

Curriculum For Training in Entrepreneurship Development and Soft Skills: Implication of Secondary School Fisheries for Fish Farmers in Anyigba

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Abstract

The study was on curriculum for training in entrepreneurship development and soft skills: Implication of secondary school fisheries for fish farmers in Anyigba. Descriptive survey design was adopted with two research questions which were answered with a population of 100 animal farmers in, Anyigba, Kogi State. A sample size of 80 fish farmers was drawn using random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a 23- item questionnaire measured on a modified 4-point likert scale and validated by three experts and it gave a reliability coefficient of 0.76 which was obtained using Cronbach Alpha method. The data collected were analyzed with mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that the male fish farmers need improvement in entrepreneurship skills development and to develop their soft skills more for better output while the female should keep up the high extent they have attained. It was then recommended that the male fish farmers should humble themselves and learn needed skills from their female counterpart, the female fish farmers should be willing to teach the skills they possess for fish farming to their male counterparts for better output to serve their locality, curriculum developers should seek more practical ways that would encourage individual differences among learners in order to carry everyone along etc.

Keywords: Curriculum, training, soft skills, entrepreneurship development Secondary school

Introduction

The essence of education is to help individuals draw out from within them what they possess already so that they can be useful to the society and the instrument that the school uses or any other entity for that purpose is what educationist referred to as the curriculum. Curriculum could be defined as all learning opportunity that a learner receives under the guidance of a tutor or an establishment or setting, usually the school. Offorma (2006) says that the curriculum is all the learning opportunities that a learner gets under the guidance of the school through a teacher. Esu (2010) says that the curriculum is the bridge that connects the school and the society together. For Amadioha and Akor (2019) they defined the curriculum as the tool used in effecting the relative permanent change in the behaviour of the learner and even that of the society.

Jeremiah and Alamina (2017) had defined the curriculum as an instrument of guidance for the development of a person and to enable that person develop the society in which the person live. Akor and Akajiri (2022) say that the curriculum is a tool used in helping people to also develop their societies to be better than they met it. All these definitions could be summarized thus, that the curriculum is a tool, the curriculum is an instrument to bring change both in people and in the society, and the curriculum brings about betterment in people and in the society and that the curriculum is taken through processes usually managed by individuals or by an organizations.

Therefore, the curriculum could be perceived as one of the major tools for training people. Curriculum for training can be described as an embodiment of content of objectives for learning, materials, methods and strategies to be adopted or adapted and set standard to determine the attainment of stated objectives. From the foregoing, the elements that make up a training curriculum include:

- a. Objectives for training
- b. Content for training
- c. Method/strategies for training
- d. Evaluation procedures adopted.

In a nutshell, a training curriculum could be viewed as a contract document between the learner and an entity (institution) which delineates the role each of the two should -play in order to meet the need desired by both. Here, the need of the learner is to by the end of the training be able to achieve some stated goals by being able to function in the capacities determined while the need of the organization is to ensure it helps the learner achieve the change in behaviour (FAO, 2023).

Also, it should be clear from here that while the curriculum is the tool used in bringing about training while training is the act, art and process of ensuring that the desired changes come or appear. Usually, when training is being conducted, what is delivered to the learner is referred to as content which Amadioha (2017) defines as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values taught to the learner in a teaching/training and learning processes. It then means that what the curriculum pursues to attain is to help those in training to gain both hard and soft skills which make up the content required for the advancement of the people and the society.

To understand soft skills, it is important first to describe hard skills. Hard skills are definite, quantifiable skills that a person gains through training, school learning or work experiences. Hard skills are said to be learnable and can be proven by a person to say the individual actually learnt that skill (Girardin, 2023). Furthermore, hard skills are either available in a person or not

because if one says he/she possess hard skills and asked to show it, it would either be clear to those observing based on what is displayed or not. Hard skills come in several forms as technical skills, analytical skills, computer skills, marketing skills, communication skills, management skills etc. Hence, it is different from soft skills.

Soft skills as described by Herrity (2023) are said to be personality traits or character abilities a person exhibits based on a prevailing need or situational demand. Kenton (2023) says it is a character and interpersonal skills that shows a person's ability to relate well with others in a work environment while Pratt (n.d.) says it is personal features which a person displays to support situational awareness to enable the person accomplish a task at hand. Some examples of soft skills include creativity, confidence, honesty and integrity, friendliness, time management, good manners, enthusiasm, attention to details, self-motivation among others. Based on the above descriptions of what soft skills are which are those characteristics that one learns deliberately either formally or informally in order to endure in a chosen profession and add value to it as well as contribute to the development of the profession for the future. These attributes one may claim are essential for entrepreneurship development bearing the features of entrepreneurs in mind.

