
Promoting Independence and Reintegration through Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition among Inmates and Ex-Inmates in Anambra State.

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ABSTRACT

People are confined in prison custody due to one form of crime or the other. Being independent and reintegration in society becomes an issue, until such a time when government intensified efforts through skill acquisition programme to enhance independence and reintegration of inmate and ex inmate. The study examined if significant relationship exists between entrepreneurial skill acquisition programme provided to inmates and their independence/reintegration into economic activities in their immediate environment. Also, access the influence of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on the wellbeing of the inmates and ex inmate. Sample of 115 was chosen and studied. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for the study, chi square test of independent was used to determine if significant relationship exist between skill acquisition and independence/reintegration of inmates and ex inmates. The result of chi square calculated ($\chi^2=19.38$) is greater than table or critical value ($\chi^2_t=9.49$) Null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. It was concluded that significant relationship exist between entrepreneurial skill acquisition provided to inmates and ex inmates and independence/reintegration into economic mainstream. Findings equally revealed that provision of entrepreneurial skill influenced their economic well-being. Researchers recommended that programme should be sustained and inmates encouraged taking entrepreneurial skill acquisition while in correctional facility. Call for collaboration from international organizations, private sectors and nongovernmental organizations.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial skill acquisition, independence, reintegration, inmates and ex inmate.

INTRODUCTION:

The joy of being economic independent and away from any form of confinement has been the quest and desire of any individual. Though, the will to do so has been restricted and not entirely decisions of the inmates pending when their jail terms expires.

Poverty and struggle to survive, couple with other forms of social vices has landed thousands of Nigerians into correctional facilities. People from time to time break societal rules and regulations that guide a particular clan, society and sovereign territory of state. There is always a punishment that follows such break of rules, when a person is convicted of a crime by competent court of law.

People get involved in social vices due to youthful exuberance, desire to get rich syndrome and poverty, being mostly the root causes. Poverty has been on increase in Nigeria after she got her independence in 1960, it was around just 15%, and by 1980 it moved upwardly to 28.0%. The rise continued to 46.6% by 1985 despite all the intervention programmes to address poverty in the country by military regime. It dropped to 43% by 1992, though the fall was not really significant. By 1996, poverty sky rocketed to 66%. From 2004 to 2010 poverty level rose from 54.4 to 69 (Nweke & Nwakoby, 2020). By 2011 relative poverty had risen to about 71.5% absolute and per dollar a day 62.8 respectively (NBS, 2011).

Poverty when it is not properly managed through empowerment programme in various skill acquisition, and when people are unable to engage in productive activities that would provide income for independent living, in addition to poor self discipline, the situation tend to push people to get involved in one form of social vices or the other in an attempt to make ends meet. Poor economic status has led many Nigerian youth seeking to make economic gains through dubious activities. Most times, the situation has led many Nigerians especially youths striving to leave the country to foreign land seeking for a greener pasture. At times, these arise due to inability of the country to manage its enormous resources, as a result of leadership failure to follow through with developmental goals, side-by-side with leadership's penchant for primitive accumulation (Sanusi, 2012, cited in Nweke & Nwakoby, 2020).

Majority in a bid to match up with their mates, struggles to impress societal ego and clamor to belong, while they travel to developed nations, most of them do all sort of illegal deals like drug business, stealing, child trafficking, advance free fraud. Aliu (2018) also stressed number of reasons why people commit crimes, get imprisoned, some of such reasons include unemployment, stigmatization, illiteracy and victimization. The resultant effects of these unaccepted behaviors is that many are caught and put to jail, some are deported and handed over to Nigerian government, while in Nigerian correctional facilities, they continue to serve their jail term.

Prisons are sort of rehabilitation facility meant to correct unacceptable behavioral patterns of the inmates who has been convicted of a particular crime and sentenced to a jail term. This is designed to make individuals a better person and stay away from crime when they finish their jail term.

