

# IDENTIFICATION OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAITS POSSESSED BY SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ADAMAWA STATE

*Obi C.I.*

## Abstract

A survey was carried out to identify the entrepreneurial traits possessed by senior secondary one (SSI) students in Adamawa State. The population included 3000 administrative staff, 350 vocational teachers and 11,000 SSI students in the 108 senior secondary schools in the state in the 2003/2004 academic session. The sample consisted of 10 schools randomly selected,

30 administrative staff all selected, 30 vocational teachers and 500 students randomly selected. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire designated Entrepreneurial Traits Identification Inventory (ETII). The statistical procedures used in the analysis included the mean and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). It was discovered that the students possessed all the entrepreneurial traits used for the study. All these traits were also considered important for the development of entrepreneurial skills. It was therefore recommended that the vocational teachers in Adamawa State should, through the provision of adequate learning experiences strive to develop these traits into functional entrepreneurial skills to the benefit of the students.

## Introduction

One of the main objectives of senior secondary school education in Nigeria, according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 1998), is to prepare students for their chosen occupations. The senior tier of secondary education aims at equipping the youths with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes for productive employment as well as providing adequate foundation for further studies at the tertiary level. The curriculum therefore is said to be integrated (Alaezi, 1987). This because it is both academic and more importantly vocational.

Vocational education according to Okoro (1994), is education whose primary purpose is the development of the skills, knowledge and attitude required for productive employment. Effective vocational education at the secondary level is probably the strongest solution to youth unemployment which is one of the most serious socio-economic problems facing Adamawa State (Adamawa State Planning Commission, 2003). Unemployment according to Okoro is caused by economic factors, social or environmental factors and individual or personal factors. The individual or personal factors are those causes of unemployment which depend on the characteristics of individuals. They differentiate between individuals and make some individuals more easily employable than others. Lack of basic general education, lack of specific personal skills, unsatisfactory attitude to work, inadequate information, lack of resources, including facilities for mobility of labour and wrong geographical location are among the individual and personal factors causing unemployment (Okoro, 1994).

Vocational education has an enormous role to play in increasing the employment potentials of the state. No matter the amount of vocational training and education given to the students, if it is lacking in practical managerial and entrepreneurial skills and competencies, the recipients will find it difficult, if not impossible to establish on their own even in the face of very challenging situations. This is where entrepreneurial education comes in. A definition of the concept of entrepreneur will be useful in this regard. The National Directorate of Employment (1989) described entrepreneur as the man who perceives business opportunities and takes advantage of the scarce resources to use them profitably. The entrepreneur has to possess some psychological traits which are either latent and could be aroused through training or manifest which training could be built upon.

The entrepreneur has to be an originator of profitable business ideas while possessing the ability to gain command of and combine resources in a way that will be profitable. Above all, the entrepreneur must be prepared to risk personal energy and financial resources to achieve unpredictable results. This paper intends to identify the entrepreneurial traits possessed by the senior

secondary school students in Adamawa State so that future vocational instruction can be better directed for more effective vocational education that will enhance youth employment.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As earlier on pointed out, one of the most serious socio-economic problems facing Adamawa State is acute youth unemployment. This problem can be addressed through intensive vocational education at the secondary school level. Intensive vocational education at this level can be facilitated by identifying the entrepreneurial traits possessed by the youths in school for development which is the object of this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify the entrepreneurial traits possessed by the senior secondary school students in Adamawa State and to indicate those important for the development of entrepreneurial skills in students.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were stated:

1. What are the entrepreneurial traits possessed by the senior secondary schools students in Adamawa State?
2. What is the importance of these entrepreneurial traits to vocational education?

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of statistical significance:

**H<sub>1i</sub>:** There is no significant difference in\* the mean ratings of administrative staff, teachers and students on the entrepreneurial traits possessed by students.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of administrative staff, teachers and students on the importance of the entrepreneurial traits possessed by students.

