

Effective Communication For The Enhancement Of Entrepreneurial Skills Among Students Of Tertiary Institutions: A Case Study Of The Students Of Selected Tertiary Institutions In Edo Central Area Of Edo State.

ODOEMENAM Temple Chibueze
NWOPA Samuel Uchenna
OKACHI Stephen Tochi

National Institute Of Construction Technology And Management, Uromi, Edo State Nigeria

Abstract

The need for good communication skills is most certainly felt by all and sundry, especially, in this fast-paced environment where the intercourse of individuals with others has become very important. It has also been observed that the English language today appears to occupy a very important place for an individual's success in the academic area as majority of the course books are designed in the English language since it is now considered to be an international language and used all over the world. Simply put, effective communication refers to a two-way communication; and it plays a veritable role in the development of Entrepreneurial and leadership skills among students, especially at the tertiary level of education. The four primary skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking are studied in unison to enhance the inner potentials of the students, as they **listen** to the lectures, **speak** in class room discussions; **read** notes and **write** to give expression to their thoughts. Students who are relatively good in expressing themselves have fairly better chances to succeed in their academic and professional careers. This is because they display self-confidence more than their peers, who may be weak in their spoken expression. Self-confidence leads to the development of the entrepreneurial and leadership qualities, as they are needed in the execution of business/organizational plans. It makes them good human resource managers who are able to take their team forward in the right direction to achieve their goals. The team leader is able to express himself clearly with his team members, as they are able to listen to their problems with compassion and are able to make logical decisions in favor of their team as well as his project. - This paper examines communication as a means through which skills acquisition can be transmitted effectively to students of tertiary institutions for self-reliance. Effective communication, therefore, is recommended by this paper as one tool necessary in the process of equipping students with the requisite knowledge for entrepreneurial development and training.

Keywords: Effective communication, Entrepreneurial and leadership skills, listening skill, oral communication, reading skill, speaking skill, writing skill.

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I. Introduction

In view of the importance of communication, entrepreneurial and leadership skills which focus on all the four language skills and their integration with each other, this study reveals how communication, entrepreneurial and leadership skills cannot be separated from each other if we wish to develop the full potentials of an individual so that he is successful in his academic and professional life. The approach adopted for this study is the collection of data from various students and Teachers in the various tertiary institutions. The said approach measured the most frequently used skill among the students and also analyzed which skill can be more effective for the development of entrepreneurial and leadership qualities. We, as humans in its entirety, require verbal communication to exchange thoughts, feelings, and opinions. A human being who has an excellent expression is capable of becoming a good manager as the use of appropriate words at the appropriate time is the key to becoming a first-class leader. People would pay attention to such a person who is lucid in his expressions and would willingly follow his lead and this enhances their work efficiency as they would be fully confident of what they are doing. A good leader is that one person who not only acquires the job completed by his team but who also acknowledges the efforts of his team without making them feel as subordinates. He is open to suggestions and good ideas from his team members.

It is pertinent to note that the entrepreneur/ leader, is quite distinct from the manager. This is because they both play different roles entirely. The manager imitates; the leader innovates. While the manager gives attention to coordination and structure; the leader concentrates on community, the manager acknowledges the status quo; the leader tests it. The entrepreneur's/leader's eye is on the perspective, the manager's eye is on the bottom line; the leader executes the right tasks but the manager performs tasks right. The import of this comparison is that the leader has more qualities to his credit than the manager. However, both have their importance in the organization, a leader sometimes has to become a manager and a manager sometimes has to put on the robe of the leader. The bottom line, according to (Devid Clutterbuck, Sheila Hirst 2002), is that the task should be accomplished on time and that the quality is not compromised. There is no doubt that leaders are usually charismatic figures who command enormous respect among the led. Charisma and respect, however, are not what incredible leaders have, instead, they are effects that people feel about leaders. They are determined by the performance of the leaders.

II. Review Of Related Literature

The educational institutions appear, in recent times, to be recognizing their inability to provide useful and relevant learning experiences. Responding to external pressures, educational institutions around the world have started to change the way they operate (Clark 2004: 1). Entrepreneurialism is not (anymore) a concept that is foreign to the academic world. There is an increasing interest in co-operating with businesses and industries often leading to the input of private funding to public universities and other tertiary institutions. Like corporations, educational institutions broaden your horizons. Many educational institutions have broadened their mission beyond education and research to include outreach actions such as community service and knowledge transfer in the form of follow-ups incubators or enterprises. Although the inspiration of intellectual activity in students through communication of theoretical knowledge and the development of knowledge through research are still important. Other aspects that are gaining importance include the provision of practical skills and applied knowledge, and the direct and indirect contribution of institutions to knowledge economies. Providing employability and entrepreneurship skills is a logical progression from this development. A 2003 European University Association survey of heads of European universities disclose that 90% regard the future employability of their graduates as important and 56% as very important aspect impacting on the design of university curricula. As entrepreneurship generates employment, it is not only essentially linked but may also be seen as a special form of employability (Moreland 2004).