Entrepreneurship development is the avenue through which knowledge and skills required for entrepreneurship is made better through training, programs, schooling or mentorship. Tondon (n.d.) says that entrepreneurship is the capacities to design/develop a new thing, organizing and coordinating, and taking risk as well as managing economic uncertainties. For Hisrich (n.d.) entrepreneurship is the act of creating a new thing and taking risks as well as enjoying the rewards. So, while entrepreneurship is described as above, entrepreneurship development, thus, may mean training in entrepreneurship in order to be better at the enterprise a person is involved in. Karen (2024) describes entrepreneurship development as a process or strategy used to improve entrepreneurial skills of a professional.

Some of the features entrepreneurship development is meant to achieve include: inculcation, refinement and development in entrepreneurial skills. Das (n.d.) says that entrepreneurship development is set out to achieve either of three things in the life of the entrepreneur which are make a risk bearer, an organizer or innovator out of the entrepreneur where the risk bearer out of uncertain pledges, negotiates a loan for the crops on the farm perhaps that does not have guarantee of getting harvested, the organizer arranges for land to pay rent, labour to pay wages and capital to pay interest, all secured on loan (uncertainty) and as an innovator generates new products to the markets.

For the entrepreneur to be able achieve any of these, he/she must need to improve on himself as such progresses in the profession or that through training entrepreneurship skills would be acquired and such keeps gaining more knowledge and acquiring more skills as time goes by. Das (n.d.) says that the entrepreneur is a person of telescopic opportunities and pursues them. In this sense, it means that being entrepreneurial is a characteristic, as a possession or a kind of personality/trait that an individual is known with and/or for. Thus, the entrepreneur needs to have capacity and competence to perform activities in this light without much ado. This was further said that some of the features of an entrepreneur are: initiative, persistence, concern for quality, commitment, self-confidence, persuasion, assertiveness and others. These qualities and more seem to bear semblance with qualities associated with soft skills. Hence, the training in soft skills automatically, avail one the opportunities for entrepreneurship development. So, the question at this point would be, how is the challenge of soft skills and entrepreneurship affecting fish farmers?

Fish farming is the process of growing fish for domestic consumption or for business in an enclosure. Ubakamma, Eruchalu, Ezeani and Okafor (2000) defined fish farming as the growing of different types of fish in a confined place for man's use. It is said to be aimed at providing animal protein available for man as well as income. Meanwhile, Akor (2016) defined fisheries as a vocation given to the catching of fish, processing, distributing and marketing of fish and cited one of its imports as providing income for the fish farmer. Thus, the definitions put fish farming as a means of livelihood for the farmer which invariably means that entrepreneurial skills are required. Again, the objective of Agriculture as a field of learning has the following as the target:

a) To enable students acquire basic knowledge and practical skills in agriculture
b) To prepare and expose students to occupations and opportunities in the field of agriculture. These objectives when juxtaposed with the goals of secondary education in the national policy (FRN, 2016) for education that says the following:

a. Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles.

b. Provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades.

Therefore, there seem to be an agreement in the philosophical pursuit of the national policy and the field of agriculture from where fisheries was drawn recently to be used in helping to teach entrepreneurial skills to students in secondary schools in order to produce productive citizens who are open to becoming full and functional members of the society, thus, the need for regular improvement in the skills they possess. But, the question is in what particular area of skills developments are they to do improvement?

This is arising on the ground that based on the experiences of the researchers, fish farming has become a lucrative area of endeavour and people are very much engaged in it currently but a good number of the people that venture into it park up no sooner than they begin. Then a poser, what put them out? What was it found as that skill most of them lack and perhaps needed to sustain the business they are in? Could it be skills? These questions prompted the researchers to pursue the discourse. Hence, the need to carry out the study curriculum for training in entrepreneurship development and soft skills: Implication of the senior secondary school fisheries for fish farmers in Anyigba. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine the extent of entrepreneurship development skills need of male and female fish farmers from the secondary school fisheries curriculum for training in Anyigba.

