

NON-TRADITIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT: *Entrepreneurial training has been emphasized as a tool to promote business startup in order to reduce unemployment. It is acknowledged to be instrumental in promoting a more entrepreneurial climate in a country. Researchers have pointed out that training plays a vital role in supporting emerging small businesses. It prepares people to start their own business, strengthens their entrepreneurial capabilities, changes their mindsets and encourages them to undertake the entrepreneurial endeavour. However, despite the increasing attention on entrepreneurship training, much emphasis have been on traditional training programmes with less focus on non-traditional training programmes with a lack of research on entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurship training in varied and multiple contexts. Using a descriptive study, 195 participants of non-traditional entrepreneurship programmes offered by the government in Southern Nigeria were examined and findings reveal that to a large extent non-traditional entrepreneurship programmes does contribute to the nurturing of participants' entrepreneurial attributes, values, mindset, intention and the starting of their businesses. The findings add new knowledge to the entrepreneurship literature on non-traditional entrepreneurship training programmes. It provides implications that will guide government policy decision in the offering of entrepreneurship programmes in the region under study.*

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurship Training, Entrepreneurial Behaviour, Entrepreneurial Mindset, Entrepreneurial intention, Entrepreneurial Attributes, Entrepreneurial Culture

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial training has been emphasized as a tool to promote business startup in order to reduce unemployment (Nagesh and Murthy, 2008). It is believed to be instrumental in promoting a more entrepreneurial climate in a country (Wan, 1988; Dominginhos and Carvalho, 2009). Ladzani and Van Vuuren (2002) acknowledged that training plays a vital role in supporting emerging small businesses. Training apart from being critical for preparing people to start their own business (McGinty, 1998), strengthens ones entrepreneurial capabilities (Zinger et al., 2001) and has the ability to change potential entrepreneur's mindsets which in turn encourages them to undertake the entrepreneurial endeavour (Curran and Stanworth, 1989).

This assumption that it is right to assist potential entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial development by providing them with a constructive training to help in self employment and business start up has led to various training programmes and various studies on the effectiveness of training programmes in stimulating entrepreneurship. However, despite the increasing attention on entrepreneurship training, much emphasis have been on Traditional

training¹ programmes with less focus on non-traditional training² programmes (Wu and Jung, 2008). There is also a lack of research on entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurship training in varied and multiple contexts (Nabi and Holden, 2008). It is in this regard that this paper seeks to examine the impact of the non-traditional entrepreneurship programmes offered by the government through its agencies in the South-South region of Nigeria on the entrepreneurial behaviour of the participants.

Entrepreneurship Training and Entrepreneurial Behaviour

Gray (1992) asserted that states can effectively utilize entrepreneurial training programmes to reduce the plight of the chronically unemployed and create jobs and new wealth at the same time. In the light of this, the agencies in the context of this study as revealed from the pilot study used mix of various training initiatives and media in their entrepreneurship training programmes to motivate participants towards entrepreneurship.

Garnier and Gasse's (1990) study on training entrepreneurs through Newspapers indicated that 32 new businesses were created following the course and that 117 other participants were actively pursuing an entrepreneurial idea. Nagesh and Murthy's (2008) study on entrepreneurship training of women in India found that the training by the state and central government was successful in catering to the needs of two-thirds of the 50 respondents' sampled in the study. They found a 68% positive transfer feelings about the training in terms of its encouragement and motivation of the individuals to become entrepreneurs; They reported a 64% positivity of the training programmes in terms of their development of entrepreneurial skills and 66% positivity of the programmes in terms of new job creation awareness.

Dominguinhos and Carvalho (2009) study indicated that the training programmes helped trainees to increase their entrepreneurial competencies and that nine firms were created from the programmes. Wan's (1988) analysis of the entrepreneurship training workshop done in Australia found that the programme received favourable endorsement from stakeholders in the country, 28% of employees who attended the workshops changed status to self-employed, 50% of self-employed who attended the workshops reported improvement in their business productivity because of the skilled acquired from the workshops while a total of 90% considered the workshop effective. Although the above study did not use a control group, Wu and Jung's (2008) study used a controlled group as well as Peterman and Kennedy (2003). Wu and Jung (2008) did not report the difference in the controlled group but did conclude that 90% of the participants found the training programmes to be very valuable while Peterman and Kennedy (2003) found significant differences in the mindset of the participants compared to the controlled group thereby concluding that participation in the training programmes does positively influence participants' perception of entrepreneurship. In line with the above discussion, this paper proposes that;

“The Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes offered by the government agencies in Southern Nigeria will positively contribute to the development of the participants' entrepreneurial behavior in terms of their entrepreneurial attributes, values, mindset, intention and new job creation”

¹ Traditional training programmes serve the college students in typical business school settings.