### **Methodology**

The research design is a survey. The area of study is Adamawa State. The population of the study consists of all the administrative staff (the principals and vice-principals) vocational teachers (those teaching agricultural science, food and nutrition, economics, accounting, metal work and other vocational subjects) and all the senior secondary one (SSI) students in the 108 senior secondary schools in the state. This population is about 300 administrative staff, 350 teachers and 11,000 students making a total of 11,650 subjects in the 2003/2004 academic session. 10 schools were randomly selected from the 108 schools. The 30 administrative staff in the 10 schools were all selected for the study. Three teachers and 50 SSI students were also randomly selected from each school making a total of 560 subjects in the sample.

The instrument for data collection is a questionnaire designated Entrepreneurial Traits Investigation Inventory (ETII). The ETII is a five point rating scale. It consists of 30 items on the entrepreneurial traits supposed to be possessed by the students. The ETII was constructed through the information gathered from the literature review.

The scales in the instrument are as shown below:

***Identification of the Entrepreneurial Traits Possessed by Senior Secondary School Students in Adamawa State***

A. Scale	Scale Point
Always	5
Usually	4
Sometimes	3
Rarely	2
Never	1

B. Scale	Scale Point
Very important	5
Important Barely important	4
important	3
Unimportant Very	2
Unimportant	1

The face/content validity of the instrument was established by two experts in vocational education. Both of them indicated that the content of the instrument was adequate and relevant to the study. The reliability (internal consistency) of the instrument was established through a pilot study carried out at General Murtala Mohammed College (G.M.M.C.) Yola, which is one of the senior secondary schools not used in the main study. Three administrative staff including the principal and 2 vice principals. 2 vocational teachers and 30 SSI students making a total of 35 subjects were used for the pretest. Data collected was analysed using Cronbach (1951). The coefficient alpha (  $\alpha$  ) was found to be .95. ETII was therefore said to be reliable.

In the main study, the instrument was personally administered by the researcher and were all collected for analysis. The statistical procedures used in the analysis include the mean scores which were computed for all the groups for all items and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) which was computed for each of the items identified for the purpose of comparing the means of the three major groups of respondents.

In the computation of the means, the real limits of the five point scale as shown below was used to determine the decision point used.

Scale	Scale Point	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
Always	5	5.00	4.5
Usually	4	4.49	3.5
Sometimes	3	3.49	2.5
Rarely	2	2.49	1.5
Never	1	1.49	0.00

Source: Adapted from Runyon & Haber (1980).

For this study, "Sometimes"/"Barely" important with a scale point of 3 was accepted as being within the range of positive. Therefore 2.5 being the lower limit of,3 was the decision point. In this case, any item with a mean rating of 2.5 and above was accepted as positive, while items rated below 2.5 were considered negative in terms of possession of the traits identified in each case and the importance of each trait. As for the ANOVA, if the computed statistic (F-value) is  $< 0.05$  (level of probability), the  $H_0$  is rejected and the variables declared significant. If otherwise, the  $H_0$  is accepted and the variables are said to be non-significant.

		Group			Mean	F-value
		X <sub>1</sub> N=30	X <sub>2</sub> N=30	X <sub>3</sub> N=500		
1.	Look for things that need to be done	3.00	3.12	3.11	3.07	0.05
2.	When faced with a difficult problem spend a lot of time trying to find a solution	2.95	2.94	2.92	2.93	0.03
3.	Complete work on time	3.11	3.12	3.14	3.12	0.02
4.	Bothered when things are not well done	3.41	3.44	3.00	3.28	0.02
5.	Prefer situations in which the outcome can be controlled as much as possible	3.12	3.13	3.52	3.25	0.04
6.	Like to think about the future	2.91	2.96	2.98	2.95	0.025
7.	When starting a new task or project gather a great deal of information going ahead	3.31	3.42	3.01	3.25	0.034
8.	Plan a large project by breaking it down into smaller tasks	2.85	2.88	2.96	2.89	0.041
9.	Get others to support recommendations	2.91	2.96	2.99	2.95	0.032
10.	Feel confident to succeed at whatever undertaking	3.00	3.11	3.12	3.08	0.02
II.	Is good to be a good listener	3.11	3.14	3.15	3.13	0.011
12.	Do things that need to be done before being asked by others	3.01	3.14	3.96	3.37	0.021
13.	Try several times to get people to do what is expected to be done	3.07	3.00	3.11	3.04	0.05
14.	Keep the promise made	3.01	3.16	3.71	3.79	0.01
15.	Do better work than others	3.03	3.14	3.16	3.11	0.022
16.	It is good to take risks	3.11	3.13	3.17	3.14	0.033
17.	It is good to worry about what to do with your life	3.00	3.11	3.12	3.08	0.044
18.	Seek the advice of people who know a lot about the tasks on ground *	3.02	3.03	2.93	2.99	0.042
19.	Think about the advantages and disadvantages of different ways of accomplishing things	2.91	3.11	3.01	3.01	0.045
20.	Is good to influence others positively and productivity	2.94	2.95	3.00	2.96	0.021
21.	Take corrections from senior colleagues	3.11	3.01	3.00	3.04	0.034
22.	Strive to get things done	3.00	2.91	2.93	2.95	0.025
23.	Like challenges and new opportunities	3.12	3.00	3.01	3.04	0.037
24.	Strive to succeed in every situation	4.00	4.11	4.15	4.09	0.044
25.	Try to get job done on time	3.11	3.01	3.00	3.04	0.022
26.	Bothered when time is wasted	3.13	3.00	2.91	3.01	0.032
27.	Weigh chances of succeeding or failing before deciding to do something	3.11	3.96	3.00	3.36	0.028
28.	It is good to plan one's life	4.00	3.96	3.99	3.98	0.048
29.	Take time to gather information before taking action	3.12	3.33	4.10	3.52	0.02
30.	Think of what to do when ever problem is encountered	4.00	3.96	3.91	3.96	0.01