Prior to the establishment of prisons rehabilitation programs by federal government, is not an exaggeration to adduce that Nigerian Prisons System is a home for idle minds due to lack of what to do, lack of workshop facilities (Aiyedogbon, 1988) and lack of good skills, which the prisoners would like to learn (Ishaka & Akpovwa, 1986). Inmates and those on awaiting trials were just kept pending when their jail term ends. Aduba (2007) reiterated that facilities capable of exposing the inmates to the acquisition of skills which are likely to keep them busy in and out of prisons are not in existence. This over the time jeopardizes their entrepreneurial traits, which eventually makes it absolutely difficult to be independent both inside the facility and when their jail term expires.

Reintegrating into the mainstream of economic activities outside the correctional facility becomes absolutely uneasy. Finding employment seems difficult because many people and organizations shy away from individuals with a criminal history, because it suggests that the person is untrustworthy or unreliable (Ramon & Travis, 2004; Solomon, Johnson, Travis, & McBride, 2004).

Studies have shown that time spent in prison lowers the individual's earning capacity (Kling, 1999). Jobs that prisoners fulfilled during incarceration are mostly unsuitable for the market demand. Prisoners in most situations can only find low-paid, unskilled and unprofessional jobs if eventually they could find any job. Hitherto, prisoners have not build assets or being involved in productive activities, reintegration becomes difficult. With the paradigm shift in prisons administration and rehabilitation process, it becomes inevitable that they embrace entrepreneurship and self-employment as a viable alternative to a paid career path and an effective means of vocational rehabilitation (Cooney 2008; DeMartino, Atkins, Barbato, & Perotti, 2011)

With this event shift to being center for rehabilitation, prisoners are given various entrepreneurial skill acquisitions, and other forms of training to make them acquire special skills and make them innovative. The entrepreneurial skill acquisition ranges from training on carpentry and wood work, shoe making, tailoring, hair making, and so on, so that prisoners would be fully independent on their own and easily reintegrate into the economy when they regain their freedom. Ultimately, the aim is to make them independent and fend for their family, reintegration into the mainstream of economic activities within the environment they would eventually identify with. The offender, in this wise, is prepared to become not only law abiding, but also useful to both himself and the society at the expiration of his sentence (Kulu & Mannir, 2018), this would enhance economic development and growth of GDP. Most of the time, people who come out from prisons are frustrated and find it absolutely difficult to start life all over again, and if proper care is not taken they would go back to the crime all over again, this time to a hardened one. Kulu & Mannir (2018) posit that entrepreneurial skill acquisition programme enable prison inmates acquire skills especially in the area of arts and craft and to become self-reliant after their jail term and to keep them away from re-entry into prison in the near future.

To this end, government intensified efforts towards rehabilitation of prisons inmates by providing skill acquisition programme that would equip inmate to be fully independent even while in custodian facility or out of facility for proper and easy reintegration into the economic mainstream. It became necessary to study the skill acquisition programme that are meant to make inmate and ex inmate independence while serving jail term and reintegrate into society outside jail term. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no research effort has been carried out in the study areas to;

- i. Determine if significant relationship exist between entrepreneurial skill acquisition and independence/reintegration of inmate and ex inmate into the society.

- ii. Access the influence of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on the wellbeing of the inmates and ex inmates.

Hypothesis of the study:

HO = There is no significant relationship that exist between entrepreneurial skill acquisition and independence/ reintegration of inmate and ex inmate into the society.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Prisons

Prison is disciplinary in nature in that it purports to transform the individual criminal into a normal, law-abiding citizen by transforming the individual's attitude to work, his physical training, moral attitude, state of mind and moral conduct among other (Dambazu, 2007).