² Non-traditional training programmes accommodate those individuals who wish to start their own businesses as they seek assistance in more focused and practical ways.

METHODS

A pilot study was first conducted in the some of the agencies responsible for entrepreneurship training and three specific agencies in Akwa Ibom State were examined. Six pilot questionnaire were distributed in the three agencies and all pilot questionnaire were filled and returned. Using purposive sampling method with a structured questionnaire, data was collected from 195 respondents who received some form of the Entrepreneurship training from governmental sources in Akwa Ibom one of the Southern State in Nigeria. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data.

Analysis

The results of the descriptive analysis from the agencies are as follows:

Agencies involve in the Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training: The pilot study revealed that the agencies offered various forms of training during the period understudy to encourage individuals towards self-employment. The training unlike the traditional training carried out in colleges and universities were non-traditional in nature whereby they were organized from one day to three days in various workshop or seminars. The types of training provided by the agencies included carpentry, textile technology, computer skill, soap making, catering/hotel management and welding among others as shown on table 1 below. Table 1 indicates that the agencies were highly involve in carpentry, computer skills, soap making and welding training given the high rank of these training on the table. The medium used in creating awareness of such training provision included the television, radio, newspapers, flyers and letters among others as shown on table 2 below. Table 2 reveals that the state radio service (AKBC³ radio) ranked as the highest medium mostly used in creating the awareness for the training followed by Announcement in Workshops/Seminars, Letters to Local Government Chairmen and the State Television Services (AKBC TV). Table 1 and 2 shows the summary of the response level in each agency on the type of training organized by the agencies and the medium used in creating awareness of such training activities.

TABLE 1: Types of Training Activities organized by the Agencies

Type of training offered	Agency 1	Agency 2	Agency 3	Total No. of Responses*
Carpentry	6	1	2	9
Embroidery	-	-	-	0
Interior Decoration	-	-	1	1
Textile Technology	6	-	-	6
Computer skill	6	1	2	9
Soap Making	6	1	2	9
Business management	-	4	1	5
Catering/Hotel mgt.	5	-	1	6
Welding	6	3	-	9
Mechanic	-	5	-	5
Value adding to Garment production	-	1	-	1
Watch/Clock making	-	2	-	2
Business Record keeping skills	-	5	1	6

³ Akwa Ibom State Broadcasting Corporation

Customer relations	-	1	-	1
Window display	-	-	-	0
Others ((GSM) repairs/maintenance, oil palm processing	-	1	-	1
Totals	35	25	10	70

**please note that this was a multiple choice question where respondents could tick more than one answer as such the totals may exceed the total of 18 respondents involve in the study. The total no. of responses shows the frequency of response on each option in the questions.*

TABLE 2: Medium used in creating Awareness of the Training Activities:

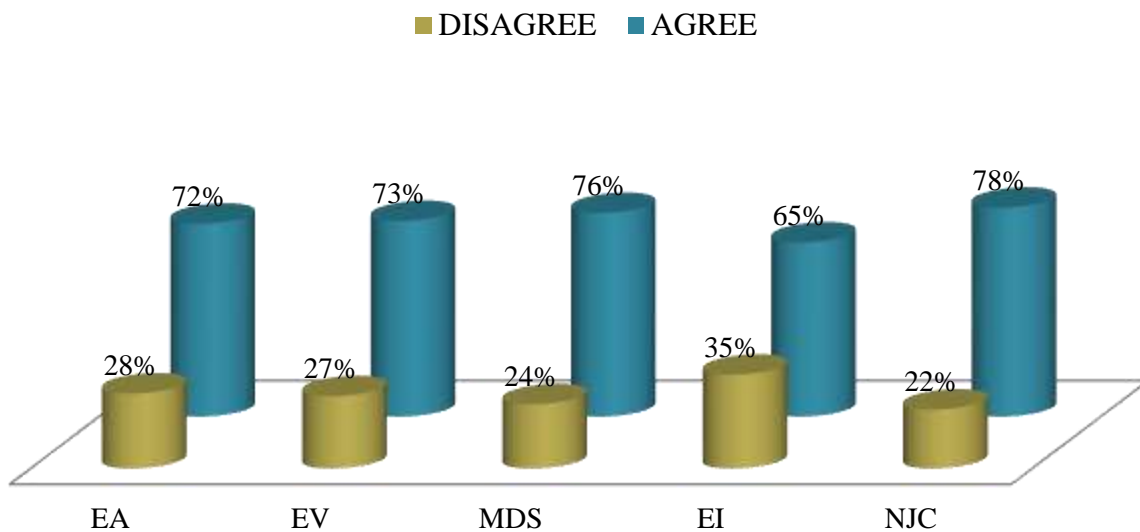
Medium used in creating awareness of the training	Agency 1	Agency 2	Agency 3	Total No. of Responses* & Rank
AKBC TV	-	5	1	6 ³
NTA ⁴ Uyo	-	3	-	3
AKBC Radio	4	6	1	11 ¹
Pioneer Newspaper	-	1	-	1
Flyers	-	1	1	2
Website advert	-	-	-	0
Workshop/Seminars	-	3	4	7 ²
Others	6 (letters to LGCs ⁵)	1 (Banners)	-	7
Totals	10	20	7	37

