of these accessories to encourage patronage.

Quality according to marshal, Jackson, Stanley, Kefgen, and touchie-specht (2004) is a multidimensional construct that includes a set of products attributes which have the potential of influencing the quality of the final product. The fashion industry believes that consumers can differentiate between low and high quality products (fowler and clodfelter, 2001). It is discovered that bead makers or designers have failed to use the type of jewelry or bead products that are made of corrosion resistant stainless steel cable for designing. It is therefore imperative to strive to meet at least the basic standard even in the face of

economic melt down. This study is however based on the strategies for enhancing entrepreneurial activities in bead craft focusing on the physical properties that consumer can be measured worthy.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to determine strategies for enhancing entrepreneurial activities of female secondary school teachers in bead crafts. Specifically, the study:

1. Identify the need for quality bead work.
2. Identify defects in beads designed by female secondary school teachers in Umunneochi L.G.A.
3. Determine ways of eliminating defects in bead craft in Umunneochi L.G.A.

Methodology

Area of the study: The area of the study was Umunneochi LGA in Abia state. Many part-time teachers in Umunneochi are naturally endowed with handicrafts and or designing business (creativity) to earn a living. That is why the area was considered very suitable for conducting this study.

Design of the study: A survey research design of descriptive sample survey was used to elicit information. Based on the purpose of the study, it is considered appropriate.

Population for the study: A population for his study composed of all the 60 part-time female teachers that are into bead work. They are used because they are into beading and floral making to augment their income as their salaries were irregular. Three part-timers were selected from each school who were in union into beading business.

Sample for the study: The entire population was used. There was no sampling.

Instrument for Data collection: This study used questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire was a 60 item questionnaire to cover the five research questions. It had a four point response scale of strongly

agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (DA), and strongly disagree (SD)

Method of Data Collection: A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed by hand by a researcher and with the help of two research assistants who helped to retrieve the questionnaire on the spot. This made the clarification possible.

Method of Data Analysis: Mean and t-test statistic were used. A mean of 2.50 was used for decision making. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 or above was accepted while any mean below 2.50 was considered rejected.

Results

Data collected for the study are presented in tables 1 to 3.

Table 1: mean ratings on the need for the designing good quality bead work by female secondary school teachers.

s/N	Need for good quality bead work	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	\bar{x}_g	Remarks
1	To attract more costumers due to exciting designs	3.86	3.82	3.46	Accept
2	To complement, blend or contrast colours	3.86	3.29	3.33	Accept
3	Purposely for expressions of beauty	2.56	2.84	2.70	Accept
4	To harmonize appearance	2.68	2.74	2.71	Accept
5	To expand imaginations	2.84	3.11	2.98	Accept
6	Display dependability	3.36	3.29	3.33	Accept
7	For symbolism	2.29	2.36	2.33	Not Accepted
8	Withstand the test of time	2.72	2.72	2.72	Accept

\bar{x}_1 =mean of female teachers between ages 25-29 years.

\bar{x}_2 =mean of female teachers between the age range of 30 years and above.

A – Accept, R- reject, \bar{x}_g - grand mean.

Table 1 showed that all the respondents agreed with all the items except in item 7.

Their means range from 2.7 to 3.46. Item 7 was below the decision rule and it was therefore not accepted.

Table 2: mean ratings on defects in bead work designed by female secondary school teachers in Umunneochi local government of Abia State.

S/ N	Defects in beads designed by female secondary school teachers in Umunneochi- Abia State.	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	\bar{x}_g	Remarks
1	Rubber tubing for spacers spoil easily	3.86	3.82	3.84	Accept
2	Some bead strand wires used are not flexible	3.26	3.84	3.80	Accept
3	Monofilaments (fishing line) are not properly secured by knotting or tubes.	3.78	3.14	3.46	Accept
4	Jewelry cables are not corrosion resistant.	3.84	3.88	3.36	Accept
5	Some twisted wire pendants are not making of stainless steel.	3.56	3.66	3.07	Accept
6	Some bead lengths are not the right out fit for occasions.	3.14	2.84	3.49	Accept
7	Some colours of beads used are not complementary	3.56	3.55	3.56	Accept
8	Loop is used instead of clasp to finish the ends of memory wire	3.29	3.11	3.20	Accept
9	Some bead craft products always bend and cut.	3.64	3.56	3.60	Accept
10	Some beads are of poor quality and can wear within a short time	3.88	3.84	3.86	Accept

\bar{x}_1 = mean of female teachers between ages 25-29 years.

