

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: A PANACEA FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP ENHANCEMENT FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

S.N. Ofofiele and S. C. Ndelekwute

Abstract

The main aim of the study was to find out how entrepreneurship will be enhanced through skill acquisition in Agriculture. Survey research design was adopted. Population of the study comprised of 28 agricultural education lecturers in two colleges of Education in Anambra state that offer, agricultural education. No sampling was done. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data obtained was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Finding of the study are that agricultural skills that will enhance entrepreneurship includes crop production, orchard farming, bee keeping, snail farming, e.t.c, the constraints to Agricultural training includes poor funding, lack of curriculum articulation, fund allocation e.t.c. Based on the findings some recommendation were made.

Education has long been recognized as a highly valued instrument for national development. The system of education in a society may be diverse and complex according to the need for educating, training and retraining of its people. It also follows that education and training help individuals to be empowered to enable them escape poverty by providing them with the skills and knowledge to raise their output income and wealth (Allawadu, 2007). These skills can be provided through agricultural training. The National Policy on Education (1996) places much emphasis on vocational and technical skills (Agriculture inclusive) at the secondary and tertiary institutions (Awotunde, 2014). Effective utilization of vocational technical education and implementation of the programmes would inculcate the necessary skills and competences that would help the youths to be enterprising and functional. Agricultural Education is the process of importing knowledge, skills and attitudes in agriculture to the learner at any level (Osinem, 2008). It equips the learners self employment. Vocational agricultural education programme is classified into two categories viz vocational agricultural education for farming and vocational agricultural education for non-forming agricultural occupations.

Agricultural education is a strong weapon for improving agriculture, to achieve its objectives as an instrument for development. This can take the form of agricultural training; to improve the skills of rural youths, to make possible entrepreneurs in the field of agriculture.

Entrepreneurship is a planned effort undertaken by an individual institutions or agencies to develop the required competencies. Entrepreneurship refers to the willingness and ability of an individual to involve in investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities (Gana, 2001). William (1996) see entrepreneurship as venturing, undertaking and assuming the risks involving creative skills associated with the organizing, directing and managing of a business enterprise. It involves taking the initiative, the responsibility and the risk to do what others have not being doing and in different and new ways and become very successful in it.

Entrepreneurship involves identifying, developing and bringing a vision to life. The vision may be an innovative idea, an opportunity or simply a better way to do something, which contribute to national development.

National Development comprises of all efforts undertaken by any government to develop the nation economically, politically, socially, educationally, technologically in order to improve the monetary and infrastructural base of the country and to improve the living condition of the people in that country.

In this contemporary society, in which unemployment is on the increase, the emphasis of present administration should be on the acquisition of agricultural skills to reduce unemployment in Nigeria. In order to increase entrepreneurial resources, it is highly necessary that steps be taken to train the citizens to acquire standard skills of creating and working successfully. This will help them become effective agents of socio-economic change in the society. This is attainable by exposing the citizenry to entrepreneurial education. Agricultural education students are in a better position to undertake entrepreneurial activities for purposes of self employment and thus stimulate the economy.

Statement of the Problem

Youths in Nigeria today constitute the bulk of the population and forms about 47% of the economically active population. It is expected of them to contribute towards development of the nation as they are leaders of tomorrow. Despite the relevance of agricultural education in enhancing entrepreneurship, large number of youth is still unemployed. The fact that the society looks down on the graduates of agricultural education as being inferior and this makes the youths to engage in social vices such as kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, drug abuse etc. It become necessary to look at how entrepreneurship will be enhanced through Agricultural Education.

Purpose of the Study

The main aim of this study was to look at Agricultural Education and training for entrepreneurship enhancement for national development. Specifically the study intended to:

1. Find out the agricultural skills needed to enhance entrepreneurship.
2. Find out the constraints to agricultural education and entrepreneurship enhancement.
3. Determine the strategies for enhancement of entrepreneurship through agricultural education.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study

1. What are the agricultural skills needed to enhance entrepreneurship?
2. What are the constraints to agricultural education and entrepreneurship enhancement?
3. What are the strategies for enhancement of entrepreneurship through agricultural education?

Methodology

Design: The study adopted descriptive survey design.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of 28 agricultural education lecturers in two Colleges of Education in Anambra State that offer agricultural education. Due to the manageable size of the population the entire population was used hence there was no sampling.

Instrument

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire items were structured based on four point scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly disagree representing 4,3,2 and 1 respectively. .

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by two lecturers from department of Agricultural Education of Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze. Their correction and suggestions were used to produce the final draft of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was trial tested on 10 Agricultural Education lectures in Federal College of Education (Tech), Asaba. Cronbach Alpha formula was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficients of the instrument were found to be 0.91.

Method of Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. Nominal values were assigned to scaling items thus Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2 and strongly Disagree = 1 values were added up to get 10 = 2.50, 2.50 is the cut off point. Items with mean value of 2.50 and above were considered accepted while those below 2.50 were regarded as not accepted.

Results

The results were presented below

Research Question 1

What are the agricultural skills needed to enhance entrepreneurship?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Agricultural Skills Needed to Enhance Entrepreneurship.