As has been observed that various investigations inquiring graduates, managers, and teachers exhibit effective communication as one of the most vital areas which requires development among workers and graduates (Maes, Weldy, & Icenogle, 1997; Morreale, Osborn, & Pearson, 2000; Holly J. Payne, 2005), it is generally considered that managers (Human Resource) from 500 corporations see effective communication, consisting of listening, speaking, group contribution, and interaction of information, as most significant for business students in the 21st century (Porterfield & Forde, 2001; Holly J. Payne, 2005). On the other hand, several studies describe the significance of interaction (communication). A few of them show the importance of communication skills, which goes ahead of social skills by containing affective, cognitive, and behavioral essentials. Communication capabilities largely portray the notion which one has of a communicator who has interaction objectives at both a suitable and useful level (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984; Holly J. Payne, 2005). It obvious in a previous study that concept of capability continues to depend on Spitzberg and Cupach's (1984): Holly J. Payne, 2005) real criteria: suitability and efficiency. While Jablin and Sias give the definition of (2001): Holly J. Payne, 2005) capability as the set of skills, hereafter, named resources, which a communicator has accessible for utilization in the communication process (p. 125). It is tactical, direct and goal-oriented ability for competence focusing information, comprehension and skill.

The force of communication competence, inspiration, and cognitive skills on managerial performance was observed by Penley, Alexander, Jernigan, & Henwood (1991): Holly J. Payne, 2005). It shows that senior managers had good verbal communication skills and lesser communication nervousness; however, they did not have more social cognitive skill. The pre-competence stage in communication skill can be observed as while a trainee to an organization "has not yet developed the capacities essential to communicate proficiently in a meticulous surrounding" (Jablin & Sias, 2001, p. 828): Holly J. Payne, 2005), and verge capability is accomplished when a worker finally have basic communication qualifications for his/her defined job description. This approach considers that through the filtering process, socialization, and training in the company, most employees achieve the said level. The study depicts that the capable communicator have firm motivations, knowledge, and skills. Motivation is often linked with one's keenness to approach or avoid interaction with community around. Motives are frequently connected to objectives such as self-presentation, relational, and instrumental goals (Berger, 1997; Cody, Greene, Marston, Baaske, O'Hair, & Schneider, 1986): Holly J. Payne, 2005).

Communication inspiration research, generally, lies within a feature nervousness framework such as communication hesitation or shyness (Richmond & McCroskey, 1992) Richmond and Roach (1992): Holly J. Payne, 2005) It is found that workers with higher communication apprehension are supposed as less industrious and less likely to attain, and have less job satisfaction than those with low communication anxiety". Penley et al. (1991): Holly J. Payne, 2005) found, senior managers had lesser public anxiety, interpersonal apprehension, and nonverbal nervousness. Effective competence exhibits how to interact and knowing what is suitable and useful within the given context. By this it came to be known that the real transmission of communication and cuffs of command, as well as identifying organizational principles for communication. Obviously, it is really observed that a lot of skill measures valve related variables, which can be described such as other-orientation, social apprehension, clarity, and communication management. At the same time, as other skill moves toward focus on psychomotor ability--one's skill on how to speak, hear, see, and non verbally convey messages in a given circumstances (Parks, 1994): Holly J. Payne, 2005).

While one of the four skills (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking) that is listening, entails cognitive and behavioral progressions in gaining information (Bostrom, 1996). In a study conducted by Haas and Arnold (1995), employees were asked to speak about proficient communicators. The result showed that one third of employees' descriptors were listening-related. Sypher et al. (1989): Holly J. Payne, 2005), found relations between listening skill and job intensity, and listening skill and rising (upward) mobility. Mostly, researchers learn listening balancing with similar constructs such as empathy and attentiveness (Monge et al., 1982; Wiemann, 1977). Wiemann (1977): Holly J. Payne, 2005) described empathy as the capability to respond, affect, exhibit, send verbal feedback presenting sympathy and thoughts for others, and to keenly listen. Another, more parsimonious conceptualization was provided by Martin and Rubin (1994): Holly J. Payne, 2005). They all define empathy as a person's capability to feel with others. Listening and understanding are ways of being a thoughtful communicator (Cegela, 1981): Holly J. Payne, 2005) or other-oriented.