### Obi C.I.

#### Results

- X<sub>1</sub> - Mean for Administrative Staff
- X<sub>2</sub> - Mean for Vocational Teachers
- X<sub>3</sub> - Mean for SSI Students

All the means were positive (above 2.5). All the F-value were significant at 0.05 level of probability. This means that the students possess all the entrepreneurial traits.

		Administrative Staff, Teachers			SSI Students	
		X <sub>1</sub> N=30	X <sub>2</sub> N=30	X <sub>3</sub> N=500	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Look for tilings that need to be done	3.00	3.10	3.11	3.06	0.04
2.	When faced with a difficult problem spend a lot of time trying to find a solution	2.94	2.93	2.92	2.92	0.03
3.	Complete work on time	3.11	3.12	3.14	3.12	0.02
4.	Bothered when things are not well done	3.40	3.43	3.00	3.27	0.033
5.	Prefer situations in which the outcome can be controlled as much as possible	3.12	3.13	3.52	3.25	0.034
6.	Like to think about the future	2.91	2.96	2.98	2.95	0.04
7.	When starting a new task or project, gather a great deal of information going ahead	3.31	3.42	3.01	3.25	0.44
8.	Plan a large project by breaking it down into smaller tasks	2.85	2.88	2.96	2.89	0.043
9.	Get others to support recommendations	2.90	2.95	2.99	2.94	0.02
10.	Feel confident to succeed at whatever undertaking	3.00	3.11	3.12	3.08	0.32
11.	Is good to be a good listener	3.11	3.14	3.15	3.13	0.022
12.	Do things that need to be done before being asked by others	3.00	3.13	3.96	3.36	0.025
13.	Try several times to get people to do what is expected to be done	3.06	3.00	3.10	3.03	0.04
14.	Keep the promise made	3.02	3.17	3.71	3.80	0.032
15.	Do better work than others	3.03	3.14	3.16	3.11	0.021
16.	It is good to take risks	3.11	3.13	3.17	3.14	0.030
17.	It is good to worry about what to do with your life	3.00	3.11	3.12	3.08	0.020
18.	Seek the advice of people who know a lot about the tasks on ground	3.02	3.03	2.93	2.99	0.040
19.	Think about the advantages and disadvantages of different ways of accomplishing things	2.90	3.11	3.00	3.00	0.022
20.	Is good to influence others positively and productively	2.95	2.95	3.01	2.97	0.033
21.	Take corrections from senior colleagues	3.11	3.01	3.00	3.04	0.038
22.	Strive to get things done	3.00	2.91	2.93	2.95	0.048
23.	Like challenges and new opportunities	3.12	3.00	3.01	3.04	0.027
24.	Strive to succeed in every situation	4.01	4.11	4.14	4.08	0.031
25.	Try to get job done on time	3.11	3.01	3.00	3.04	0.029
26.	Bothered when time is wasted	3.13	3.00	2.91	3.01	0.035
27.	Weigh chances of succeeding or failing before deciding to do something	3.11	3.96	3.00	3.36	0.02
28.	It is good to plan one's life	4.01	3.96	4.00	3.99	0.04
29.	Take time to gather information before taking action	3.12	3.33	4.10	3.52	0.05
30.	Think of what to do when ever problem is encountered	4.01	3.96	3.90	3.96	0.02