2. Determine the extent of soft skills the male and female fish farmers need to enhance their entrepreneurship skills from the secondary school fisheries curriculum for training in Anyigba.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent of entrepreneurship development skills need of male and female fish farmers from the secondary school fisheries curriculum for training in Anyigba?

2. What is the extent of soft skills the male and female fish farmers need to enhance their entrepreneurship skills from the secondary school fisheries curriculum for training in Anyigba?

Research Method

The study was carried out in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population for the study was made up of 100 fish farmers in Anyigba while the sample size for the study was made up of 80 fish farmers who were randomly selected using random sampling technique from in the entire population. The instrument used by the researchers for

data collection was a questionnaire titled: Questionnaire on Implication of Senior Secondary School Fisheries for Training in Entrepreneurship Development and Soft Skills in Anyigba (QISSFTEDSSIA) which was constructed by the researchers. It consists of 23-items which were arranged in two sections A and B. Section A contains the biodata, while section B consists of two subgroups: extent of entrepreneurship skills needed by fish farmers and extent of soft skills needed to enhance their entrepreneurship development skills. The questionnaire was built on a four-point Likert Scale, namely: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) and the levels of responses are weighted as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face validated by three experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation Unit, one from Curriculum and Instruction unit of the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education and the third from the Department of Aquaculture, Faculty of Agriculture, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, Kogi State. The suggestions given were used in producing the final copy of the instrument. Cronbach alpha was used in calculating the reliability to determine the internal consistency which gave an alpha value of 0.76 which was considered high after the instrument was first administered on ten fish farmers in Okene in Okehi Local Government Area. The data obtained were analyzed using, mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. Hence, $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$. Therefore, items whose mean were less than 2.5 were seen as Low Extent (LE) responses while those whose mean were 2.5 and above were seen as High Extent (HE) responses.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of entrepreneurship development skills need of male and female fish farmers from the secondary school fisheries curriculum for training in Anyigba?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent of Entrepreneurship Development Skills Need of Male and Female Fish Farmers from Secondary School Fisheries Curriculum for Training in Anyigba

S/ N	Items	Male Fish Farmer			Female Fish Farmer			N
		Mea n	SD	Remar k	Mean	SD	Remar k	
1.	Skill in value chain change in fish farming	1.6	0.17	LE	3.6	0.17	HE	80
2	Skill in communication relating to fish farming	1.8	0.14	LE	3.8	0.14	HE	80
3	Skill in decision making demand of fish farming	3.3	0.17	HE	3.8	0.14	HE	80
4	Skill in human relation demand of fish farming	3.4	0.18	HE	3.6	0.17	HE	80
5	Skill in attitude required for fish farming	1.6	0.17	LE	3.6	0.17	HE	80
6	Skill in care of tools used in fish farming	1.5	0.17	LE	3.7	0.17	HE	80
7	Skill in good judgment for fish farming	3.5	0.17	HE	3.8	0.14	HE	80
8	Skill for adequate	1.7	0.17	LE	3.7	0.17	HE	80

9	management of fish farm Skill in pond management	3.3	0.17	HE	3.8	0.14	HE	80
10.	Skill in saving habit for the future	3.5	0.17	HE	3.6	0.17	HE	80
11	Skill of reinvestment of return on investment	3.4	0.18	HE	3.8	0.14	HE	80
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.6	0.16		3.70	0.15		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 results above showed some areas where the male fish farmers need to develop further in their entrepreneurship skills while the female fish farmers seem to be possess high extent of soft skills required for fish farming. The skills for care of tools, attitude required, value chain change, adequate management and communication were at low extent for male fish farmers while their female counterpart performed at high extent for those items with mean (1.5, 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8) and the female had minimum and maximum mean (3.6 and 3.8) for all items but skills for decision making, human relation, good judgment, pond management, saving habit and reinvestment were at high extent for the male and female fish farmers. The output of this result may not be unconnected with certain personal traits possessed by the genders involved. Besides, one would not rule out the place of personal commitment and dedication to the occupation. However, it is pertinent to say that the grand and standard deviation (2.6 and 0.16) for the male was lower compared to what the female fish farmers obtained (3.70 and 0.15). Thus, the male fish farmers in Anyigba need to improve on their current level of commitment based on the extent of they do the business of fish farming for better output in the future.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of soft skills the male and female fish farmers need to enhance their entrepreneurship skills from the secondary school fisheries curriculum for training in Anyigba?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Extent of Soft Skills Male and Female Fish Farmers Need to Enhance Their Entrepreneurship Skills from Secondary School Fisheries Curriculum for Training in Anyigba