S/N	Entrepreneurship skills in Agricultural education include	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Crop Production	3.50	0.89	Agreed
2	Vegetable gardening	3.72	0.96	Agreed
3	snail farming	3.61	1.06	Agreed
4	grass cutter farming	3.77	0.74	Agreed
5	Orchard farming	3.68	1.02	Agreed
6	food processing	3.50	0.86	Agreed
7	agricultural marketing	3.12	0.77	Agreed
8	Agricultural extension	3.09	0.71	Agreed
9	Rabbit production	3.51	0.82	Agreed
10	Pig production	3.75	0.88	Agreed
11	Farm stead planning	3.41	0.72	Agreed
12	Landscaping	3.07	0.75	Agreed
13	Poultry production	3.4	0.84	Agreed
14	Agribusiness	3.50	0.61	Agreed
15	Bee keeping	3.22	0.59	Agreed
16	Floriculture	3.10	0.55	Agreed
17	Fish farming	3.15	0.88	Agreed
	Grand mean	3.44	0.76	Agreed

Data in table I shows that all the agricultural skills listed above could enhance entrepreneurship. The items had mean values above the cut-off point of 2.50 and was accepted by the respondents. The SD of 0.76 showed that the respondents have a consensus opinion on the items.

Research Question 2

What are the constraints to Agricultural Education and Entrepreneurship enhancement. The answer to this research question is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Respondents on constraints to Agricultural Education and Entrepreneurship Training.

S/N	Constraints to Agricultural Education and Entrepreneurship Training include:	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Insufficient funding	3.95	0.88	Agreed
2.	Lack of curriculum articulation	4.01	0.72	Agreed
3.	Poor quality of Agricultural education programs	3.75	0.55	Agreed
4.	Poor budget allocation	3.58	0.59	Agreed
5.	Lack of integration of school based and work –based learning	3.20	0.65	Agreed
6.	Poor supervision	3.70	0.65	Agreed
7.	Insufficient time for agricultural training	3.61	0.80	Agreed
8.	Absence of infrastructural	3.33	0.90	Agreed
9.	Lack of facilitated effective supervision	3.09	0.73	Agreed
	Grand mean	3.58	0.72	Agreed

All the items in table 2 above were accepted by the respondents. All the items had mean values above 2.50. The SD of 0.72 showed that the respondents had consensus opinion on the items.

Research Question 3

What are the strategies for enhancement of entrepreneurship through agricultural training.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondent for Enhancement of Entrepreneurship through Agricultural Training.

S/N	Strategies for enhancement of entrepreneurship include:	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Clear curriculum emphasis on Agricultural training	3.80	0.56	Agreed
2.	Adequate provision of infrastructure and equipment.	3.19	0.58	Agreed
3.	Private partners and NGOs should be encouragement to participate in funding entrepreneurship education	3.70	0.61	Agreed
4.	Functional Quality assure VTE training	3.72	0.66	Agreed
5.	Training and retraining of teachers	3.84	0.79	Agreed
	Grand mean and standard deviation	3.65	0.64	Agreed

All the items had mean values above the cut-off point of 2.50 and was all agreed by the respondents. The standard deviation of 0.64 showed that respondents had the same opinion on the items.

Discussion

Research question I was designed to find out agricultural skills needed to enhance entrepreneurship. Results of the study revealed that entrepreneurship will be enhanced through agricultural skills on crop production, vegetable gardening, grass cutter farming, snail farming, orchard farming, food processing, agricultural marketing, extension, rabbit production, pig production, farm stead planning, land scaping poultry production, agribusiness, bee keeping, floriculture etc. These findings are

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in line with what Osinem (2008) stated that agricultural skills includes poultry production, pest control, crop production, rabbit production, pig production etc. The results of the study on constraints to agricultural education and entrepreneurship training showed that the following are the constraints. Insufficient funding, lack of curriculum articulation, poor quality of agricultural education programme, poor budget allocation lack of integration of school based and work based learning, poor budget allocation, poor insufficient time for agricultural training.

The findings are in line with the findings of Greenstone (2003) who discovered that vocational technical education is highly constrained by insufficient and poor funding, and low budget allocation etc.

Research question 3 was to find out the strategy for enhancement of entrepreneurship through agricultural training. Results of the study showed that the following strategies should be adopted such as curriculum emphasize on agricultural training, adequate provision of infrastructure and equipment, private organizations, parents and NGOs to be encouraged to participate in farming entrepreneurship training.

These findings are in line with the work of Adekunle (2014) who stated that there should be functional quality assurance system to supervise the activities of vocational and Technical education. Also Okolocha (2012) stated that Federal Government and stakeholders should provide adequate funding for institutions Adequate funding would boost standards and quality of manpower instructional and infrastructural reasons.

Conclusion

Non-possession of requisite skills in agricultural education based skills has hindered the economic development of a nation. For entrepreneurship enhancement in the country among the youths, agricultural education is very crucial as it will make the youths to be enterprising and self reliant. Therefore it becomes necessary that agricultural education and training should be given adequate attention in the schools.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Federal Government should provide adequate fund for the running of agricultural programmes in schools.
2. Training and retraining of Agricultural Education lecturers of agricultural education lecturers to update their skills and knowledge in Agriculture.
3. Agricultural education programme should be adequately supervised to ensure proper delivery of curriculum content.
4. Infrastructural facilities should be supplied to schools.

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