**Identification of the Entrepreneurial Traits Possessed by Senior Secondary School Students in Adamawa State**

- X<sub>1</sub> - Mean for Administrative Staff
- X<sub>2</sub> - Mean for Vocational Teachers
- X<sub>3</sub> - Mean for SSI Students

All the means were positive (above 2.5). All the F-Values were significant at 0.05 level of probability. This means that all the traits are important for the development of entrepreneurial skills.

**Summary of Results**

Data analysis showed that the students possess all the 30 entrepreneurial traits used for the study. These traits were also considered important as the foundation for effective vocational education.

## Discussion

It was desirable to observe that the senior secondary school students in Adamawa State possess the entrepreneurial traits used for the study. These psychological traits could be fully developed through functional and effective vocational education at the secondary school level. The findings of this study are in consonance with that of Olaitan (1994); Okoro (1994); Amewhule (1994); and Akanbi (2002).

Since students possess these basic factors, what is then the problem? Why the increasing rate of youth unemployment in Adamawa State? It might be that vocational education *in* the state has not been very effective in equipping the youths with saleable skills for self-reliance. If it is so, a basis has been established in this study for functional and productive vocational education in the state. Qualitative vocational education cannot be achieved without the provision of adequate facilities in terms of funds, staff and instructional materials and equipment. These facilities should be adequately available since they have been reported to be hitherto inadequate (Obi, 2004).

To further intensify vocational education in the state, entrepreneurial studies should be introduced as a subject in senior secondary schools and taught by professional business educators. The subject matter content of the course according to Akanbi (2002) should include: definition, concept, characteristics and functions of entrepreneur; forms of business ownership and business planning; feasibility studies and report; business location, siting and financing, personnel, financial material and time management; marketing and sales management; and social responsibility. It is hoped that the introduction of this curriculum will considerably improve the standard of vocational education in the state.

## Recommendations

Sequel to the identification of entrepreneurial traits among the youths, the following recommendations are made:

1. Entrepreneurial studies should be introduced as a senior secondary school subject and taught by professional business educators.
2. The business/vocational teachers in the emerging subject should endeavour to develop the entrepreneurial traits identified into usable entrepreneurial skills.
3. Adequate educational facilities should be made available for qualitative teaching and productive learning.
4. The parents, teachers, students and more importantly the government and all the other stakeholders should cooperate effectively to provide an enabling environment for the youths to establish on their own.
5. At regular intervals, follow-up studies should be conducted to determine the extent the senior secondary school graduates are grappling with private business ventures.

## Conclusion

An attempt has been made to demonstrate that the senior secondary school students in Adamawa State possess the basic entrepreneurial traits that could be developed through effective vocational education for productive employment. Now that the basis for functional education has been established, adequate educational facilities should be made available in the state for practical and qualitative vocational education. This form of education will help to address the problem of youth unemployment, poverty, prostitution, stealing, drug abuse and other forms of criminal behaviour among the youths.