**please note that this was a multiple choice question where respondents could tick more than one answer as such the totals may exceed the total of 18 respondents involve in the study. The total no. of responses shows the frequency of response on each option in the questions. Ranks^{1,2,3} shows the Medium mostly used by the agencies in creating awareness of the training activities as indicated by the high level of responses for such options.*

Respondents involve in the Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training: The result of the descriptive analysis indicated that Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes did positively contribute to the development of the participants' entrepreneurial behavior as indicated in the high percentage of respondents who agreed to its impact on their Entrepreneurial Attributes (EA - 72%), Entrepreneurial Values (EV - 73%), Entrepreneurial Mindset (MDS - 76%), Entrepreneurial Intention (EI - (65%) and New Job Creation (NJC - 78%) compared to those who disagreed as shown on fig. 1 below. The respondents (88%) also found the Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training initiatives useful. The result confirmed the pilot findings in which the respondents (in the agencies) acknowledged that the Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes did contribute positively to the development of the entrepreneurial behavior of the participants' in terms of aiding to nurture the participants' EA (78%), EV, (66%), MDS (87.5%) and EI (80%). The result agreed by the participants as well as the findings from the pilot study suggest that the Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes implemented by the government agencies did contribute positively to the development of the participants' entrepreneurial behavior in the context studied.

⁴ Nigerian Television Authority

⁵ Local Government Chairmen

Fig. 1: Impact of Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training Programmes on Entrepreneurial Behaviour

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the descriptive analysis, the proposition that ‘The Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes offered by the government agencies in Southern Nigeria will positively contribute to the development of the participants’ entrepreneurial behavior in terms of their entrepreneurial attributes, values, mindset, intention and new job creation’ is supported by the analysis. This implies that the use of Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes may likely enhance entrepreneurship in the state thereby reducing the unemployment situation in the state. This supports the assertions that Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programme is instrumental in promoting a more entrepreneurial climate in a country (Wan, 1988; Domiguinhos and Carvalho, 2009). The result contributes new knowledge to the impact of Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training on Entrepreneurial Behaviour.

Prior research have pointed out that entrepreneurship training has the ability to strengthen ones entrepreneurial capabilities (Zinger et al., 2001). This is in harmony with the descriptive analysis which proved the relationship between Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes and EA of the participants. The supposition that entrepreneurship training has the ability to change potential entrepreneurs’ mindset (Curran and Stanworth, 1989) is proved by the result of the analysis in this study which also confirms similar findings that entrepreneurship training influences participants’ MDS (Hatten and Ruhland, 1995; Souitaris et al., 2007). The findings on the impact of Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes on EI addresses the gap in the entrepreneurship literature of a lack of research in varied and multiple contexts on the influence of entrepreneurship training on entrepreneurial intention (Nabi and Holden, 2008). The finding on the relationship between Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes and NJC agrees with the assertions that entrepreneurship training plays a vital role in preparing people to start their own businesses

(Ladzani and Van Vuuren, 2002; McGinty, 1998) and confirms findings by Garnier and Grasse (1990), Nagesh and Murthy (2008), Wan (1988) and Dominguihos and Carvalho (2009) that entrepreneurship training led to the founding of own businesses by the participants of such programmes.

CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to examine the contribution of Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes on the Entrepreneurial Behaviour of participants in Southern Nigeria. Through the descriptive analysis used, it can be concluded that Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes contribute positively to the entrepreneurial behavior of participants of such programmes in terms of their entrepreneurial attributes, values, mindset, intention and the creation of new jobs. Though the analysis indicated most support for the proposition of the paper, the result is constrained by item non-responses and inability to account for other variables. Nonetheless, the result of the analysis did to some extent confirm the pilot findings from the agencies responsible for the implementation thereby adding credibility to the findings of the analysis. The findings adds new knowledge to the entrepreneurship policy literature in that, government use of Non-Traditional Entrepreneurship Training programmes to promote entrepreneurship is not a wasted effort.

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