III. Methodology

The study was conducted using quantitative research method. Data was collected through questionnaires that raised questions related to entrepreneurship. Here, a self-rated questionnaire was utilized to collect the data. The sample size ranged from 50 – 60 and a five-point Likert scale methodology was used. The questionnaire had 20 questions. We distributed 50 of these questionnaires among different individuals within the Institute. These questionnaires were filled by a cross section of businessmen, faculty members and students from the Applied sciences, Engineering, Environmental and Business & Management Science Technology of the National Institute of Construction Technology and Management, Uromi, Edo State.

The division was as follows

- 10 businessmen
- 20 faculty members
- 20 students of the institute

Data Analysis

The following questions were asked and analyzed:

1. Is entrepreneurial education important for tertiary/higher education students?.
2. Are communication skills important for developing entrepreneurial skills?
3. Is entrepreneurship the solution of unemployment in the country?
4. Is Entrepreneurial education important for the economic system of a country?
5. Are good communication skills important for tertiary/higher education students for being good entrepreneurs?
6. Should Entrepreneurship be offered as a proper subject at the tertiary level of education?
7. Should there be the development of entrepreneurial faculty and staff at the tertiary level of education?
8. Are internships in higher education necessary for developing entrepreneurial skills among students of tertiary education?
9. Tertiary institutions should give internships to their students regarding entrepreneurship.
10. Is it necessary to establish entrepreneurial institutions in an under developed country for the development of the country?
11. Does the Nigerian Government support entrepreneurship?
12. Can communication skills help an entrepreneur to build a relationship with this community?
13. Do you agree that entrepreneurship and tertiary education students are good combination for the Nigerian economic well-being as there is a high rate of unemployment?
14. Do you agree that communication skills are important for effective competition in the market as an entrepreneur?

15. Risk taking is very common in entrepreneurship. Do you agree that it is favorable to take risk while being an entrepreneur?
16. Do you agree that people refrain from being entrepreneurs because of the fear of risks and losses?
17. Do you agree that young entrepreneurs have many obstacles compared to experienced ones?
18. Government does not provide enough financial services for young entrepreneurs.
19. The teachers should be trained for entrepreneurial skills.
20. It is necessary to have a proper training of entrepreneurship before starting any business.

It was made on the format of a typical five-point Likert scale,

1. Strongly agree. 2. Agree 3. Neutral 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree

In question No. 1, our key objective while working on the questionnaire was to know the importance of entrepreneurial education in tertiary education students. The results showed that 50% people agree to it and 34% strongly agree. Thereby matching with our objective that the Entrepreneurial education is very important for higher education students.

Question No. 2, as it was one of the major findings that communication skills are very important for developing entrepreneurial skills, thus the result from our primary data is in the same direction as 50% of the faculty members and students strongly agree to it and 34% agree to this fact.

Question No. 3, In the course of doing this research project we found out that 28% people agree and 22% people strongly agree that entrepreneurship is the solution of unemployment whereas 40% people give the neutral opinion but on the whole 48% people agree so the entrepreneurship is very important and is one of the solutions to the issue of unemployment.

Question No. 4, The percentage of 42 of strongly agreeing and 42 of agreeing clearly indicates and verifies the fact that good communication skills are important for students at the tertiary level of education for being good entrepreneurs as it was our hypothesis in the research.

Question No. 5, It is very important part of the primary data(questionnaire) we collected that entrepreneurship should be offered as a proper subject at the tertiary level of education and it was one of our main points, thus the result matches with the required data as 47% people strongly agree with it and 36% agree with it.

Question No. 6, the 32% people strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing to the fact that entrepreneurial education is important for economic system of a country was just as anticipated by us in the course of our research and is according to expectations and objectives.

Question No. 7, 38% people strongly agree and 40% people agree which clearly verifies the objective of research that there should be development of entrepreneurial faculty and staff at various tertiary institutions.

Question No. 8, The results of our primary data matches with the intended result that internships are necessary for developing entrepreneurial skills in students, as it is 32% of strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing.

Question No. 9, the 38% of the people strongly agree with that statement and 30 percent of people agree to it so the conclusion is that tertiary institutions should give internships to students regarding entrepreneurship.

Question No. 10as 34% people strongly agree and 44% agree to the fact that it is necessary to establish entrepreneurial institutions in underdeveloped countries for development of the country clearly states the objectives of research to be valid.

Question No. 11, , as 42% people disagree with the fact that Government supports entrepreneurship, it is concluded that the Government does not support it though it ought to be its duty and this causes damage to the economy.