\bar{x}_2 = mean of female teachers between the age range of 30 years and above.

A = Accept, R = reject, \bar{x}_g = grand mean

Table 2: revealed that all female secondary school teachers in beading business agreed to all the items listed. All the items had mean ratings above 3.5. This implies that all these items listed are reflective on the bead craft done by female secondary school in Umunneochi-Abia State.

Table 3: mean ratings on various ways of eliminating defects in bead crafts by female teachers in secondary schools in Umuinnochi-Abia State.

S/N	Ways of eliminating defects in bead craft.	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	\bar{x}_g	Remarks
1	Look for an expert, pay and be trained.	3.12	3.70	3.41	Accept
2	Use string bin with hinged lids to prevent them from mixing.	2.74	3.02	2.88	Accept
3	Make use of customized designs to help creative ability.	3.56	3.18	3.37	Accept
4	Jewelry cable to be made of corrosion resistant.	3.76	3.44	3.60	Accept
5	Binding wire to be making of stainless steel.	3.74	3.68	3.71	Accept
6	Finish the ends of memory wire with either a loop or the memory wire end instead of a clasp.	3.84	3.80	3.82	Accept
7	Monofilament are best secured by knotting and not by gumming	3.44	3.78	3.61	Accept
8	The higher the nylon coated wire the greater the flexibility.	3.55	3.56	3.56	Accept
9	Colour code to be make use of the produce complementary and exiting designs	3.86	3.82	3.33	Accept

\bar{x}_1 = mean of female secondary school teachers between 25-29 years

\bar{x}_2 = mean of female teachers between the age range of 30 years

A = Accept, R= reject, \bar{x}_g = grand mean.

Table 3 reveal various ways of eliminating defects in bead craft designed by female teachers in Umuinnochi-Abia State. Mean responses of female teachers on ways of eliminating defects in bead work showed that all the items had mean scores above 2.50 which was the criterion level of acceptance. This means that various ways of eliminating defects in bead work were all identified by these beaders in various secondary schools.

Discussions of Findings

The result in table 1 revealed that the 7 items were required in designing good quality bead work. The result is in agreement with the findings of Ogugua (2010) who stated that these additional components needed to design and finish jewelry. They are available in different sizes and shapes.

The result of the study in table 2 revealed that 10 items are regarded as notable detects in bead work designed by female secondary school teachers Also, the result of the study on table3 revealed 9 items in the

designing of bead work. The findings were in conformity with the view of Kaka (2006) who said that cut and set stones are made into jewelry of variety of colours for personal decoration and that the qualities inherent in them are symbols.

The findings agreed with the view of Cardow (2010) who stated that bead work needs a day today guide as it were for designers that have a vision for expertise and excellence. The findings of the study in table 3 also suggested the solutions to these defects and that bead craft that we stands the test of time counts. As Agbo (2005) stated that colour fading is always the major constraint in Nigerian products, the same goes to bead craft in the fashion scene. Quality bead work should be made of corrosion resistant and stainless steel. Use storing bin with hinged lids to prevent them from mixing, among others. The adoption of these and the ability to design exciting bead crafts attract more customers and makes one an employer of labour instead of an employee.

Conclusion

Bead and jewelry designing are for expressions of beauty and gorgeous look. These accessories are outstanding in the fashion scene. Practically speaking, these beaders or designers are mainly unprofessional and whose experiences are limited.

Consequently, there are doubts on the credibility of these accessories. Professional designers should insist on corrosion resistant accessories, complementary colours, finishing with loops instead of clasps. With this, coupled with expansion of imagination in the act of beading or jewelry designing, among others seem to be the good option for creating jobs for graduates in the face of economic melt down. Therefore, ability to be innovative and able to attract patronage and economy will reduce the effect of economic meltdown on individuals and families.

Recommendation

From the findings of the study, it is, therefore highly recommended that

1. Graduates should be trained in bead and jewelry designing while in school to equip them with self-reliance.
2. Home Economists should not overlook handcrafts because it is full of creativities.
3. To succeed in bead craft needs great dedication.

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