S/N	Items	Male Fish Farmer			Female Fish Farmer			N
		Mea n	SD	Remar k	Mean	SD	Remar k	
1.	Time management skill	1.7	0.22	LE	3.5	0.17	HE	80
2	Resourcefulness skill in fish farming	2.1	0.3	LE	3.5	0.17	HE	80
3	Show of interest in vocation of fish farming	1.9	0.24	LE	3.4	0.18	HE	80
4	Skill of innovation in fish farming	1.7	0.17	LE	3.7	0.17	HE	80
5	Skill of creativity in fish farming	1.4	0.17	LE	3.4	0.18	HE	80

6	enterprise Skill of self confidence in own ability for fish farming	2.5	0.17	HE	3.5	0.17	HE	80
7	Skill of cooperation with others	3.2	0.22	HE	3.6	0.17	HE	80
8	Skill of dependability by other	2.3	0.17	LE	3.5	0.17	HE	80
9	Skill of respect for others	1.4	0.17	LE	3.0	0.28	HE	80
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.02	0.20		3.45	0.18		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The result on table 2 indicates that the soft skills needed by male fish farmers stand at low extent while that of female fish farmers was at high extent. This is coming on the basis of the mean for soft skills for male on confidence and cooperation (2.5 and 3.2) while all the means for the female fish farmers being at high extent with least and highest mean being (3.0 and 3.7). The implication would be that the male fish farmers in Anyigba should give themselves to adequate training that would enable them to imbibe the desired soft skills that would enable them boost their productivity in fish farming business, maximum output would be guaranteed.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings on table 1 indicated the responses of the both gender of fish farmers in Anyigba. The results showed that skills for care of tools, attitude required, value chain change, adequate management and communication stand at low extent for male fish farmers as they are yet to develop them to be able to break even in the business of fish farming but their female counterpart performed maximum output here because they have developed such skills adequately. Nonetheless, the male fish farmers have high extent skills for decision making, human relation, good judgment, pond management, saving habit and reinvestment and on these items also the female fish farmers are at high extent potency. This signifies that the skills on the items are very key in fish farming activities considering that Idoko(2023) confirmed that that communication skills, problem solving, pond management are among the skills the entrepreneur in fish farming needs. Also, Alawa (2016) had found that planning, management, marketing are some of the most important skills that the entrepreneur in fish farming needs for adequate development. The implication is that the male gender who seem to lag behind in the acquisition of most of the skills needed for fish farming should brace up for the better while the female fish should maintain the high extent of skills they have currently ad are encouraged to teach their male counterpart on how they could learn and apply the needed entrepreneurship skills.

The result on table 2 indicated that the response of fish farmers with regards to soft skills needed to enhance their entrepreneurship skills development. The result showed that the male fish farmers only did well in the area of self-confidence and cooperation but are lacking on all other items on the table while female fish farmers were up beat on all the items with high extent

capacity and the item with the least mean which has to do with respect was above average score. This findings are confirmed by (Herrity, 2023; Santhakumar, 2023) who both found that innovation, resourcefulness, respect, self-confidence, time management, creativity skills among others were vital soft skills to develop for entrepreneurship. This means that the persons who have low extent output in this study should endeavor to find out from their counterpart what they are doing to be ahead in order to achieve their own goals in fish farming business too.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of this study are that there is need for improvement in the performance output of the male gender in fish farming by taking steps to boost their entrepreneurship skills and that the soft skills required for enhanced entrepreneurship skills development should be a main pursuit of the male while the female fish farmers should not relent from where they are right now but to keep getting better at what they do.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations supporting the findings of this study:

1. The male fish farmers should humble themselves and learn needed skills from their female counterpart.
2. The female fish farmers should be willing to teach the skills they possess for fish farming to their male counterparts for better output to serve their locality.
3. Curriculum developers should seek more practical ways that would encourage individual differences among learners in order to carry everyone along.
4. Agricultural stakeholders should help in organizing regular workshops to boost the skills of fish farmers for food security in the locality.
5. The government should encourage the fish farmers by making available grants that would help them boost productivity.

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