Question No. 12, as 38% people strongly agree with this idea, 32% agree and 22% people are neutral, this shows that majority of the people agree that communication skills help to build a relation with community

There is a very small percentage of people (about 4 percent) who disagree and only 4 percent strongly disagree which shows that majority of the people agree with the statement. Hence, through communication skills entrepreneurs shall begin to build a relation with the community.

Question No. 13, the majority of people agree i.e 30% and 22% people strongly agree which makes an overall percentage of 52% but many people are neutral is this regard. So the conclusion, to some extent rather to a greater extent, is that entrepreneurship and tertiary students are a good combination for Nigeria's economic well being.

Question No. 14, Most of the people i.e 40 percent agree with this statement and 38 percent of the people strongly disagree with it which means that communication skills are really very important to compete in the market as an entrepreneur.

Question No. 15, here, it is observed that most of the people agree with that idea, as 42 percent strongly agree with it and 34 percent agree with it. This helped us to conclude that it is favorable to take risk. Though risk-taking is not that appealing, However, certain level of risks have to be taken because it is an important tool for entrepreneurship.

Question No. 16, 38% of people strongly agree that people refrain from being entrepreneurs because of fear of risk and loss, on the other hand 24% of people strongly agree with this. Therefore, it shows that people are ready to start their own business and become entrepreneurs but they fear the risk of loss.

Question No. 17, 34% of people strongly agree that young entrepreneurs have many obstacles compared to experienced ones. It is concluded that we should provide such an environment in our educational institutions that enable the young entrepreneurs to be confident and achieve their goals easily without any hurdles.

Question No. 18, 38% of people strongly agree that government is not providing enough financial services for young entrepreneurs so our project illuminates this aspect that government is not taking interest in entrepreneurial sector but they should because this is really necessary for our economy

most people agree with this statement as 36 percent strongly agrees with it and 36 percent agree with the statement thus the conclusion is entrepreneurship in Nigeria is favorable for its economy as there is high rate of unemployment.

Question No. 19, most of the people i.e 52 percent and 28 percent of people strongly agree and agree respectively with this statement. Therefore, it is the conclusion that the teachers should be trained for entrepreneurial skills.

Question No. 20, 50% of the people strongly agree so this shows that it is necessary to have a proper training of entrepreneurship before starting a business and this position aligns with our main objective that students should be well trained so they are able to establish themselves.

IV. Conclusion

It was concluded in the questionnaire that communication skills are very vital for entrepreneurial skills as well as education and setting a place in the market, thereby making an entrepreneur develop relations with his community. The basic need for interaction cannot be accomplished without effective communication between individuals. However, people often neglect the significance of the four communication skills that should be developed in any entrepreneurial setting. These skills are already innate in us but depend upon our own volition on what to do with them. The right amount of confidence when each skill is used is needed so that one can have a smooth sailing flow of business. The most important trait of the entrepreneurial-minded business students is the way they communicate and convey their messages. So for this purpose most of the tertiary institutions have to work for developing better communication skills which will act as the base for the entrepreneurial skills. Entrepreneurship itself has its significance and for that it should be given more attention from the authorities as to make it a proper subject in universities while the teachers should be trained for teaching it. Proper entrepreneurship education at the educational institutions level is fairly new so internships should be offered to tertiary students in order to make them better entrepreneurs of the future and make Nigeria stand out in the comity of strong economic nations. Entrepreneurial education can make good young entrepreneurs and thus help in strengthening the economy of the country. Government is not supporting it the way it should and giving no financial services for entrepreneurial education. People strongly agreed to all the above-mentioned points that were there in the questionnaire thus voicing our aimed results through their opinions. However, it is the concluding part of enhancing students' skills, self-confidence, and philosophy and performing in a confident, self-governing and pro-active way that has the most worthy guarantee for Built Environment in Higher Education. The test before us in terms of creating high quality, sustainable living surroundings, is that we need young generation of learners who are innovative and enterprising. Such individuals show a desire for setting objectives, achieving those objectives through their own efforts, solving problems, and have their own unique way of communicating to people. This also includes their ability to negotiate and receive feedback on how well they accomplish their tasks. Thus, it can be concluded that Entrepreneurial education has become very important rather compulsory at tertiary levels of education.

V. Recommendations

Along with the education of entrepreneurship, it is therefore recommended that communication skills must be instilled in the students. Again and because they are very important for the development of entrepreneurial skills in students at this level of education, it is recommended also that government should take better steps in order to strengthen the economy of the country as entrepreneurship has been identified as one of the solutions to the unemployment problem in the country.

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