Prisons are most commonly used within a criminal justice system: people charged with crimes may be kept in prison custody until they are brought to trial; those pleading or being found guilty of crimes at trial may be sentenced to a specified period of imprisonment (Douglas, 2013) Cited (Anyanwu, Onyechi, Adikwu, Ezegbe, & Otu, 2018). Prisons are established confinement for the safekeeping of those legally interned for awaiting trials (Omagbemi & Odunewu, 2007). Nigeria's prisons are yet to make appreciable impact on the educational training of inmates (Ajah & Nweke, 2017).

According to Orakwe (2013), the Nigerian Prisons Service has several programs aimed at rehabilitation. These include the Prisons Adult Remedial Educational Program (AREP) that enables illiterate inmates to access adult education including training in carpentry, metal work, and woodwork. There are also services offered by the Nigerian Prisons Service to equip the inmates with skills in husbandry, and the service and maintenance of agro machines.

However, despite the existence of these programs, their functionality raises questions since some of them are in a state of disrepair and cannot be used by inmates.

Entrepreneurial skill and independence/ reintegration:

According to Onweonye, Obinne & Odu (2013), vocational training in prison is considered essential for the achievement of the purpose of reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of discharged prisoners. Reformation and rehabilitation are the current issues that are central to modern penal-thinking and practices and have been adopted and implemented in some Nigerians prisons using vocational trainings. This is because upon release from incarceration, the inmates could start a business that could make them employable or become independent entrepreneurs and even employers of labour. When inmates are engaged in productive literacy and vocational skill that lead to economic and social independence, it will bring about reduction in idleness and consequently may reduce the tendencies to engage in crimes. Prison inmates are provided with vocational skills that can enable them reintegrate into the society upon release from prison, especially the vocational skills with minimal startup capital like event decoration and baking skills, this will help reduce the incidence of re-offending.

Daniju (2007) cited in Ikegwu, Ajiboye, Aromolaran, Ayodeji & Okorafor (2014). Opined that the best option for empowerment programme is skill acquisition, as it will ensure financial independence and better standard of living. Skill acquisition will bring about societal empowerment by providing jobs, develop entrepreneurial ability which in turn will ensure financial independence and assure better standard of living.

According to Kulu & Mannir (2018) primary goal of vocational skills acquisition programme in prisons is to help offenders develop marketable job skills upon release to the community. Certificates or college credit can be earned for some vocational programmes in prisons. Hence, for this study, vocational skills training programme is any form of educational programme whose primary purpose is to prepare prison inmates for employment in recognized occupations after their jail term. Studies show that time spent in prison lowers the individual's earning capacity (Kling, 1999). Jobs that prisoners fulfilled during incarceration are mostly unsuitable for the market demand. Prisoners can only find low-paid, unskilled jobs if they can find any job at all.

Reintegration and Rehabilitation simply implies the reforming of the personality and behaviour of convicted offenders through a well designed educational programme which may or may not include therapeutic treatment, ensuring that the individual offender is returned back to the society as a complete, self-supporting and accepted member of the society (Ameh, 2010).

Many people and organizations shy away from individuals with a criminal history because it suggests that the person is untrustworthy or unreliable (Ramon & Travis, 2004; Solomon, Johnson, Travis, & McBride, 2004).

Methodology:

Study Area

The study was carried out in Anambra state in South Eastern Nigeria. Anambra was created on 27 August 1991. It has a population of 4,055,038 (2006 census), with density of 846/km² (2,200/sqm) and total land mass of 4,854km².

Anambra is rich in natural gas, crude oil bauxite, ceramics and has an almost 100 percent arable soil.

Anambra state has many other resources in terms of agro-based activities like fishery and farming, as well as land cultivated for pasturing and animal husbandry. People of the study area are mostly into trading, agricultural activities and partly civil servants. Boundaries are formed by Delta state to west, Imo state and Rivers state to South, Enugu state to the east and Kogi to the North.