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**Appendix A Raw Data I**

1 0	1 6	0 4 0
1	7	6 1 1 5
0	3	7 1 2 8
3	1 6	2 6 3
6	9	3 1 1 1
1 3	1 6	1 0 0
9	2 0	1 1 1
4	1 1	2 6 7
0	8	1 1 8 3
8	1 4	4 1 3
5	1 1	4 6 4
0	1 1	5 7 7
1 1	1 4	2 2 1
4	5	9 6 6
4	1 6	3 4 3
9	1 8	2 1 0
1	4	7 1 0 8
1	8	4 9 8
2	2 0	3 - 3 2
0	1 5	4 9 2
4	9	5 8 4
1	1 3	6 6 4
8	1 2	6 3 1
1	7	7 7 8
3	2	1 4 2
3	1 2	4 4 7
1	9	4 1 1 5
2	7	0 9 1 2
2	7	7 8 6
3	1 0	4 7 6
1 3	1 1	2 3 1
1 2	7	1 2 2 7
1	3	8 4 1 4
6	1 5	1 4 - 4
4	1 4	6 1 5
1 4	1 2	1 2 1
9	1 8	1 1 1
7	1 1	2 6 4
1	7	1 4 3 5
7	1 8	0 2 3
3	1 6	3 4 4
3	7	0 4 7
1 0	1 4	2 2 2
3	7	5 8 7
1 2	6	3 3 6
1 4	1 1	2 2 1
1	1	7 8 1 3
1	5	1 1 3 1 0
5	1 4	3 6 2
2	8	5 7 8
2	9	1 2 5 2
3	1 2	6 6 3
4	1 9	2 2 3



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2	1	10	9	8
■2	: 20	3	0	5
5	13	5	1	6
6	12	6	3	3
2	11	8	4	5
2.	4	6	5	13
1	12	9	2	6
3	6	9	5	7
208	183	48	35	26
120	118	95	87	80
80	124	114	116	67
119	149	80	93	59
195	138	74	49	44
153	161	59	62	65
164	201	47	63	25
98	92	85	102	123
68	89	129	112	102
159	153	59	62	67
109	136	66	104	43
93	103	101	133	100
178	148	65	62	47
74	89	125	104	108
112	116	55	77	140
250	157	33	27	33
48	56	116	120	160
74	129	103	106	88
117	146	83	67	87
108	140	87	77	88
74	107	123	91	105
128	180	75	66	51
98	110	96	108	88
63	91	113	100	143
191	188	43	36	42
79	154	91	107	69
140	153	78	66	63
79	132	121	91	77
57	73	83	98	189
77	103	96	126	98

**Raw Data II**

10 14 2	2	0
3 5 6	9	7
0 1 9	10	10
3 16 2	6	3
6 9 3	11	1
13 16 1	0	0
9 20 1	0	0
4 11 2	6	7
0 8 11	8	3
8 14 4	1	3
5 11 4	6	4
10 2 9 7	5	7
11 14 2	2	1
4 5 9	6	6
4 16 3	4	3
9 18 2	1	0
3 2 7	8	10
3 6 6	7	8
2 20 3	3	2
0 15 4	9	2
4 9 5	8	4
1 13 6	6	4
8 12 6	3	1
3 5 9	5	8
3 2 1	4	2
3 12 4	4	7
1 9 4	11	5
2 7 0	9	12
2 7 7	8	6
5 8 6	5	6
11 9 4	5	1
12 7 12	2	7
3 1 40	2	14
6 15 1	4	4
4 14 6	1	5
16 10 3	0	1
11 16 3	0	0
7 11 2	6	4
1 7 14	3	5
7 18 0	2	3
3 16 3	4	4
3 7 0	4	7
12 12 0	4	2
3 7 5	8	7
12 6 3	3	6
14 11 2	2	1
1 1 7	8	13
1 5 11	3	10
5 14 3	6	2
2 8 5	7	8
2 9 12	5	2
	6	3
4 19 2	2	3

3 12 6 ,

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10	9	0	3	8
2	20	3	0	5
5	13	5	1	6
6	12	6	3	3
2	11	8	4	5
2	4	6	5	13
1'	12	9	2	6
5	4	11	4	6
210	181	50	33	26
122	116	97	85	80
82	122	116	114	66
119	149	80	93	59
195	138	74	49	44
155	159	61	64	61
164	201	47	63	25
98	92	85	102	123
68	89	129	112	102
161	151	57	64	167
109	136	66	104	43
93	103	101	133	100
178	148	65	62	47
76	87	127	106	104
112	116	55	77	140
250	157	33	27	33
50	54	118	118	160
74	129	103	106	88
117	146	83	67	87
110	138	89	75	88
74	107	123	91	105
128	180	75	66	51
100	108	98	110	84
63	91	113	100	143
191	188	43	36	42
81	152	93	105	69
140	153	78	66	63
79	132	121	91	77
57	73	83	98	189
79	101	98	124	98