Population Of The Study

The study was carried out at Onitsha custodian facility. Currently there are 80 serving and awaiting trials inmates that participated in the various entrepreneurial skill acquisition programme. There are equally 35 ex inmates that were lactated within Onitsha metropolis through the various address submitted at Onitsha custodian center. They benefited from various

entrepreneurial skill acquisition programme while they served their jail term in Onitsha custodian facility.

Determination of Sample Size

There are four custodian facilities in Anambra- Awka, Ekwulobia, Nnewi and Onitsha. Due to high population and concentration of inmates, Onitsha custodian facility was randomly chosen for the study. Inmates and ex inmates that benefited from the various skill acquisition programme have a total population of 115, and this form sample size of the study.

Administration of Data Collection Instrument.

On the Spot method was adopted. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents at the various points of their monthly meeting. Seventy three inmates and 31 ex inmates completed their questionnaires accurately, a return rate of 90%.

Method of data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to present and describe the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries, such descriptive tools like mean, averages, and frequency. Also inferential statistics such as chi square was employed to determine whether some observed pattern of frequencies correspond to an expected frequency. It measures deviation in each category and compare the number or rate of deviation in the observation patterns. Also 5 point likert scale rating was equally employed to access the respondents rating of wellbeing having acquired entrepreneurial skill acquisition, the mean of various responses were obtained.

Data collection instruments

A well structured questionnaire was administered to elicit information from the respondents on their socio-economic characteristics. like sex, marital status, age, size of family, skill and vocational training received by inmates.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondent

The respondents' socio economic characteristics on table 1 shows sex, age educational qualification, size of family, monthly income of the beneficiaries. The table shows that 33% of the respondents were female while 67% were males. Majority of the respondents fell within the age bracket of 21-30 years with the highest percentage of 44%, followed by those that fall within the age bracket of 31-40, representing 30%. This shows that the inmates and ex mates are still in their productive age. Though majority of the respondents were not married, representing 69%, majority of them are those still serving their jail term with total number of 68 inmates. Twenty three ex inmates are married while 3 of the inmates are equally married. A reasonable number (65%) of them have SSCE, which is comprised of 53 inmates and 15 ex inmates. This is followed by those that have First School Leaving Certificate, representing 19%. Those that had no formal education were (8%) and with only (3%) had Bsc/HND. Only (20%) of them have family sizes of between 1-3 persons, average family size of inmates is 1 while ex inmates is 2. Inmate's makes monthly average income of 9,883.56 while ex inmate's makes monthly average income of 30,016.

Table 1. Distribution of respondent by their socioeconomic characteristics

Variables	Inmates	Ex-inmates	Total Frequency	Percent
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Gender				
Female	20	14	34	33
Male	53	17	70	67
Age (years)				
<20	11		11	11
21-30	38	8	46	44
31-40	22	9	31	30
41-50	2	11	13	12
51-60		3	3	3
61-above				
(\bar{x})	27	38		
Marital status				
Single	68	4	72	69
Married	3	23	26	25
Divorce	2	4	6	6
Widowed				
Educational qualification				
No Formal Education	2	6	8	8
FSLC	12	8	20	19
SSCE	53	15	68	65
NCE/OND	4	1	5	5
BSC/HND	2	1	3	3
Family Size				
< 1	71	11	82	79
1-3	2	19	21	20
4-6		1	1	1
7-9				
(\bar{x})	1	2		
Monthly income(N)				
1,000-10,000	43		43	41
11,000-20,000	28		28	27
21,000-30,000	2	20	22	21
31,000-40,000		8	8	8
41,000-Above		3	3	3
(\bar{x})	9,883.56	30,016.12		

In table 2, forty one respondents representing 39% received entrepreneurial skill acquisition on tailoring, eleven respondents indicated that they received trainings on carpentry work, for shoe making, 25 of them received trainings on how to make shoes. For bead making, 9 respondents received trainings on that. Eighteen of the respondents received trainings on hair dressing.

Table 2. Response on entrepreneurial skill acquisition beneficiaries received

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition provided	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Tailoring	41	39

Carpentry	11	11
Shoe making	25	24
Bead making	9	9
Hair dressing	18	17

Source: Field survey: 2020

Table 3, contingency table, 73 of the respondents are inmates while 31 are ex inmates respectively.

Table 3. Contingency Table Of Observed Frequencies

	Tailoring	Carpentry	Shoe making	Bead making	Hair dressing	Total
Inmates	31	9	20	8	5	73
Ex-inmates	10	2	5	1	13	31
Total	41	11	25	9	18	104

Source: Field survey: 2020

Test of Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship that exists between entrepreneurial skill acquisition and independence/reintegration of inmate and ex inmate into the society. In testing the hypothesis which state that there is no significant relationship that exist between entrepreneurial skill acquisition and independence/reintegration of inmates and ex inmates into society.

Using the formular; $\frac{(\text{observed}-\text{expected})^2}{\text{Expected}}$

Degree of freedom $(c-1)(r-1)$
 $(5-1)(2-1)= 4(1) =4$

DF @ 0.05 probability level.

Therefore the (x^2) of 19.38, which is greater than the table or critical value (x^2t) 9.49. we strongly reject the Null Hypothesis which state that there is no significant there is no significant relationship that exists between entrepreneurial skill acquisition and independence/reintegration of inmate and ex inmate into the society, and accept the alternate hypothesis that significant relationship exist between entrepreneurial skill acquisition and independence/ reintegration of inmate and ex inmate into the society. The findings corroborates with submissions of Onweonye, Obinne & Odu (2013), vocational training in prison is considered essential for the achievement of the purpose of reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of discharged prisoners. Also, kulu & Mannir (2018) posit that entrepreneurial skill acquisition programme enable prison inmates acquire skills especially in the area of arts and craft and to become self-reliant after their jail term and to keep them away from re-entry into prison in the near future.

Table 4. Chi Square calculations (Observed And Expected Frequencies)

Observed	Expected	(O – E)	(O – E)²	(O – E)²/E
31	28.78	2.22	4.93	0.17
9	7.72	1.28	1.64	0.21
20	17.55	2.45	6.00	0.34
8	6.32	1.68	2.82	0.45
5	12.63	7.63	58.22	4.61
10	12.22	2.22	4.93	0.40
2	3.28	1.28	1.64	0.50
5	7.45	2.45	6.00	0.81
1	2.68	1.68	2.82	1.05
13	5.37	7.63	58.22	10.84
Total				19.38

Source: authors calculations, 2020

Table 5 shows response of the beneficiary’s improvement on their economic wellbeing having benefitted from entrepreneurial skill acquisition. Basically, level of independence, reintegration into society among the ex inmates, ability to earn income, ability to take responsibility, and improved self esteem were improved drastically.

Table 5. Response of inmates and ex inmates on their wellbeing after accessing entrepreneurial skill

	MATERIALS	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Indifference	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed	Mean
1	It enhanced level of independence.	85	17	2			4.80
2	It promote reintegration into the mainstream of economic activities	30	1	73			3.59
3	Promote ability to earn income both in custody and after jail term.	93	11				4.89
4	Enhance ability to take responsibility in their families after jail term.	70	28	4	2		4.60
5	Promotes self esteem.	33	68	3			4.28

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The result shows that significant relationship exists between entrepreneurial skill acquisition received by inmates and level of independency and reintegration into economic mainstream among ex inmates. This shows that once entrepreneurial skill acquisition is provided to inmates it increases their entrepreneurial spirit which promotes their independency and reintegration. Also findings revealed that wellbeing of the beneficiaries drastically improved having assessed entrepreneurial skill acquisition.

The researcher therefore recommends the following;

- i. The project should be sustained so that more inmates would benefit immensely while they are in correctional facility, as it is guarantees proper reintegration into society.
- ii. Researchers call for collaborations from international organizations, private sectors and Nongovernmental organizations (NGO).

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